

(19) Stinker - big boy in boots B. Oon
Beaver - Billy (14)
Knocker (16) - Frank's friend (Earl)
 Hazel - mother
 Junior Hill type -- daddy -
 Time - present
 setting -- low white house (junk) like people Frank's friend
When You Whistle, the Wind Will Blow
 (believe in yourself)

Motors

Wind Around Resistance
Seller of Purple

present time

Tally shouldered a bare pole ~~and staggered~~
 from the raft of odd lumber under the pecan tree
 & staggered toward the ~~catanovian~~ ^{catanovian} frame of
 the tractor barn in full sun. ~~Knocker~~ ^{Knocker} hammered
 nails into a crosspiece with a side angle from
 a side ~~angle~~ ^{angle} with his sandy head cocked & his
 mouth full of nails and ~~knocks~~ ^{knocks}, beer caught
~~against~~ ^{against} the ~~point~~ ^{point} ~~post~~ ^{post} ~~post~~ ^{post} ~~post~~ ^{post}

The dirt drive through alongside the low white house
 was paved with Spool cans like a cobblestone street.

"Man, I gotta have me a dip of Spool," say pee-wee,
 holding to the rickety corner post and leaning himself up.

His bare chest in harbor, brown, concave. He is
 wiry, has a weak voice but is mean as a snake. Tally
 had tangled ~~with~~ with him -- doesn't mind -- but steers
 clear of him generally. Knocker is the one he's helping
 to build the tractor barn for his old man.

Had water
Rohm

If you whistle, the wind will blow
1960 Prologue (make your own fate)

Mama
Cecily

read
bottom
to top
correct
order

Talbridge
~~Tally~~ Tally would like to go back. He'd like
to go back to before before ~~the~~ Junior &
~~Panel~~ ~~the~~ ~~black~~ ~~girl~~ ~~broken~~ ~~up~~ ~~and~~
~~the~~ ~~sky~~ ~~stomper~~ ~~boots~~ ~~pointing~~ ~~up~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~
~~head~~ ~~down~~ ~~sun~~. Before ~~Peewee~~ or maybe
~~Knocker~~ ~~Junior~~ cussing & carrying on with
his ~~square~~ lips drawn or ^{called} red with ~~him~~ and
~~his~~ ~~eyes~~ belling while her tiny red dog ~~jumped~~
~~off~~ from her shoulder bag. To before ~~Peewee~~
~~Knocker~~ ~~Stinker~~ or maybe even ~~Knocker~~ ~~Stinker~~
~~knocked~~ ~~me~~ ~~off~~ ~~my~~ ~~feet~~ ~~or~~ ~~knocked~~ ~~me~~ ~~off~~ ~~my~~ ~~feet~~
~~but~~ ~~knocked~~ ~~me~~ ~~off~~ ~~my~~ ~~feet~~ ~~or~~ ~~knocked~~ ~~me~~ ~~off~~ ~~my~~ ~~feet~~.
~~to~~ ~~go~~ ~~back~~ ~~to~~ ~~before~~ ~~Knocker~~ ~~or~~
maybe Tally ~~had~~ suggested felching the
jug of moonshine from the tractor barn ^{tier pole}
~~paint~~ ~~is~~ ~~posed~~ ~~to~~ ~~air~~ ~~7~~ ~~spoon~~ ~~to~~ ~~mean~~ ~~with~~
~~the~~ ~~old~~ ~~man's~~ ~~dog~~ ~~dip~~ - and ~~about~~ ~~the~~
~~big~~ ~~red~~ ~~her~~ ~~drunk~~ & then get drunk them selves. She's
dead, man, she's dead. To before, they -- all of them --
~~fork~~ ~~turns~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~black~~ ~~girl~~ ^{stopping to get} ~~tray~~ ~~eggs~~.
(Was that before or after the shine?) To before
Tally came to be Peewee's fit when he ran
out of Skool. ~~Before~~ Tally came ~~to~~ ~~help~~ ~~his~~ ~~sis~~
a tractor barn for the Suggs, ~~to~~ ~~before~~ ~~he~~
~~was~~ ~~born~~ ~~ever~~ ~~met~~ ~~the~~ ~~Suggs~~ ~~left~~ ~~home~~

full moon - - no lights just
fire

with a curly curl topped black mustache, eyed
her. ^{Thrust black eye} [a young black man with a tapered face
his left eye squinted, squatted on the edge
of the porch] ^{set}
The fat blonded fellow ^{staring off to porch}
his beer on the edge and baby was toddled toward
the road.

"Shaw" said to the ^{boss} man; "BT there'll
help you. He's a regular mechanic."

"Shit!" said the ^{fat} man with the
black bushy beard. [Bossman sends Ronce to check truck]

Shelby peered behind the ^{slender} ~~fat~~ man
in ~~the~~ bid-like white ^{slender} ~~fat~~ man
sawing canvas shoes.
Feeling easier - - if the men had been going
to try something, they would have already.
She blew at her reddish curly bangs
kept walking.

When they got to the truck it was graying gray
dusk and mosquitoes buzzed around them ~~and~~
~~the man~~ ~~the man~~.

"Wants name that hard ma'am?" ^{He didn't look at her}
shy. ^{She} Made Shelby feel more confident. ^{She}
He got in and pulled the hard latch, and felt
~~lost~~ lost confidence when he couldn't ^{latch} the
latch on the hood & she had to get out & ~~left~~
show him.

Propping his hands on the ^{case} ~~side~~ of the engine,
he peered inside, his long wavy hair crawling
in he studied. "Look like you could a bound
the engine, ha 'am."

