

Just rough draft

Chapter 2

need uses of turpentine and resin

Mae

One of five children, Lola was reared by many but mostly by herself. Her mother was more often drunk than sober after her father deserted them when she was six years old. The quality of life, for them improved somewhat after his departure because incidents of drunken abuse by him on her and the other members of her family were frequent and voitable.

Lola ^{Mae} Brown was born in 1937 and reared in the small community of Seymore, Georgia, population approximately two hundred. An exact census would have been impossible due to the constant turn over of ~~the~~ its inhabitants. Originally the settlement was established by the Seymore Turpentine and Lumber Co. for the purpose of housing labor to extract the raw gum from the mature pine trees surrounding the flat-wooded area.

(scenery) long leaf yellow pine

The tall pines bearing the bands of white paint, signifying ownership by the Seymore Company, were designated as turpentine trees by the ^{wooden rider, whose job it was to ride the woods overseeing the job done by the} workers, occasionally ^{who were} being tempted to skip trees around the ponds and swampy areas infested by the cotton mouth moccasins.

In this section of South Eastern Georgia there are four distinct seasons. The winters at times bitterly cold with temperatures frequently dropping into the low twenties and thirties. During this time the new crop, or virgin trees, were hung with tins ^(which served as funnels) and clay cups ^{to catch} to catch the gum which later in the spring would begin to run. A healing streak was cut with a hack to seal the tin to the trees and in March, when the weather would become warmer and the spring rains would set in, a streak would be hacked every other week ^(to cause the oozing gum to run) this process being referred to as chipping boxes. The filled cups were emptied

GEORGE

Mr. Lee. The starkness of the white in contrast to the unpainted structures emphasized the stratification of the residents. Scraggly mimoso trees ^{scattered randomly} appeared on each side among the sooty behaia grass which covered the continuous yardage. A huge, majestic oak draped in gray moss defined the boundary of the painted dwelling and a few azaleas and spanish bayonets ^{single impression} gave the only feeling of something having been planned. Clusters of unlabeled mailboxes perched on fence posts in front of the commissary ^{ACROSS THE ROAD} ~~giving~~ ^{provided} the only indication of outside communication. *(Description of commissary)*

It ~~was~~ ^{was} in one of ~~the~~ ^{the} shanties that Lola was born and reared. Her father working the turpentine timber for the Seymore Co. until the wanderlust nature overtook him. ^{AND} Her mother ^{working} as a maid for Mr. Lee ^{WIFE (JUNE)} ~~was~~ ^{was} able to remain. ^{was} At the age of 8 years, ^{joined} her older siblings working in the fields of the nearby row crop farmers. It ~~was~~ ^{was} then that Lola quit the public school which ~~was~~ ^{was} located about ten miles away; a non-descript little one-room school with the rancid smell of unwashed bodies ^{chalk dust} and it ~~was~~ ^{was} just as well that Lola ^{discontinue her education} quit her education because often hungry and barefoot in winter ~~she~~ ^{she} couldn't concentrate. Days at school ~~were~~ ^{were} spent in sitting doing nothing. Not daydreaming as some, but thinking about how she ~~was~~ ^{was} feeling at the moment. ~~The more physical aspects of life~~ ^{took} taking top priority ^{AND} immediate needs ^{were} more pressing than long range goals. Concerned about whether her feet ~~were~~ ^{were} cold or feeling sleepy ~~and~~ ^{and} most times giving ^{inadequate} ~~an~~ ^{inadequate} rest resulting from late hours kept the night before by her Mama and Big Mo frolicking. ^(insert scene) ^{was} Mama always laughed ^{ed} so loudly with Big MO, that ~~no one~~ ^{sleeping was difficult,} ~~could sleep.~~ ^{could sleep.} Having only two rooms in the shanty, with no door, ^{allowed for little} ~~gave~~ ^{gave} no privacy and the merrymaking and loving ~~was~~ ^{was} experienced by all. Two old mattresses partially covered the bare splintered floors with an old table and two spindeled, rickety chairs and a cracked, ^{black} east iron woodstove completing the furnishings.

