

New Mexico Quarterly

Volume 12 | Issue 4

Article 19

1942

Rachel

Geoffrey Johnson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq>

Recommended Citation

Johnson, Geoffrey. "Rachel." *New Mexico Quarterly* 12, 4 (1942). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol12/iss4/19>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by the University of New Mexico Press at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *New Mexico Quarterly* by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

God gives in a gush!" I answer, "The best is—"
ponder-pensive.

Soon that trailer-of-sunset star wand
Through the open window, though;
The desert is its own excuse for being silent;
A bringing breeze feels universe to tell.

ELLIS FOOTE

RACHEL

Wistful, I watch my Jewish boy-refugees,
Their olive-clear faces bowed by the winter fire
Intent on their plaintive harmonica melodies,
And I tease my heart until the sounds expire
With fragments of talk recalled, of reported scene,
Trying to picture their homes, their village green,
The mothers they left, their sisters I have not known.

And always after the melody ends (but never
It ends in my heart) above the remembered tone
And tune of their exile-song, there shines and cries
A dark maternal woman who grieves for ever,
Agelessly young in a universal air:
"You have given your mite of solace in sheltering these,
But what of my children on frozen Danubian scree,
In Moravian wilds and the camps of the living-dead?"

And then I look in the boys' black brimming eyes:
Human and local, and too intense to bear,
Shines Rachel and cries, and is not comforted.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON