

# RHYTHM OF HARVEST

Can you hear it? The cricket's chirping. Can you smell it? The fresh, dewy, smell of water dripping off minty, green plants. Can you feel it? Can you? It's the beat of the night!

Everything is perfect, in the night. There is a windy, cool breeze in the air, making the blades of lime-green grass sway back and forth. It was kind of like playing a guitar.

Now it's five in the morning, when I wake up. I look in the mirror. I'm exhausted... sleepy, from the baby boy waking up at one-thirty in the morning. "I'm thirsty sis" is what he says.

He looks at me with those big, beautiful, brown eyes that show innocence, and smiles. I can't help myself, I smile back. "I'll give you water, is that okay?"

I put him back to bed and he says "I'm not sleepy; I want to stay up with you."

“How about I tell you a story,” I say.

“Is it good? What is this story called?”

“It’s really good. You’ll love it. It’s called the Rhythm of Harvest.

Once upon a time...” I begin to tell the story.

He’s finally tired again. He goes back to sleep. No matter how sleepy I am, because of that boy. I’m not mad, I’m pretty much glad. He just brings me so much joy. Then I realize it’s three in the morning, and outside its pouring.

It’s still dark outside. I glance out the window and see as frogs hop away, as the crickets chirping dies down, as all the nocturnal animals, insects, reptiles and any other kind of creepy crawlers hide away, knowing it’s going to be a sunny afternoon today.

It is like a never ending orchestra. The crickets chirped, the frogs croaked, the insects buzzed, the snakes hissed, the wolves howled, the rabbits bounced, and the owls, bats, and other flying birds flapped their wings as they soared through the night, looking for the squeaking mice.

Chirp, chirp, I hear. Chirp, chirp, chirp, I hear another bird call back. I smile this is an entirely new song.

We arrive at one of the fields I will be working in today, and wince as the tires screech to a stop. I look at my mom there is determination in her eyes as we look forward and see no end to the rows of tobacco. I look back and smile at the boy, with the big, brown eyes.

I still remember the song of the night, but I like this song too. You hear a squish as our shoes connect with the moist dirt. We line up like marchers next to the row of tobacco we will be working in. I look at my mom and see as her eyes water, making her look vulnerable and small. There is little to no noise as we work now.

You hear a baby boy cry and pound his tiny, fragile, fists against a car window, as he watches his mother disappear into a long field of tobacco.

A man closes his eyes as he feels sweat roll from his head and down his face. He wipes it away. It's kind of like playing a violin. The hand goes up and the sweat slowly rolls back down.

I look up and the sun blinds me with its light, so I look back down and feel as it beats on my back. I look at the uneven dirt path that tries to unbalance me, but I have a role to play, so I keep on marching forward.

Now I work in the sweetness of potato, but there is nothing sweet about it. I carry a forty pound bucket for forty-five cents. There are no benefits, if I get hurt im useless. When I get older I will have problems with my back and arthritis, but its all part of a role I play so I go on.

I don't like this song ive heard it over and over again and it brings me no peace. Its just like the story I once told my brother, who is now working in tobacco. It's a sad song and now I know the role I played. It was the Rhythm of Harvest.

- Neftali Cuello