**ALL THE WAY HOME**by Tad Mosel
MARY

Why don't they all leave? You too, Hannah. For I am not going to the funeral. You were right, Hannah. God is coming harder to me now. And Jay, too! I can't seem to find either one of them. Whatever made Jay do it, ever! The night we moved into this house, where did he go! And when he first went to work in Papa's office--! (stopping, remembering more softly) Not when Rufus was born, though. He was very dearly close to me then, very. But other times, he'd feel himself being closed in, watched by superinten-dents, he'd say, and--There was always a special quietness about him afterwards, when he came home, as if he were very far away from where he'd been, but very far away from me, too, keeping his distance, but working his way back. No, I'm not going to the funeral. Do you think he'll rest simply by lowering him into the ground? I won't watch it. How can he rest when he was lost on the very day he died! That's just what I don't know, if he was lost, or drunk or what. I never knew. Not for sure. There were times we all knew about, of course, but there were other times when it wasn't always the whiskey. He'd be gone for a night, or a day, or even two, and I'd know he hadn't' touched a drop. And it wasn't any of the other things that come to a woman's mind, either, in case you're thinking that. Those are easy enemies. It was Market Square. And talking to country people about country secrets that go way back through the mountains. And anyone who'd sing his old songs with him. Or all-night lunch rooms, and even Charlie Chaplin. What's wrong with Charlie, he'd ask me, not because he didn't know what I'd say, but to make me say it. He's so nasty, I'd say, so vulgar, with his nasty little cane, looking up skirts. And Jay would laugh and go off to see Charlie Chaplin and not come home. Where he went, I can't even imagine, for he'd never tell me. It was always easier to put everything down to whiskey. Why couldn't I let him have those things, whatever they were, if they meant something to him? Why can't I let him have them now? I'm glad Ralph didn't tell me if Jay were drunk when he was killed. I must just accept not knowing, mustn't I? I must let Jay have what I don't know. What if he was drunk? What in the world if he was? Did I honestly think that was a gulf. This is a gulf! If he was drunk, Hannah, just if he was, I hope he loved being. Speeding along in the night--singing at the top of his lungs--racing because he loved to go fast--racing to us because he loved us. And for the time, enjoying--revelling in a freedom that was his, that no place or person, that nothing in this world could ever give him or take away from him. Let's hope that's how it was, how he looked death itself in the face. In his strength. That's what we'll put on the gravestone. In his strength.