

Maybell ~~the~~  
Martin (boyfriend)  
Loyce & Fern  
Boote Moore

(get into dope fiend's head)  
- she's about to be arrested,  
has hurt the boy herself, & get  
their pity)

Marcha

Thorton  
Grandparent  
Nancy (Loyce)  
Luebeck  
(Fern)  
child  
like Elmo

What you have to do is hit it just right if you're  
coming to <sup>for</sup> money -- first of the month, ~~when~~ <sup>when</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>change come</sup> checks come in, But Marcha not here for  
money. Not this time.

She turns the radio lower & jitters with <sup>the</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>truck</sup> up the  
rutted lane, on alley between pole thin pines. She's  
just lit a cigarette, so she doesn't want to put it out,  
it's her last one -- no need wasting it. She pulls  
over on the dead grass yard, littered with cottonwood  
leaves, like ~~scattered~~ <sup>crumpled</sup> ~~paper~~ <sup>trash</sup>, and switches off the  
truck. The blue trailer hums with the sound of quiet. Not  
even on TV. <sup>or</sup> <sup>Bub</sup> <sup>one</sup> <sup>one</sup>, she says to the <sup>daily</sup> boy  
beside her and gets out. She sucks on her cigarette  
then catches him when he reaches the side  
of the truck seat, her side.

The child grabs her around the neck, then settles  
on her <sup>right</sup> <sup>heavy</sup> <sup>for</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>small</sup> <sup>child</sup>, where she shifts him to manage her  
cigarette between ~~two~~ <sup>two</sup> fingers of her left hand.  
She sees the gold curtain part on the <sup>trailer</sup> window  
over the front, and walks on across the  
sunny dead grass & <sup>(wd)</sup> <sup>(new)</sup> <sup>(word)</sup> <sup>word</sup> whispering leaves.

On the trailer concrete doorstep, she sticks the  
cigarette between her teeth & knocks on the second  
door with her free hand. She knows they're in  
there; she starts to knock again, let them  
know she means business. She's not

leaving the time till she sees them.

"Come in," says Faye in her curdled voice. A note depended to be friendly; Marcha had not expected <sup>her stepmother</sup> Faye would be friendly. She doesn't care.

Marcha opens the door, steps inside, then reaches back to close it with smother from her nose streaming out to the blue sky, bright in contrast to the dim living room of the trailer. She can smell crackling corn bread or maybe plain, and knows the boy ~~does~~ <sup>is</sup> by the way. But titch, he does too.

"Come on in," says Faye, rocking in her recliner rocker, a Taylor, the fancy kind.

Feman, in the next identical chair, just sits there with his fingers laced, glaring up at her from onyx green eyes.

"Have a seat," Faye says.

Marcha sits <sup>on the sofa</sup> holding Barb on her lap. Her jeans pull across her smooth fat belly. Barb scottles down & toddles <sup>in his diaper</sup> on short legs to the woodheats in the middle of the room.

"That's hot boy!" says Faye & reaches for the child but <sup>then she gets</sup> ~~Marcha smother~~. The boy toddles back to his <sup>his</sup> mama & leans against her blunt knees. She smother.

"What's got you out & moving the furniture?" says Faye, setting back.

Marsha should say something. She doesn't know how. She just says it. "I'm looking for somebody to take out here."

"You mean baby sit?" says Faye.

"Turn around, but," says Marsha. He ~~turns~~ <sup>turns</sup> she presses her face on her cap, lefty ~~the~~ his shrunk <sup>brown</sup> t-shirt with the hand holding the cigarette. "See that," she says, thumbing a hand print down on the boy's back, then sliding his drape lower to a mean red burn. "Cigarette," she says & seems to catch herself holding her own cigarette above her braque ~~skin~~. She holds it between her lips.

"How'd that happen?" says Faye.

Feman shifts his black ~~lace~~ <sup>leather</sup> shoes on the tile floor, grinding true back & part from scattered from the stacked wood by the back sliding glass door.

"How'd that happen?"

"~~Oh~~ Sorry -- old boy it in being with -- done it," The cigarette is burned to the ~~the~~ filter & Marsha looks for some place to stub it, old fuddy none among the clutter of ~~to~~ paper & scraped down cloth, gets up and tosses it out the front door.

"How come him to that?" says Feman.