Dry smell of tobacco

had rosy into the snuff, sent

Duke family --
Mother Duke, Tom --
Earl, husband, wed

She felt Tom's now, looking down at her strong
thighs as she walked the sandy road toward
the house, listening to the men, now shuffling
about the porch, not hooting, but talking, laughing.
At the open front weedy yard, she, doing
slow, didn't take her eyes off the men talking
leaning against the porch posts.

An old house with one end of the porch
collapsed, the beaten tin along the fluted
of eaves buckling.

Something ^{rebellion} about the men being in such a
run-down place, the kind of place Shelly had seen
all over S. La., setting ^{with sacredly} ~~the~~ the earth
after the family had moved away or died.

"I need to use your phone," she called, stopping
under the dying magnolia, facing them. ^{Pickup parked}
~~part of door.~~

"The phone," said the wiry man with gray
whiter gray hair. "I'll hear that?" He was
wearing a gray suit -- neither young nor old
but worn & screaming.

"Ma'ang'tter ain't no hotel," said the
burly man with a bushy black beard & laughed in his beard.

The other laughed, shifted, ^{slung} from car
to her.

"Got car trouble?" said the ^{black} ~~black~~ ^{with} ~~with~~
swart black, fat blondish man, with a round
sweet face.

"My truck broke down up the road there,"
said Shelly. "Need to call my daddy."

Here, Her eyes strayed to the end where
the porch had collapsed, where a barefoot man

a black man

Made sense to Shelby. Hope. She got out, "Guess it'll help on home then," she said. "And I sure thank you."

He ~~also~~ slammed the hood, brushed his hands, and stared ~~down~~ the road toward the home.

Shelby looked ~~to~~. Already set to walk, Shelby glanced back and the other men ~~was~~ were walking toward the truck in a line, just their shapes visible in the gray dusk.

Should she run now? Had they come to help?

Her hair prickled.

"Blow the engine," yelled the fat blond man, ~~watching~~ ~~staring~~ as if he knew ~~the~~ ~~she~~ ~~would~~ ~~do~~ ~~it~~ what would be ~~done~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ spot where he stood. No need wasting energy.

Shelby starts walking ^{walking} toward the highway, hearing feet crunching sand behind her. Past the truck & coming. She walked faster, noising & hoping they don't hear her moan. One laughed, then another. She ~~starts~~ trotted, ran. Breaths coming in gasps. ~~The~~ Bug is ~~starting~~ picking her face. And then a hand gripping, grabbing her shirt sleeve, ~~tearing~~ ripping...

Moonlight

It should have been over then. After they dragged her back, kicking, biting, screaming, but it was just beginning. What she'd heard about a dead about a ^{problem} ~~problem~~ ^{was} as somebody else

Even the shy flat blade fellow - ^{BJ} ~~they~~ they called him - "there's he said ~~that~~"
"Sorry Ma'am" and gave her hope. So she was raped - they had to kill her.
"I want to go home now," she said and being said it realized how stunned & near to be beaten she was - So dumb - The barefoot wild man into the curly mustache, who was standing in the doorway of the way room of the falling pond, ^{snorts} snuffled & looks his foot from the door jamb.

"Says she wants to go home," he says to the other in the hall and snorts again. They laugh.

"Belind I'll have me another piece." The big burly guy with the bushy black beard. Shelby know them now - personally. But not names - ^{about the} ~~about the~~ ^{buffs} ~~buffs~~, who she hope & pray if all she's belind about good & evil in true will help her from the filthy nest of ~~gentle~~ in the empty trashed room back to the truck. ~~On home~~. When she's still, she feels fine - amazingly well unbroken - but when she moves, she feels every ~~think~~ ~~bruce~~ ~~from~~ ~~straps~~ ~~she~~ ~~seeing~~ think prints or grasping. Take dye on their hands.

~~no~~ lights ~~of moonlight~~ fire in fireplace - flashly to

A hand of warm clammy flesh brackets her ankle, yanking and she recoils forward, knowing it's a human hand, snatches around and jerks the man with the curly mustache from his post by the wall where she'd first seen him. He snorts, whoops, ~~grabs~~ ^{grabs} on top of her. A beer can rolls & beer trickles to the dirt off the trap to cracks, a peaceful slow gurgle that gets lost in the ~~scramble~~ ^{scramble} to sound of feet scrambling her own scrambling & scrambling of the curly-mustached man's ~~breath~~ ^{breath} & snorting and other feet scrambling from the lit room at the end & along the porch.

"What you got her out here for, boy?" says the screaming man

"Tried to get away," he says. He laughs in her ear.

Shelby places her face on the cool plank & listens to the beer ~~gurgling~~ ^{gurgling} dipping to the dirt.

The fat blonde man swings from the porch holding to a post, and the porch gives, cracks. He paces the yard, rubbing his head back, gazing slowly at the curly mustached man & Shelby glided front to back. Shelby feels something hard form between her buttocks & the fronts of the man & knows what's coming up and damn it want to hope that the blonde fat man is feeling scared or guilty or sorry and might ~~help~~ ^{help} tell everybody to let her go. [The blonde man]

Gray man orders the man on top to let her go, calls him "Boy" again, not joking but man & she has another name to hold in her head, along with BT and

Have black man here

- surely someone will come by & see the truck
- nobody lives on the road (graded road)
have her thinking that Daddy will be out looking ^{suspect truck quit}, but
~~won't be looking on the short cut she took on a whim~~
The chance seems insignificant. She will die this
time. She believes that when she escapes from the
conversations that fat man has no more power than
she.

He keeps pacing & saying they ought to let her
go before somebody comes by & sees the truck.
"My daddy is gone he looking for me," she says
and the mustached man ~~grabs her hair~~
& yanks back, lets go and her chin knocks the
floor.

"Where y'all live at, girl?" says the ~~big~~
barley man with the bushy beard. He stands
propped against the dark wall with one ^{both} foot behind. "I
am I near you around here."

