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## Boy (after Seurat)

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I remember the feeling of excitement as we pulled in the drive. I anticipated the excited bawdy drone of voices and laughter. The adults would be drinking things with sophisticated names like Martini, Old Fashioned, Tom Collins and High Ball. I knew little of what those were but I could hear the excitement in the voices as the drinks were requested. I would observe the careful mixing and measuring of the ingredients. Cherry's and olives, normally tightly rationed, were in abundance and used unsparingly as ice crashed against the insides of the sleek chrome shaker. All of this was advertisement enough for any boy to long for that day when he too would be among those so privileged as to partake.



**BOY (after Seurat)** James G. Robinson

We entered through the front door and passed, Dorothy like, from the harsh monochrome of winter into the inviting Technicolor warmth. The living room was a polyester jungle of relatives dressed in those vestments reserved for holidays, weddings, wakes and funerals. The smoke laden air softly glowed from the diffused light of the tree. It was a time for an innocent's observation of all things different. The tree was fake, white and thick with tinsel! Its' lights were as big as our ornaments and glowed red, green, and white! On the coffee table a white dimples bowl held opulent bright gold ribbon candy and nuts to be enjoyed without reprimand. There was the traditional Oplatki, a wafer much like the host used in Catholic mass. The wafer was stamped with religious imagery and would be dipped in honey as the guests would place it on one another's tongues while offering a simple blessing. I was greatly confused by this as a child who had been drilled by some very serious nuns that lay hands must never touch the host. The adults told stories of sneaking out on Christmas Eve and hiding in barns to see for themselves if the animals really could talk for some few moments at midnight. Then there was the prominently displayed Derezinski family portrait. My cousin had divorced that year; however, one might not have known he was ever married for his ex-wife had been expertly removed from the photo. I remembered where she had stood and the closest examination could find no trace of her existence. Although not fully comprehending why, I found this slightly disquieting.

**W**e children were guided to a folding table in the kitchen for the least anticipated part of the evening; the meal. The sausage was passable but heavily buttered boiled grains and sour soups were not for a child's pallet. Served first were the perogues. These tasteless dumplings, pan-fried to perfect toughness and filled with unappetizing cheeses, kraut or prunes, were dropped onto our plates. Then bowls of kapusta were set in front of us; a soup that can be best described as sauerkraut in a vinegar bath. Mounds of Kasha, boiled buckwheat drenched in melted butter, appeared on our plates. I have no