

Big Gosnell came and said
(Voice like heavy cold lead
But warm he was)

He said,

"I like to lift heavy things,
I do,
And I've got a book, you see ...

(MATH 151, USAFI)

(In the compound, Pfc Fisher,
Pfc Fisher ... report to
gate 2)

... and (wide eyes and big round face)
I need some math for a high school
DEEgree,
you see ...

Are you the education adviser?
(Push him away with eyes)

... mostly because,
not so much for me,
you see,
but this teacher ...

(back home in cool spring
where the earth smell
fills the air)

... he made me say
(when I quit school
and joined the army) ...

(Attention in the compound,
Attention in the compound,
Five minutes to headcount,
Five minutes to head --)

... he made me say
(boy, was he a good guy!)

'... get those credits, Gosnell,
the army can help you if ...'

(Attention in the compound!)

... and I don't like not to
keep my word
to a man who ...

(Everyone not testing,
Outside!
Move!)

... but the algebra in the book,
I mean they make numbers equal letters,
and ...

(Gosnell! Testing?)

... no Sarge, I ...

(back home where
fields are green
and cool nights
and soft girls with
swelling breasts)

... really, I mean --
can't you help me do it? ...

(Attention in the compound!)

(Gosnell! Out!)

... I must go to (I'm coming Sarge!)
Please help me make 'em equal letters,
because the credits
and I gave a man (the army can help
you Gosnell!)

my word
and heavy things I like to lift
(wide eyes and round, round face)"

(Attention! Attention
In the compound!)

(Back home,
where darkness comes at night,
instead of so much glaring light,
and numbers don't equal letters).

-- J. Bennett, Jr.

Muenchen, Deutchland