Shelly doesn't answer. The ~~big~~ mustached man
sits straddled her, grinding into her buttocks. Then
he stands, drops his pants & grinds into her, pants
& rodsing.

Shelly starts to cry. The other laugh.
"Man, I am I never!" says the ~~big~~ blond man,
pacing the yard. He scratches his crotch, watching.
"Boss man," he says to the screaming gray man, "let 'em
do y'all get while the getting's good."

Boss man shuffles to the edge of the porch & leans
watching. Barley man takes off his boots & britches, ^{breathes}
A few minutes the mustached man ^{grinds} pushes in,
shudders & lays on top of Shelly like a bed.

"Get on off a there," says the barley man &
sets his beer can door by his boots.
"You boys get it good," says boss man, "this is
your last piece for the night."

Black
man

Monday

"Well ^{me} I ain't wanting no more," says ^{b. J. +} ~~fat~~ ^{fat} still pacing the yard, but Shelby know they're not through, just that he'll be next or maybe last and what does it matter, all that matter is bearing up under the ^{sackhammering} ~~blows~~ ^{weight} of the one on top right now.

He's done. He's getting up. She tries to straighten her ^{best} ~~back~~ ^{spine} ~~back~~. She waits. Listening to their talk with her face buried in her arms locked overhead. And feels another one, heavier -- fat ~~black~~ man? -- straddle her rump like a horse. Talking on -- Bossman to B J, then Stinker (the burly bearded one has a name now) ^{and the boy} and prefers the dirty ~~words~~ ^{talk} ~~they~~ when they'd raped her the first time to this incessant chatter. ² ~~There~~ more to go. And then she remembers Bossman's last attempt, how he'd hunched & grunted and with drive, 30 seconds maybe, and know she can last at least that long. Then what? Will they kill her will they let her go? ^{Whichever} ^{she} ^{has} ^{to} ^{do} ^{he} ^{flattens} ^{himself} ^{on} ^{her} ^{back} ^{and} ^{she} ^{whispers} "Hide in ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~collapsing~~ ^{collapsed} ~~porch~~ ^{porch} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~wait~~ ^{wait} ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~them~~ ^{them} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~go~~ ^{go} ~~out~~ ^{out} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~here~~ ^{here}."

Boss White she lies there, still face down ^{and} ^{she} ^{is} ^{not} ^{sure} ^{if} ^{she} ^{can} ^{hold} ^{out} ^{for} ^{long} ^{enough} ^{to} ^{see} ^{them} ^{go} ^{out} ^{of} ^{here} sucking ^{the} ^{dirty} ^{through} ^{the} ^{crack} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{floor}, ^{Rawley} ^{says} ^{they} ^{are} ^{not} ^{there} ^{yet}. Bossman decide to go after more beer. Leaving Stinker & B J ^{Rawley} ^{(black} ^{man)} ^{the} ^{guard} Shelby. She listens to the truck pickup roar & clatters up the road and fade out on the highway.

^{Rawley} ^{is} ^{more} ^{eager} ^{than} ^{ever} ^{to} ^{go}, ^{pacing} ^{the} ^{yard} ^{again}, while Stinker sits against the wall black ^{marking} ^{from} ^a ^{beer} ^{can} & smoking. He quarrels with B J for a few minutes, then his voice begins to dray. Shelby slowly moves her head so she can see them; Stinker with his big beer head slumped, barely visible in the

(mosquitoes)

against the dark wall, where at the end of the porch, flashlight glows from the opening of the screen door. (Describe)

She holds her breath, watching BT amble toward the magnolia, unzip his pants and take out his fumbling & peeing. She begins to scoot backward toward the collapsed end of the porch, slowly & silently up on her hands & knees she turns & crawls across the crisscrossed boards, this time creeping to the left under the low-hanging rafters of the porch. She can make out the window where she'd crawled through by the dim glow of a fire and decides to try to get to her clothes. But just as she moves her right knee, she hears BT yelly at Stinker.

"Where's she?" he holler. "Where's that gal?"

"Huh?" says Stinker.

"What'd you let her get away for?"

Foot pound on the dirt, then another set, thudding along the porch, then jumps to one ^{in the yard} ~~in the yard~~, circling the house ^{shouting} ~~holler~~ & roosting.

"Bossman's gone hell us," says BT.

"Well she ain't gone far," says Stinker. "Hey, girl. You better get on here before Bossman gets back, you hear?"

"It's get you flashlight," says BT, "she's about up under the home."

Shelly shudder, quits breathing, listening to the a door on one of the pickups squeak open & slam shut.

She discovers that by peeping thru a crack in the collapsed roof, no more than ~~the~~ 3 feet high, she can see them on their knees, sharing the light underneath the house.

Wooty

"Could be anywhere up under yonder with all them blocks," says Stinker.

"Gemma go on around to the other side," says BT and takes the flashlight. "You stay here & look out."

Shelby watches the light out of sight around the copped ^{of} ~~end~~ north end of the house & the ~~corner~~ where she hides. When he comes back and then, "Hey, bring the light on back," yells Stinker. "I don't know where she is at."

Shelby draws into a ball and presses lightly against the slanted wall of the collapsed roof and watches the beam play thru the triangular space where she had crawled. ~~It's~~ ~~two~~ ~~feet~~ ~~high~~ ~~at~~ ~~raw~~ ~~boards~~ ~~colored~~ ~~boards~~ & piece as short T piece of ~~raw~~ ^{pine} boards opening to the window, and then her crawl space blinding off. ~~She~~ ~~stares~~ ~~her~~ ~~eyes~~ ^{watching the light} play strikes exposed nails above & around her but not on her, the men so close now she can smell ~~the~~ ~~cigarettes~~ & bear tobacco & beer.

The ~~light~~ ^{beam} draws back, she breathes.