The darkness of night ^{was} alleviated by the illumination of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~single~~ ^{single} kerosene lamp in the ^{only} ~~dark~~ ^{dark} ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~mosphere.~~ ^{mosphere.}

Sturdy, rough pine boards of varying sizes formed the exterior
of the shotgun style, ^{tin roofed} coamessary which served as meeting place
a gathering place for the members of the community as well as
the only shopping facility within fifteen miles, ^{laying the turpentine}
^{vehicles for transportation were scarce}
and field hands with no other alternative ^{since} ~~front porch~~
^{therefore placed the copiers on sleepers}
offered which ran the length of the front of the building
^{the front porch} offered a place to rest on benches ^{on} ~~and~~ ^{from} ~~the~~ ^{same} ~~lumber~~ ^{as} ~~the~~ ^{walls}
post corner post ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{other} ~~end~~ ^{nailed to the} ~~end~~ ^{on} ~~each~~ ^{end}
beached a young ~~beach~~ ^{girl} could display her virtues
and hopefully ensnare a passing ~~beach~~ ^{young} man, a housewife
could exchange the latest gossip ^{with their} ~~could~~ ^{would} ~~try~~ ^{try} their
~~mother~~ ^{patience} by ~~standing~~ ^{hanging} precariously over the sides.
Workers could ~~eat~~ ^{eat} vent their anxieties and dream ~~among~~ ^{among} the
either verbally or silently while munching on one of
the ~~edibles~~ ^{edibles} purchased from the shelves which lined the
inside walls of the store. ~~It~~

(Light provided by kerosene lamps)

The wooden slat windows which ~~had~~ ^{had} long ago ~~lost~~ ^{left} their latches ~~fasten~~ them completely at the mercy of the elements, likewise the walls unceiled ~~had~~ so many cracks that the winter winds whistled through chilling those who ~~were~~ ^{were} not passing the ~~xx~~ moonshine bottle with Mama and Big Mo, from "over the hill". ^{para} Big Mo, once a fighter in Atlanta, ~~had~~ ^{had} to quit when he reached ~~the~~ ^{the} point of not winning anymore, ~~but~~ ^{but} still ~~has~~ ^{maintained} a powerful build but now used his muscles for the more practical purpose of swinging a hack to scar the pine trees ~~and~~ ^{and} causing the ~~xx~~ gum to run down into the ~~g~~ ^gups in hot weather. Many ~~have~~ ^{have} said that Big ~~Mo~~ ^{Mo} can chip as many as three thousand boxes in a day ^(over scene) jagged, light-colored scars protruded over one cheekbone and on his chin as evidence of a life in the boxers ring. ^{AND} His thinning hair ~~was~~ ^{was} the only indication of more years behind than ahead of him. Big Mo's main interest in Mama ^{was} the availability of ^{moonshine whiskey} moonshine, which ~~is~~ ^{was} always on hand because ~~xxx~~ of the meager amount earned by Mama working for the foreman ^{wife} at the ~~pa~~ ^{pa}inted house ~~of which~~ a goodly portion ~~goes~~ ^{was used} for the white ^{lighter} liquor. If Mama ~~knows~~ ^{knows} this or that Big Mo ~~is~~ ^{is} more interested in her daughter ~~than~~ ^{than} she, it ~~is~~ ^{is} never mentioned. Lola's older sister, Rosie, ~~now~~ ^{now} 14, tried to ignore the powerful hands that probed and pinched but rather than suffer the abuse of the swift kick or fists more often ^{would} give in. Lola ^{also} occasionally feels his wrath if he noticed her or stumbled onto her cotton mattress, his large fingers digging and inflicting pain ~~are~~ ^{were} only ~~more~~ ^{more} of the ordinary discomforts of her daily ^{life} ~~life~~. Mealtimes at the shanty consist ^{ed} maily of beans and fatback ^{wit} occasional turnips or collard greens supplement ^{the} diet, and even fish, if Lola and her older sister and brother ~~are~~ ^{were} lucky enough to catch something on the makeshift poles of tree branches. The Alapha river, proliferate with bass and catfish, frequently yeilded to the patient fisherman ^{AND} Game in the form of deer, rabbits, ^{COON, SQUIRRELS} and possum ~~are~~ ^{were} plentiful for those with a gun or trap. Dove