"Meanen," says March, sitting again. "Now  
~~See~~ come I'm trying to get her a place  
to stay." She nods at the boy, with his face  
on the <sup>couch</sup> sofa.

"Why don't you just get shed of the boyfriend?"  
Marcha don't answer. She wants another  
cigarette and she's just finished one. Pot's the  
same way, one leads to another.

~~Up the~~ <sup>short neck, screwed</sup>  
~~eyes~~ <sup>watch</sup> Marcha <sup>eyes</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>lowered</sup>  
~~eyes~~ <sup>watch</sup> the boy. "If the Lord had meant  
for nigger & whites to mix, he'd of made 'em all  
one color."

"He ain't no nigger in him," Marcha says;  
"He's Booth's, up and down."

Fernan says huh, gazes out the door where  
chickens peck at the raw dirt.

"It's on his birth certificate," says Marcha.  
"Blood & Inheritance."

"You oughtn't of done that," says Fernan,  
saying at her again with his pinched mouth  
like no words have come out. One tooth down on  
top, just as if he's toothless, but one's just  
stuck lower on gum longer.

"Where's Betty & Sandra?" says Marcha.

"School," says Faye. "It's Monday, you  
know. School day."

"They ought to be on in in a minute, huh?"  
"Two o'clock." Faye gazes at the clock  
over Fernan's wavy blonde head. "Don't  
don't come till four."

"They ask about me?"

"Not so you'd notice," says Faye.

"It would be bringing some bubble gum  
something." Thinking about the store reminds  
her of the cigarette she got out of.

"Don't let Fern see you 'nouse," says  
Faye. "Make it the little bottle. 'Can't afford carrots'."

But she stands up, holding the bottle toward the kitchen  
~~the south side of the~~ of the living room.

"He's starving to death," says Marcha.

"When'd he eat last eat?" says Faye.

"This morning," Marcha's not sure that's  
right; he was with her Mamma last night  
& all Marcha knows he might not have  
eaten since she left him. She's not even  
sure she fed him yesterday.

"Go get him something," says Fernan, stony  
straight ahead, like he's just agreed to  
to pay when he'd sworn off.

Faye stands up, ~~stopping~~ <sup>stopping</sup> to square in her pants  
she'd want, and goes into the kitchen, talking to  
the boy Marcha than the child, "Losh like you

man would figger out where he had come from,  
don't it boy? She glance back at Marsha  
~~to see if she had~~ <sup>if she had</sup> "It didn't."

"We done took two of your hands," says  
Ferna, "ain't taking no more."

"He ain't got no business around \_\_\_\_\_,"  
says Marsha,

"Amen!" Faye sets the boy on a spot at  
the oversized ~~table~~ table & begins spooning  
butterbean with ~~her~~ hands to her mouth. She  
twitches her bare toes.

"Ain't taking no bigger youngsters," says Ferna.

"He got the same Daddy Betty and Sandra do."

Marsha ~~was~~ ~~she~~ could eat a bowl of ~~beans~~  
beans, like usual, She sniffs her <sup>opposite</sup>  
right pointer finger to make do

"Betty & Sandra's ~~same~~ <sup>blonde</sup> as ~~Beth~~ ~~war~~."

Faye is up for a fresh towel to wipe Bub's face  
on. She has the spoon, feeding herself. She  
takes it, feeds ~~him~~ <sup>himself</sup> into the bowl of  
beans. "Don't go slighting Beth and her dead ad  
in her grave."

"You ain't dealing with no bunch of fools," says  
Ferna, leaning forward now with her hands  
shinned between his sturdy legs.

"But fake after my Mom's side of the family," says March. "Dark-skinned like that -"

"Ain't none of 'em I ever seen with <sup>dark</sup> ~~dark~~ like that." Faye ~~stretches~~ <sup>stretches</sup> one of Bill's ~~eyes~~ <sup>eyes</sup> at an ~~if~~ <sup>it's</sup> ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~on~~ <sup>on</sup> ~~hair~~ <sup>hair</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~chained~~ <sup>chained</sup> ~~by~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~his~~ <sup>his</sup> ~~hand~~ <sup>hand</sup> ~~all~~ <sup>all</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup>

The craving for a cigarette over whelms March. "Well," she says, <sup>sturdy</sup> "I reckon we'll be good."