"Well, all it gotta say is, we's better find her before Bama comes," says BT. Dope says "ain't no girl"
 "Katie goes up in there"
 "he does in grade"
 "he's pickin' his root"
 "he's here"
 "down"
 "enter"
 "her"

"~~Let~~ ^{Go} check around them oaks," says ~~Stinker~~ ^{Stinker}. "You to" Get you that other flashlight ~~out~~ ^{out} of my truck and check that patch & dog ~~pen~~ ^{pen} out there. ~~She~~ ~~can't~~. Her voice fades to ~~fade~~ ^{fade} the front of the house.

By a truck door open & closed & Shelby peeps thru the crack to watch one bear angle around the low-hanging oak out front, the other on the south end of the house where big ferns grow 6 feet high.

She herds together clothes. If she can get her clothes & shoes head out the back she might be able to follow the river to the Mayday bridge & walk the woods along the highway, not a mile to her home.

She ~~promised~~ ^{she wondered what} her daddy is out looking by now that her whole family is going crazy with worry. ~~and was~~ She wonders what time it is and is glad to be thinking of time & routine & clothes to keep and not keying in on her body. When she starts to ~~crawl~~ ^{creep} toward the window she steps on a ~~step~~ ^{step} ~~saddle~~ ^{saddle} & feels sick but refuses to think about it. What if she leaves a trail - blood? what? -- they might look again.

Moonlight

When she gets to the ~~peepholes~~ ^(more triangular) Rhomboid of moonlight, she peeps around the fallen section of the porch and can see BJ still scouting the dog kennels then an old ^{hayrack} tobacco barn, but not ~~Stinker~~, hidden behind the fallen section of the porch.

Her teeth ache, mosquitoes whine, light bites, but she doesn't ~~touch~~ try to wave them away. She itches all over. Aches. Her back throbs. She crosses the path of moonlight to the window, crawls in and across the moon-streaked floor to the heaped trash & clothes until she locates her red shirt & jeans ^{adored of her ~~Stinker~~} ^{Easy now}. Watching both men scouting the road, she steps into her jeans, zips & snaps them. Pulls her shirt over her head & with out setting, slips on her safe shoes, all the time ^{alternately} ~~watching~~ ^{watching} out the window & searching for her other ^{white tennis shoes} ~~shoes~~. Finally, she spins in a nest of old papers near the door, tips over ~~slip~~ ^{slip} slipper at once, then tips both shoes with her eyes on the summer moonlight up the hall. She tips out, looking north at the

* steps on a nail

(Go back, have them search the house)

And the hall which is blocked by the fallen porch, then south where it opens into the porch. She can go out there; they might see her. She can hear them talking, coming back across the yard, but still a safe distance away, and ducks into a room -- so many rooms! -- where moonlight shines through a broken window.

(Glum & to ask everywhere.) This was they're getting closer, quarreling, the window. If she left the broken window the remaining triangular broken pane might clatter to the floor. She waits ~~then~~ ^{away} types toward the south end, searching for doors, gets to an old kitchen with a fire in the fire place & spies ^a door opened to the back, but the voices have gotten closer almost to the porch and there is ~~the~~ ^{the} screened door opened that opens onto the porch the one she'd watched the firelight through while they raped her last time.

Suddenly she hears the pickup roaring back getting closer & hears Stink & BJ's voices coming trailing toward the road.

Rover "Hey, one helluva 'She got away.'"
"What ya mean she got away?"

Shelby ~~begins to the door, no space~~ ^{begins to the door, no space} ~~out the back door~~ ^{out the back door}, a long drop to dirt and is shocked at how bright the ~~sunlit~~ ^{sunlit} field is, ~~that keeps her eye on the border of trees where she knows the river runs.~~ ^{that keeps her eye on the border of trees where she knows the river runs.} If she can just make it to the trees... She runs, not looking back, and trying not to listen, expecting a hand on her ankle again, and the pickup truck over the hilltop of sand & pretty plain, woods drawing near. She can see an

owl highlighted in the top of dead black gum
and feel her watching her. Full moon overhead
like a raw potato slice. Almost there
almost to the tree line in eclipse of moonlight
the trees. Hearing at the house, truck down
& engine roaring, rushing to house but
not before she lands in the shadow.

She stops, looking back, & sees the circle of
head lights around the house, then shines
across the field and she starts running
again, through the ~~dark~~ ~~moonlight~~
shadow of moonlight thru the trees, keeping
her ears tuned now to the run of the river
and down & stops, down & turns even when she
gets to the shimmering black water, downsloping
sliding along bamboo & sand to the soft
~~water~~ closure of water, struggling, swimming against
the current where down she slips the railroad
trestle, and beyond that the concrete bridge. Red
behind her, yells & cursing, 'open in the moonlight
& visible, she treads up into the scalloped-sand
shallow and ~~penetrates~~ ^{into} the shadow of the trestle when
the ~~watch~~ ~~current~~ ~~slap~~ ~~layers~~ ^{pressure} over the filtering bed of rocks,
and on, eyes on the bridge ahead, ~~step~~
giant bar of sand and the moon overhead, ^{enemy} ^{helps} ~~open~~ ~~her~~
~~way~~ spot lighting her way ahead & her below for
two men to follow.

~~But~~ But treading the ~~shallow~~ ^{dark eddies} along the
east bank, ~~she~~ she is suddenly aware of the silence
made almost visible by the ringing of kathy did &
the gurgling of the current and no more shouts from

the banks behind.

Almost to the bridge, just not more than 100 yards away, and she'll heed up & along the woods by the next to the highway.

And then she hears trucks roaring again up the dirt road where her truck quit & into the highway, and she darts back, scrambling up the brushy bank to the rail road track and hopes across to cross the along the opening V of moon-glittered rails.

