

# Infant Vision

by Jim Gold

It's seven o'clock, dear," Tommy's mother called from the kitchen. The bus will be here in twenty minutes. Put on your shoes."

"Ma, what grade am I in this year?"

"First grade."

"How old am I?"

"Six on your birthday tomorrow."

"Then why do I look like eighty-four?"

"You didn't brush your teeth."

"Ma, could I really be eighty-four?"

"You're only six. Be quiet and brush your teeth. You'll be late."

"But Ma--"

"All right, all right. You might be eighty-four tomorrow."

"You mean I can be six and eighty-four?"

"Of course. Most people have two ages, some many more."

"Why?"

"They suffer from infant vision."

". . .What's that?"

"It's the way infants see things."

"Is it good?"

"Sometimes."

"When?"

"When it's pure, fresh, and simple."

"Is that why I'm six but look eighty-four?"

"I don't know."

"Does infant vision run in the family?"

"Your father has it. That's why he jumped out the window when he tried to fly."

"Did he hurt himself?"

“Not exactly. He jumped from the first floor and that was okay. But when he jumped, he forgot to open the window. There’s lots of broken glass. He’s cut pretty badly--but Dad enjoys hospitals.”

“Is that why I’m eight-four today?”

The bus pulled to the curb.

“Put your shoes on,” his mother said. “Hurry. Where’s your homework assignment?”

“But—how old am I?”

“We’ll talk about it after school.”

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