~~17~~

The ^{combination} woods rider and foreman

The vibrant, husky voice could be heard at frequent intervals, distinctly pronouncing his name for the combination woods rider and foreman to tally the number of ^{boxes} ~~logs~~ he chipped. ~~Mo!~~ ~~boom~~ ~~solidly~~ ~~and~~ ~~for~~ "Hack! Hack! Hack!" "Mo," ~~came the sounds~~ ~~the~~ ~~repetitious~~ and solid sounds reverberated ^{through the woods} ~~throughout~~ the day above the continuous harking of the other workers and the whistling March wind.

and quail abounded but ~~were~~^{were} reserved mainly for the property owners sport. Lola's family having few resources for procuring these delicacies, though, sometimes ~~were~~^{were} fortunate enough to have possum when some generous neighbor had more than they can use for a meal. Many times Lola ~~would~~^{would} sup on a cup of black sand, a practice which she ~~still~~^{CONTINUED TO} indulged later in better times. Once ~~at the age of nine~~^{during the toddler stage} Lola ~~was~~^{was} found convulsively vomiting worms. ~~THEN~~^{THEN} Nature having rid her tiny body of some of the terrible parasites returned her to ~~HER~~^{HER} heretofore relative state of health to continue life as before. ~~Sometimes~~^{Sometimes} in the afternoon before Lola quit school ~~she~~^{SHE} would go over to the painted house around to the back door and sit on the wooden steps to wait for her Mama to finish work or help with some of the ~~chores~~^{OUT DOOR}. The foremans two young daughters, ~~ages 8 & 10~~^{near her own ages} would play on their ~~xx~~ tire swing in the back yard and Lola would watch and think how pale and lifeless they were. Occasionally they would become animated and taut her with words like "nigger or "blackie" ~~but~~ Lola ~~doesn't~~^{didn't} mind because she ~~was~~^{was} born knowing those words in relation to herself. Nigger ~~was~~^{was} a word her mother used for her ~~often~~^{often} She laughed with them and ~~they~~ ~~seem~~^{would} confused t hat their jeering ~~doesn't~~^{didn't} provoke her. Usually their mother, Mrs. June, ~~would~~^{CALLLED MIZ JUNE BY THE BLACKS,} reprimand them and they ~~would~~^{would} return to play or disappear behind the white door of the house. ~~As~~^{As} Mama ~~would~~^{would} finish for the day. ~~Mr.~~ June ~~could~~^{could} be heard giving a half-hearted warning about her not drinking on the job with Mama replying affirmatively. Sometimes if Mama was in a good mood, or could inconspicuously sneak a quick sip of whiskey behind the ~~big~~ oak tree, she would ~~give~~^{generously slip} Lola a penny to go to the commissary accross the road for five silver ~~xx~~ bell candies. Those beautiful, silver-foiled chocolates in the shape of a bell were the most beautiful things Lola had ever seen. Mr. Lee, also the store keeper, would ~~patiently~~^{impatiently} hand her the candy as her eager little fingers would grab, being careful to avoid touching the white hand

Commissary

Rough ^{vertical} ~~plank~~ boards encased the shot-gun style store ^{topped} with a corrugated tin roof which made ticking sounds in the hottest part of the summer day or gave off shrieks during a windy period. The front porch, which ran ^{the} length of the building, accommodated ~~two~~ benches on each end made of boards left over from the ~~store~~ ^{sides}, which were nailed from the walls to the supporting ~~four~~ by four posts. ~~Plank~~ shelves, containing various canned goods, clothing, shoes, and many home remedies, lined the interior of the store, with a wooden counter holding the cash register and account books placed along the right wall. The rough wooden floor contained a sanded ~~trail~~ along the counter from ~~front~~ customers shuffling while waiting their turn.