Almost home now. Almost there. Almost there. Hidden by ~~the~~ ^{the} strip of woods between the highway & the tracks, she can hear the peckysal motor up & past back and to, but never see her where they are almost a rock-throw away. ~~She's~~ ^{walking now,} ~~glorify~~ ^{glorify} in the fact that they can't see her where they are almost a rock-throw away. ^{Suddenly she is as much as she had hated the flatland, after the hilly ground of eastern Jersey she's not losing it. For the stretch, nobody's about here, at least.}

The moon is overhead which means at least mid night that her mamma & daddy & Grandma & sister & brother are worried beyond worry, frantic but she it's almost over. Soon she'll ^{get to} ~~step off~~ ^{step off} the tracks ^{at the} ~~break~~ ^{break} in the tall conical pines & step off the tracks in front of her daddy's new-old store and into the yard of the white home facing the tracks and they'll be waiting and she'll say her mamma will say "Where in the world were you?" And she'll say... Her knees buckle.

Describe
Mama
here
few more

Chapter 2

Walking on, slower now, safe from view of the highway & the menacing ^{sound of} slow-moving trucks, she decides not to tell. ^{Try to tell} (she can't tell the picture every thing blowing up: her final year of school at the new school in Covington; the friends she might have ^{but then for she} (schooled at home first time in her daddy's store beside her Grandma's house & shorts. Shock on her ^{people's faces or her own} neighbors' faces, maybe pity. Or disbelief. But most of all she tries to imagine ^{in your} how to tell, what to say, what he would say if she told, how she would say it. ^{Maybe long to face these same men again at a trial -- she's heard stories in Eastern Tenn about raped women being tried on trial.}

The trucks have gone now, ^{trucks} ~~trucks~~ ^{trucks} fading out in the west, and ahead is only the silence of insect hum & crows & moonlight showering over the woods of the rail road tracks. Her wet clothes cling, make her itch. And ~~she~~ suddenly she feels mad, walks faster, sad and glad at once, as she sees the opening in the trees, home. Her knees begin to buckle, her face and she begins to cry, ^{of to the angle} seeing ahead ^{now} a blur of trees, her Grandma's white house ^{with all the windows blazing, the light on the porch burning against the ~~dark~~ sandy moonlit road by the ~~side~~ running along the tracks.}

And she doesn't care how she tells it, just

to
going
doctors
question
conspiration

describe
Mayday
few neighbors
road winds
to church
& neighbors
houses

That she can tell it.

Stepping up on the bright porch, staring thru the split door window, she can see her mama with her reddish hair coiled on top of her crown, fanny and watching the children sprawled on the board floor, asleep. Everybody there in the long ~~dark~~ ^{old-fashioned} living room, except her Gramma & her Daddy.

She ~~opens~~ ^{tries} to knob & can see her Mama's sun-pied face left ^{to compare} "Oh my Lord," she says "Oh my Lord." She stands, sliding the chair beneath her back and lurches toward Shelby. ~~She~~ "Where in the world ^{were} you?"

"Il... il..." Nothing comes while she rocks in her mama's strong arms.

"You ~~are~~ wet all. Why're you wet?"

"Il just... il..."

~~She~~ ~~had~~ ~~gone~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~children~~

Shelby's ^{years} sister, Emie, with long legs braced around books, shifts on her pallet, curls & sleeps again.

~~She~~ ~~is~~ ~~staring~~

Her mama shivers, "Your daddy is fit to be tied. ~~They~~ Been out riding up & down the roads for il don't know how long. Even called the ^{sheriff} ~~sheriff~~." "Mama, il gotta tell you," Shelby breaks free to step out the door and her mama follows, closing it. Her face looks pale ^{under} the porch light.

"Il been raped."

"What... raped?"

"A bunch of fellows"

"A bunch of fellows?" "Steal her money
held to the door knob. "Where?"

"Oh Mama, what'd I do was took that
short cut part the way along the river when I got
off Cornville Road. The truck broke down
I had to go to the old home to call
y'all, and..." She cries. Her ears roar.

"Lord help us!" says her Mama and hugs
her again. "Are you bad hurt?"

"No'm," says Shelby, "not so it shows." And
then she looks at her wet red shirt & jeans her
soggy shirt. ^{x dropped my pants} "What do we do now, Mama?"

"Who was it?" says her Mama. "Was it
anybody you seen before, maybe at the store?"

"No'm, not nobody we know."

"Let's go put you in a tub of warm water,"
her mama says, ^{top opening the door again.} "When
your daddy gets here, we'll decide."

Shelby follows her to the bathroom tucked onto
the old home off the hall and while her Mama
adjusts the water, Shelby sits on the toilet
& listens to the creaking road & smells the
sweet-soapy smell. She yanks a towel from the
rack on the wall near the sink & brushes her face in it.

While she soaks, alone in the steaming white light, she
listens to the children being walked to their beds -- "She's
home, she's alright," her mama says -- and then her
daddy's truck, which sounds like a different from the
other trucks but makes Shelby shiver, and at last,

She tells
her mama
she stepped
on a nail

what she's been longing for, her mama
daddy tuckin' on the front porch, loud & low, loud &
low again.

Then steps coming toward the bathroom
door. "Ya alright?" Her mama.

(Close) with teeth
"Yes ma, just a minute." Shelly eyes her ^{stocky white} body
with the thumbprint bruises and scraper, thinking it
should show more damage for all her suffering. If
she looked lower...

She stands & drum & steps on the clean
cotton print skirt, a bra & a shirt. She'd expected
again when her mama had left the bathroom & come
back with a folded stack of clothes. And this
mean they would be going to the sheriff's office
in Cornersville? In the middle of the night? Ten
miles away? She feels tired, suddenly, that's
all. Just wants to sleep.

