

SILVER QUEEN

I pulled my car over by the farmstand on Northwest Street. "How's the corn this year?" I asked the farmer. "It's the best ever," he said. "You say that every year," I said. "No I don't," he said. "You you do," I said. "I don't," he said. "Well, you do," I said, "but let's not make a federal case of it," I said. "Fair enough," he said. "What kind you got?" I asked. "Silver Queen," he said. "That's not Silver Queen," I said. "I know Silver Queen when I see it and that's not Silver Queen." "Mister, I've been growing corn for forty-five years. I know every damned thing there is about growing corn. I can grow corn in my sleep. I was growing corn before you were born, and I'll probably keep right on growing corn after I die," he said. "If you could stand to part with a dozen ears of your beautiful Silver Queen, I'd be much obliged," I said. That night, the kids all said, "This is the best ever," and I agreed. The next day I was driving down Northwest Street again, and I stopped at the stand and got out and said to the farmer, "Please forgive me for doubting you. It's some terrible flaw in me. You were right, it was the best ever. My children thank you, my wife thanks you, and I thank you more than I can ever say," I said. "I forgive you, my wife forgives you, and the corn forgives you," he said, sweeping his arm back toward his fields. "Oh, yes," I said, "the corn, the corn . . ."

I love that poem, succinctly putting adulthood's lack of wonder to rest.

- John Emil Vincent