The commissary not only served as a store but also a train depot for those wishing to travel ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~the~~ ^{the} Valdosta ~~area~~ ^{area} and a ~~more~~ central ^{gathering} place for the members of the Seymour community and other surrounding areas.

extending the precious morsels. Lola would rush out and sit on a bench against the wall of the front porch. ^{commissary scene description} Savoring each chew, ^{the candy} Lola would sit and listen for the sound of the train whistle which indicated ^{that the train} ~~that train~~ would be ^{passing} ~~coming~~ by shortly on the track running beside the commissary. The loud noise would make Lola's heart ^{beet so fast} ~~beat so fast~~ that she felt she would burst. Once she tried to count the cars but realized ^{and that} she could not ^{count past ten} ~~she started~~ just ^{SIT} feeling her body responding to the sound and vibrations. ^{para} In the late evening the turpentine workers would come into the commissary for some sardines or beans or whatever ~~else~~ they could ^{purchase with} ~~get~~ for their small wages. An account would be kept in a large book for each worker, the amount of the items purchased deducted from their pay at the end of the week. ^(commissary description) Lola, swinging her feet on the bench, would smile and make some comment to the passers-by from her perch. ^{AND} Many ~~xxxx~~ would return the greetings unceremoniously. ^(para) Temporarily soothed by the gluttenous reprieve, Lola would begin her slow saunter home, feeling the squishey sand and frequent jabs of small gravel meeting the resistance of the ^{ALREADY} calloused soles of her ~~feet~~ feet. The sun sinking low, ^{bringing} a dusky hue to ~~the~~ her surroundings. ^{para} Lola would sniff the scent of bacon frying from the shanties she passed on her ~~sojourn~~ sojourn. The smoke rising from the brick and tin chinneys added a dimension of serenity to the advanced evening with the gait of children at play and dogs barking now and then giving to Lola an awareness of herself and others simply being. Her small arms bared in the ^{harsh} cotton shift, long ago discarded by someone, she could feel the goose pimples produced by the now chilling evening ^{Air} air. Drawn to a fire built in one of the yards to ward off the cold, an old lady kindly warned her to "git along home". Rushing her pace now, Lola approached the porch of her shanty. jumped over the broken bottom step without missing a beat, ignored the splinters prick at her heel, giving the starved ~~mutt~~ mutt a tug on his tail and entered the den of noise that ~~is~~ ^{was} home. The →

MUTT

smell of frying fatback and hoe cakes permeated the small dwelling and Lola
~~is~~ ^{was} once more hungry. ^{para} Her mother ~~is~~ ^{was} away at ~~the~~ "Abes" ^{and} her sister, Rosie,
~~is~~ ^{was} cooking and yelling at the younger children to "hesh up". As she finished
 the preparations for the meal each child grabbed some meat and bread and ~~sets~~
 on the floor, getting up occasionally to drink water from the tin ~~dipper~~
^{in the} ~~the~~ pail on the table. The younger children continued to cry and ~~were~~ finally
 given a piece of hoe cake "to hesh ~~them~~ ^{them} up". ^{then} As the evening meal ~~is~~ ^{was} finished,
^{ONE AT A TIME, THE} ~~by the individual~~ children ^{would} they lie down on whatever space ~~is~~ ^{was} available on
 the mattresses, oblivious to the cold ~~now~~ seeping ~~in~~ into the small shanty.
 Lola, ^{who had} ~~having~~ just drifted off to sleep, ~~is~~ ^{was} awakened by Mama and Big Mo returning
ⁱⁿ inebreated joviality, ^{They} pushing ^{her and the other 2 children} from the mattress ~~her~~ and ~~the other four children~~
 onto the cold floor ~~in~~ where they maintained fetal positions and ~~were~~ lulled
 back to sleep by the animal sounds of the coupling two. ^{para} Sleep ~~seemed~~ ^{was} only
 to have just begun for Lola when the sound of a truck horn awakened her and
 her ^{older} brother ^{Jim's} and sister, ^{Rosie, they} ~~making~~ ^{made} a dash for the door in the early morning
 darkness, ^{SCURRYING} ~~scurrying~~ ying onto the labor pickup with the other workers. ^{Then}
 curling into a ball ~~Lola~~, shivering from the early morning coolness, ^{Lola would} catch
 a small nap on the drive to the field. Awakened again upon arrival, an owl
 hoots ⁱⁿ in the ^{semi darkness} distance, ~~and~~ Lola jumped down, grabbed a bag from a stack and ~~runs~~
 along beside the other children and adults to the cotton field. Long rows
 of cotton plants ~~defoliated by sprays~~ glared back at her from the morning
 now ^{growing} ~~becoming~~ lighter from the rising sun. Lola scratched her head and yanked
 herself awake to ~~begin~~ the long trek down the rows, oblivious to the rough
 bushes scratching her nimble fingers. The incessant chatting of the field
 hands ~~begins~~ ^{begins}, increasing as each sack ~~begins~~ ^{begins} to fill. ^{begin} Dragging the sacks back
 to the end of the row where the scales await ^{and} the boss, ^{begin} tallied the
^{para} poundage by each name. The slow ascent to the endless rows ~~begins~~ ^{begins} again.
 Numerous tales of perilous past experiences and lovers trust ~~over~~ ^{over} the objects