When she gets to the living room

Not a sound in the house but Grandma snoring
when Silky turns from the hall to the living room,
she finds her mama posted on the couch and her
daddy in the straight chair where her mama had
set. His head is on his ^{rough} hands. She stops in
the doorway, thinking he hasn't ^{heard her} come in,
then he says, "I called the sheriff's wife, honey;
she advised him to come on."

"Here?"

"Yeah." He looks up, stretching his pale blue eyes,
or if he has read in them.

Shelly sits next her mama who is surging
her foot ^{just short} of the ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{garnish} ^{then} ^{and}
coffee table. ^{white} ^{rocker} ^{door}
a little, a picture in a sturdy frame of ^{the} ^{man}

describe
home
opening
it
was
in
innest

More emotion on Shelby's part
Grandpa. ^{Shelby's} ^{last} ^{time} ^{she} ^{did} ^{it} ^{to} ^{spring}

Atmosphere

When someone in the family dies, a photo appears is excavated from the looney pictures & placed about, or if now it's O.K., now that he's dead, it's not an unmodest thing to exhibit pictures.

"Why don't you go on to bed, Jewell?" he says, ready back.

Shelby's ^{grand} ~~mother~~ ^{mother} has a look that says, cuts her green eyes at him. Shelby has never heard them quarrel, but has seen that look before, and then they do things his way. Not this time, Jewell's it.

The clock on the mantel ticks. Shelby wants ~~to~~ for ~~to~~ discuss the rape, with ~~them~~ 'she dreads it, and with every tick of the clock it's coming closer. And suddenly it's as if the real nightmare is just starting, and she wishes she'd never told and goes over in her head what she could have said ^{instead} if the truck broke down, "I got lost. I had a fit" (she used to have epileptic seizures).

Finally they hear a car ^{over the railroad tracks} bumping ^{slow-moving} with its head lights flashing on the front window, and her daddy gets up, ~~but~~ ^{he} hits his gray tulle pants & crosses to the door. Going out, he rubs his hand across his thinning ~~brown~~ hair that is ~~losing~~ ^{turning} from color gray over brown.

He closes the door, and Shelby knows they are talking low at the sheriff's car. ~~She~~ Shelby watches her mama's inscrutable face as if she's trying to hear what they're saying. ~~Now~~ Shelby longs to speak, but now it's as if her mama would rather be quiet.
has switched to eternal silence.

more emotion

When at last the engine on the car quits,
the clock ticking picks up its winning
rhythm, and the foot steps on the porch
and both men come thru the door.

The sheriff, - a short squat dark man with
a tapered head, ^{close set blue eyes} - steps thru the door
behind Shelly's Daddy with his cap on his
hands. Walking slow, talking low, as if
somebody ^{had} just died.

"How y'all ma'am?" he says.

"Have a seat, sheriff," says Jewell &
slide to the edge of the couch.

"I ain't got but a minute ma'am," he
says ^{with} his ^{eyes} set blue, stare fixed on the picture
of Jewell above Shelly's head. "Earl, I reckon
y'all best to get settled in here," he adds,
^{twirling} his cap.

"Yessir," says her daddy, steady with
his arm crossed. ~~Ma'am~~

"How's them Dickey?"

"Oing fair," says her daddy. "Nolhy to
speak of. Diddy 's dying set her back."

"I have good of y'all to move on down here &
take over the store." Still the sheriff
stares at the picture, "Where ya hurt Sester?"

His question comes so suddenly that Shelly
wonder if he 's speaking to her.

She clears her throat. "Saw?"

"Honey," says her Mama, putting a freckled
hand on her knee. "Sheriff wants to know if

your heart."

"Yes, Sheriff," Shelby looking down at her ~~own~~ hands.

"Where, boots?" says the sheriff.
~~She looks up hoping he's looking at her but~~
he's not. None of them are. If they were, they might guess, without her telling.

"She don't know who it was, sheriff," says Jewell. "Wash & nunn laid eyes on 'em."

Waddy shifts feet, recross his arms.
"We don't know many people here now. Used to, 'l did" comes Jewell, there's, lived her whole life up in them Tennessee hills. He laugh, but it's so too bad & laugh you might hear at a funeral -- meant to sound brave.

~~"You're the~~
"Things is shore changed," the sheriff whistle, suck. "A bunch of meanness, 'l tell ya!"

"But you do, see a sight in your line of work," says Earl.

"Wouldn't do to say here in front of them ladies?"
The sheriff says, looking over Earl's head now at the ~~light~~ ^{light} of two ~~light~~ ^{light} about the TV.
"You get any names, best?"

"One was B J -- big fat black fellow. He fits One war Boy -- that's all they called him -- had a curly black mustache."

"Huh," says the sheriff.
She stops, starts again when the sheriff don't say more.

more notes

At night

"They was one by old heavy set feller with a black beard they called 'Stinker,' she feels such reciting ~~the name~~ but better being able to at last ^{of the} ~~find~~ ^{find} this fellow in a gray suit was named Bossman."

"Uh huh!" This time the sheriff's uh huh has oomph. "Well then I reckon it's about time me & Mr. Bossman had a 'little talk.' Act as if he's"

"You know him but going out the door - straight to talk to Bossman - but turn, turning his cap gain // "I'm shore glad you got a fix on 'em," says Earl and look speak I drawn & relieved ^{and Earl and boy and Sheriff -- he's too} ^{helped me get away [the moral paper]}

"Yep, Bossman & his boys gets a little rowdy now & then, and I have to call 'em down."

reaction to black man Sheriff will get him

Shelly wonder what her daddy told him ^{when they were} out out there. Did he say they raped her or just punched her up? She starts to just say it, but the Sheriff speak.