"He ain't finished yet," says Faye, showing her teeth to the dog's mouth.

March sits, ~~staring~~ <sup>staring</sup> thru the sliding glass door with Christmas ~~stars~~ <sup>scallops</sup> ~~like~~ <sup>like</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~carved~~ <sup>carved</sup> Christmas snow, a Santa Claus is stacked near the division of glass. It's January, springlike, and she can ~~see~~ <sup>see</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~line~~ <sup>line</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~corn~~ <sup>corn</sup> ~~praying~~ <sup>praying</sup> ~~toward~~ <sup>toward</sup> the yard. She's missed another Christmas, Dede ~~isn't~~ <sup>isn't</sup> ~~going~~ <sup>going</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~get~~ <sup>get</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~girl~~ <sup>girl</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~present~~ <sup>present</sup>. But ~~even~~ <sup>even</sup> ~~if~~ <sup>if</sup> ~~she~~ <sup>she</sup> ~~had~~ <sup>had</sup> ~~thought~~ <sup>thought</sup> ~~about~~ <sup>about</sup>, she had no money. Bill's ~~effort~~ <sup>effort</sup> barely paid for her ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~cigarette~~ <sup>cigarette</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~beer~~ <sup>beer</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~dope~~ <sup>dope</sup>. She'd quit. "If you can't get it, ... She loved grasspot, but no better than cigarettes. Though if the price kept going up on cigarette, she might just start smoking ~~grass~~ <sup>grass</sup> again. If she could get it, when she was with Booth, getting dope was no problem. He'd work all week on the county roads -- job ~~Gen~~ <sup>Gen</sup> get him -- just

(rewrites) - give believable, real situation  
to buy a good supply of pot for lots of them.  
Not \_\_\_\_\_, the stove and scalded and was  
still broke half the time. Co came, same thing  
that killed Booth - which she got blamed for by  
Faye & Genov. They acted as if she'd actually  
forced him to overdose. And, truth be told, Faye  
& Faye had taken the girls before she could give  
them, and accused her of taking up with \_\_\_\_\_  
before Booth died. She had \_\_\_\_\_; if she had she would  
be the one dead, not Booth, because Booth would  
have killed her for going into a nigger.

The boy trotted back to the heater & curls like a cat  
before it, while Faye covered bowls of food for Marsha  
to take home. It's 3:10 and Sord & Betty  
will be in soon, so Marsha knows Faye's  
apart for her to learn. She's over her  
craving for cigarettes now - thinking he got  
habit on one long craving, one more shit - habit  
to back - if how she quit before. She wonders  
what it would feel like to have no craving at all,  
and test it by feeling the conjuring - ~~hell~~  
to work. She doesn't want it. She watches  
the boy, curled chubby & thick, sucking his thumb,  
and knows she can't take him - no matter what.  
Know it's over. That when there is no



more crying, it's over.

"Can he just lay there awhile?" she says.

"You ain't trying to pull nothing, are ya?" says Fernan.

She nods, swallowing. She doesn't want to cry. She's never cried. Even her mama says she never cried. Even as a baby. She doesn't know how it would feel. Sometimes she pinch herself & can't even feel it. Her skin is plastic. Slight pink & soft & rounded, but has no feeling. She knows what Fernan & Faye have said should hurt her feelings if she had feelings. It's the way to people talking to her that way, because she always acts out feelings. She can't remember ever having had feelings. She can't remember ever being cared - - not really. But maybe she really cares now. Maybe she cares about Bub and what will happen to him with            next dope fix.

"He ain't hurting nothing," she says nodding to the dog now bump into his thumb hanging from his black mouth. Slits of his dark eyes peep shy close, long black lashes resting on his tarnished solder eye sockets.

"If ya ~~don't~~ come back by dark," says Faye, "we're bringing him to ya."

Manche nods, get a nap, staring at the

Use fresh what's  
detail of events about  
Luz's home

boy, They all are, Like he's a ~~young~~ boy  
~~was~~ as fireplace. The weather is, like his feet  
of like he's running in bed drawers. Goes still,

"I'll see if all," Must a say - a you  
out - ~~The sun~~ walking across the yard  
~~until the sun overhead shines to the~~  
pickup in the open sun.

This time she'll do it ~~the~~ time she'll  
hang herself. The ~~has~~ final crawling