of conversation among the women as the children absorb^d and file^d away for future reference. The sun emits^d a warmth to the cotton patch and Lola feels^{it} the spread of the glow on her skin as she picks^d and reeals^d into the bag over and over again until it ~~is~~^{was} filled. When the sun ~~is~~^{was} directly over head the workers ~~are~~^{were} notified by the honking horn to break for lunch. Loading^{para} onto the truck again, Lola deposits^d herself on the rear of the truck, skinny legs dangling, in order to feel the tickling of the grasses and weeds beneath her feet as the truck moves^d along the path to the main road. The truck stopp^d at each house, depositing its^d cargo of field hands at their respective dwellings to eat a quick lunch and be picked up again after a brief time. Lola, ^{and Rosie} ~~her brother and sister~~ hop^d off the truck as it slows^d in front of ~~the~~^{her} shanty, trail^d inside, grab^d leftover hoecake from the night before and hurriedly ~~eat~~^{eat}, arguing among themselves about how much more who had than someone else. Lola fills^d her mouth with the crusty, greasy bread and washed it down with water from the tin dipper; ~~Having~~^{THE LAST REMAIN'S FROM} lick^d her fingers she once again ~~lay~~^{lay} down to enjoy a short nap. The truck horn sound^d, the field hands reload^d onto the truck now resounding with loud voices, jesting and laughing, renewed from the lunch and rest period; off to the fields to begin again down the infinite rows and ~~Lola and her peers~~^{the children} revel^d in the merriment of adults not too angry by fatigue which ~~would~~^{would} inevitably come by the end of the day. ^{para} A young boy of about 16 seems^d enamored by Rosie, ~~ALTHOUGH SHE WAS~~^{SHE} a bit thin and lanky from too little to eat and too much hard work, nevertheless had filled out in the right places, and even with the constant frown, she ~~is~~^{is} some what pretty. The boy, George, blackened already by the sun, muscles ~~gleaming~~^{glistening} with perspiration, even in the cool of the early fall day, ~~is~~^{is} handsome by the ordinary standards. A cocky grin, ~~seemingly~~^{seemingly} to be painted on his face, exposed wide white teeth. ~~George starts~~^{THROUGH OUT THE DAY HE STAYED} as close to Rosie as possible and seems^d more

interested in her than getting the cotton picked. Rosie gave him an occasional half-smile, which for anyone else would be no smile at all, ^{AND} Lola overheard snatches of the conversation, mostly one sided, as George tried to entice ^{Rosie} her to join him after work that night. Rosie finally submitted to his charms and he danced a little jig, ^{pl} hoped a few cotton rows and ~~seems~~ contentedly ^{continued} picking cotton.

Completely weary now, the sun lowered ⁱⁿ in the sky, the truck horn sounded and the field hands filed past the scales with their bags, depositing and getting tallied and loaded onto the truck. Lola sits ^{at} on the back, ^{EXHAUSTION CAUSING HER TO} now forgetting the grass tickling her feet. Rosie and George have paired off, ^{AND} ^{WERE} sitting close together on the side of the truck. A few good-natured remarks concerning them ~~were~~ exchanged by the others. ^{AND} Rosie frowns ^{but} slightly less than before. As the truck begins to slow at the first shanty, the workers unloaded and two houses from Lola's she ^{Hopped down} ascends with the others to walk the rest of the way, ^{in order} to smell the ~~fragrance~~ cooking food and watch the dusk turn to darkness. Upon arrival at her house, she smells the fragrance of possum and taters cooking and heard Big Mo's booming voice and ^{he} knows he brought something to eat in exchange for Mama's hospitality and ~~is~~ her gnawing stomach reminds her to be happy that he ~~is~~ ^{is} there. ^{there}.

(~~scene at meal time~~)