"The 'an ol' 'n shore glad you an an I (Earl) hurt no worse ~~than~~ you are." ^{She stepped on a nail (Earl)} ^{Go to Clinic in Conville, get} ^{Get out (shot.)}

"We thank you, sheriff," says Jewell and gets up & crown to the door, saying ^{shin out} ^{to Sheriff}

"I be back with y'all in a day or two" he says. And she closes the door.

Sat mid Aug

The next morning Shelly lumbered listening to her Diddy go out the back door & open the door of the store, her Granin grumbling in the kitchen, and the children laughing. A bird sings outside her window in the pretty pink crepe myrtle. The train passes (describe ^{caught up in the sound} ~~heard~~ ^{released})

If she don't move, she don't hurt. So she lies there. If she stays she won't have to face what comes next. She sits up. The whole world should have stopped after what happened last night. But everything is going on as before.

Not quite.

"Shelly," her mother calls, knocking on the door. "Your daddy wants you to go over there with him & pick up a check on the two-ton. I've gone keys to the store."

My God! Not there. Not now. ^{one minute to the store till he gets back!} Her name

Set on up now, sugar foot. ^{the} She ~~listens~~ walks away talking to Granin.

Shelly listens to hear if they're talking about her. They're not. They're talking about the corn coming in in the garden. About putting it up whether to freeze or can. Whatever has been told to Granin & the children about Shelly being missing last night, has passed. She wonders what.

Get into her skin -- see place - atmosphere --
for ride to get two-ton

Riding with her daddy to get two-ton, she expects to see some sign of her baby walking, ~~two~~ railroad tracks but only ~~see~~ ^{see} ~~just~~ ^{just} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~wood~~ ^{wood} ~~rocks~~ ^{rocks}, and then signs of the truck along the highway -- only occasional tree marker that she's seen before -- ~~foot prints~~ ^{foot prints}. She expects foot prints in ~~the dirt~~ ^{the dirt} under the peaceful amber current as she gazes off the bridge.

Expects her daddy to say something. Nothing. But after he turns off onto the dirt road, and drives across the railroad tracks, she sees foot prints ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~two-ton~~ ^{two-ton} ~~up~~ ^{up} ~~ahead~~ ^{ahead} with its door open.

When she sits back, sucking the hot air thru the window she realizes she's been sitting forward and checks her Daddy's calm red face for signs that he's seen what was ~~on~~ ^{on} the tracks or the highway, but what is on the dirt.

He gazes out, his square jaw turtling, till he gets to the two-ton & stops in front.

From where she sits, she can see the front the open dirt yard, the dead magnolia the front porch with its caved front section. No sign truck, no men, ~~no~~ ^{no} ~~sound~~ ^{sound} just the calm -- induced by ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~coming~~ ^{coming} of a morning dove.

"Reckon we bruther well see if we can get it going." He gets out. "Been lookin

Atmosphere

for that old engine to ~~take~~ ^{use} any more. Using too much oil." He checks the back of truck to be sure all groceries there (not stolen)

She gets out and stands gazing at the rusty ~~front~~ ^{front} of the fluted gables.

"From about getting that box of tools out of the back," he says and gets in the truck to flip the latch.

She lifts the greasy metal box of tools from the bed of the blue pickup & lays them to the front of the truck, studying ~~them~~ beside her Daddy as he gazes under the hood.

"Could be the carburetor," he says. "How it sounds before it quits."

~~That~~ "Kind of sputtered, then just quit."

"You have it in second?"

"Sir?" She is watching the collapse & section of porch where it hangs from the front wall. He speaks up & says, "Did you have it in second?" ~~She~~ — then looks at her.

"Third."

"All that sand ...," and then he gazes at the road, at the foot prints, deep tread shoes & plenty boot prints. He ~~looks~~ ^{looks} begins working on the carburetor. He works for a while, half tools from the box or ordering her to.

The done over. The breeze lifts in the big oak ~~next~~ ^{next} to the yard. Suddenly she has to speak, to know what next.

says he asked sheriff not to make a big stink
he is more concerned with the black man issue

"What did you tell the sheriff last night?"

"The truth. He don't look up. Tell the truth, & the rest of it'll take care of itself."

"What did Man tell you?"

"What happened?"

"All of it."

"Whipsets God so, boy, they ain't no more Hood
meat ~~of~~ ⁱⁿ quarter-inch assant."

She had him to crescent & gone to set up
the two long, fanning goats with her hand. In
a minute he walks to the truck window,
brushing wiping sweat with his sleeve.

"Listen here, girl. You gotta brace up. Forget
about it, I got them a war that away." He
starts back to the raised hood, stops & stare
at her thru the big-crusted windshield. "Bin 7
nobody mad at you nor nothing. You hear?"

Sandra Dale at
class

Stonewall

Chapter 3

Mid-August ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~sun~~ ~~was~~ ~~scorching~~ ~~the~~ ~~pace~~, which Shelly
in ~~trying~~ ~~to~~ ~~put~~ ~~aside~~ ~~like~~ ~~her~~ ~~Daddy's~~ ~~war~~ ~~experience~~ ~~and~~
the wind picked up with fall-like

Come Monday and a warm breeze picked up off
Pender Creek behind Gramin's house, but the weather
is muggy & overcast, and everybody but Shelly seem
to have forgotten the incident of Fri night. Life for
the Knight's leveling off on Sat after Earl got the tin-tin running,
and seemingly completely leveled off on Sunday when they
went to church and ~~no one~~ ~~mentioned~~ ~~even~~ ~~asked~~ ~~how~~ ~~Shelly's~~
~~bandaged~~ ~~foot~~ ~~was~~ ~~doing~~. Not even big-eyed Edie ^{with the baggy long eyelids} who told Shelly
that the children had been told that Shelly got off redy ground
in ~~Valdosta~~ ~~and~~ ~~got~~ ~~lost~~. Bingo!

