

composure of that (to me still) little girl if i am ever subjected to such a professional level of interrogation.

PROBABLY

the cabbie from the oakland airport to emeryville is a skinny oldtimer who loves magic johnson and drives like he's operating one of those video machines where you can total-out three times before they even begin to subtract serious points.

"what brings you to emeryville, of all places?" he asks.

"it's kind of hard to explain," i tell him, "but it's a form of moonlighting. i teach college and i come up here to grade essays for a testing service."

"do they pay you?"

"a little."

"do they cover your air fare and expenses?"

"yes."

"where they put you up?"

"the durant."

"shee-it, son, thass a nice hotel. now you see why yo' mama made you finish school?"

HOW TOAD IMPROVED UPON HANSEL AND GRETEL  
poisoned breadcrumbs.

— Gerald Locklin

Long Beach CA