

## THE WORMWOOD REVIEW

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## THANKSGIVING DAY PRAYER, 1990

Thank you, God, for this day and for the food of which we are about to partake.

Thank you for our loved ones — children and grandchildren, husbands and wives, parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, even ex-husbands and wives, and for their health, which is as good as can be expected, taking into account age and genetic background.

Thank you for our ability to earn enough money sufficient to feed and clothe and shelter ourselves, with a little something left over for Pizza Man deliveries and cable t.v. subscription movies and enough Barbie dolls and clothes and cars and furniture and accessories to make 100 little Guatemalan girls happy for a lifetime.

Thank you for my sons, born too late for Viet Nam and too early for Desert Shield.

Thank you for my daughters, born too late to be trapped by "the only occupation a woman was truly created to fulfill" and too early to have thoughts of financing their education by joining the Reserves.

Thank you for our being born in the United States of America, which, with all its faults, is still the best country to live in (5,000 immigrants a day attest to that).

Thank you for our being born in the latter part of the 20th Century, when infant mortality is low, when polio, smallpox, T.B., diphtheria, scarlet fever, whooping cough, and rickets are rare; when every day there is a new and more successful treatment for cancer and MS and MD and SIDS and even AIDS.

Thank you for this table before us, groaning under the weight of platters piled high with food — food which we will eat until we are bloated and miserable, lying about the living room belching and farting and complaining that we haven't an iota of space left over for dessert, and the kitchen is filled with enough left-overs to feed half of Ethiopia.

Thank you, especially, God, for our being born middle-class, Protestant, and white, so that we may never suffer the afore-mentioned diseases and deprivations, the pain of prejudice and persecution, and the agony of concentration camps, pogroms, mass graves, and genocide.

#### THE CRIMINAL MENTALITY

It was still daylight  
when I hurried into the downtown mall  
on my way home from work.  
Montgomery Ward was having a sale  
and I wanted a specific item —  
a cotton nightshirt with Garfield  
in high-top sneakers on the front,  
a snide remark about jogging  
issuing from his mouth  
in a cloud-shaped balloon.  
My daughter who deeply resents  
having to walk half a block  
to her parked car  
would love it.

The cashier in Lingerie was young  
and flustered, having trouble with an exchange  
while three more customers  
waited impatiently.  
I took the nightshirt next door  
to Mens' Wear  
where the smiling cashier was free  
and no customers were waiting.  
When I took out my Visa Card,  
he said in awkward English, patting the register,  
"This machine she don't do credit cards."  
As I was questioning the validity