But then Jewell announced ordered Shelly to go to
the Health dept. in Cornerville for a tetanus shot.

This time, Shelly drove her Daddy's blue Chevy
pickup, keeping her eyes peeled along the ⁵⁰ ~~while~~ ~~driving~~ ~~route~~
along 129 for Bossman & his boys. ^{the pickup or} ~~she~~ ~~didn't~~ ~~recall~~
forking from the 2-lane gravel highway into ^{pine} ~~that~~ ~~wooded~~
that reminded her of the one where she got raped. But
she was ~~OK~~ ^{not} ~~now~~. And besides, she couldn't ever
recall what their ~~pickup~~ ^{pickup} had looked like except
that a couple were high fat high on giant wheels.

At the city limits of Cornerville, she passed
small frame houses on her left, and on her right
the old Simpson-Powder camp ~~where~~ ~~with~~ ~~sloped~~
whiteest houses left over when the ~~camp~~ ~~had~~ ~~only~~
industry in Swain County had run off of fat pine

stumps on the surrounding vast acreage of forests.
And as now part of the Negro quarter on the
left where ~~the~~ children barefoot black children scooted
across the highway ~~not~~ heading highway ahead of her.
She had to slow to keep from hitting on big yellow
cur dog they drove ahead and down the dip at
Troublesome Creek and stopped at the single
traffic light where 94 intersected with 129.

Post office on the left, north of the crossing,
and a red brick courthouse ^{to the left} just
a ~~the~~ convenience store on the adjacent corner and
a hardware store just north of the convenience store.
A few cars passed, wound, and a ~~the~~ woman idled
with a paper ^{back} of ~~the~~ ^{news} idled along the
parking lanes of the courtyard.

At her turning to the health dept, sat
a new hip-roofed ^{public} library on the right corner and
the sheriff's office on the left, between the courthouse
and the one-cell jail.

Steph Shelly pulled up & parked in front of
the health department, next door to the library, and
started to walk across the blacktop sidewalk and
ask the sheriff ~~what~~ she'd found out about if he'd
arrested Bosman & the boys. But halfway across
she changed her mind - he'd let ^{her} ~~them~~ know, and
besides, she didn't want to start everything again
& she'd ~~don't~~ just as soon no one saw her going
into the sheriff's office.

Up the black top road, at the end, sat the
post office, brick school she would go to in a couple
weeks. ^{intended} -- ~~her~~ ^{her} first ~~time~~ ^{time} at school a real school
for the millantime, she felt chills.

of anticipation thinking of all the possibilities of ~~the~~
she graduated. She - Not college. Not now. She'd
be doing good just to get a job, maybe
be a secretary in Valdosta, 25 miles west, that
for she could imagine that far she, no farther
if she might be able to persuade her mama
& daddy to let her work after school. Right now
it seemed that their plan for her was a continuation
of life-as-it-is, the Knight family's dream of
a new ^{house} on the old Knight place in
Mayday. But they only have enough money to pay bills - electric, grocery
She pushed ^{open} the heavy plate glass door and ^{hobbled} ~~walked~~
into the cool plant-filled dotted-walled lobby of the
health department, then up to the counter on her right
where a ~~tan~~ woman with glossy brown hair & ~~wide~~
high cheeks ^{sat} sorting papers through ~~manila~~
at a computer.

"Canal help
"Kay," she said in ^{a nasal voice,} "Give me ^{just} a sec," and kept
pecking at the keyboard with her long tan fingers.
Then she wheeled in her chair, facing Shelby. "Now,
canal help ya."

Shelby propped on the white Formica counter. "Yeah,
I got a nail in my foot & Mama wants me to
get a tetanus shot."

"You new around here, ain't you?"

"~~Moved~~ "I'm Shelby Knight, just moved here from
Tanner with my family."

"You don't say."

"You know Miss Dicy Knight at Mayday?"

"Lord, yeah, I been knowing Miss Dickey," she said and stopped the counter, "but she's tickled to death, having her grand young'un around."

Shelby laughed. "I don't know about that. Look like we get on her nerves."

"She's a cracker mess herself."

"Kind of afraid to get along with."

"OK," ^{the program} ~~she~~ ^{which} ~~she~~ ^{she} ~~has~~ ^{has} ~~been~~ ^{been} ~~around~~ ^{around} ~~again~~ ^{again} ~~later~~ ^{later} and pushed papers over the keyboard. "How give me your name again,"

Shelby tells her, watching Shelby Knight printed on the blue screen, and then her age; -- no record of previous communication, Shelby will have to get that. But no problem about ^{getting} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~boot~~ ^{boot} ~~later~~ ^{later} right now.

Shelby follows her down the cool white hall to a room on the left where a large, leardy woman with a pretty face sits at a desk.

"Wanda, we got us a girl here needs a tit nurse booster. Stopped on a nail"

And again Shelby goes back thru ^{back} ~~the~~ ^{back} ~~history~~ ^{history} her ~~family~~ ^{family} money to Mayday and Miss Dickey's orniery mess.

Both women ^{may be 40 45,} ~~women~~ ^{laugh} ~~talk~~ ^{their} ~~loud,~~ ^{voices} ~~showing~~ ^{showing} bouncing about the room. Finally the slim one with the boney brown hair goes back to her desk, and Shelby is left along with Wanda the nurse who gives the shot then unwraps ~~Shelby's~~ ^{Shelby's} foot & cleans it with a cresote like cleaner.

"How in the world do you get on a nail?" Before Shelby could answer, she added. "Banfonted"

could have Wanda go along with her - both of them knowing it's a lie, and knowing the other knows / better reaction from Wanda about black man "Worry, if I was your friend I'd keep my mouth shut about the black man"

No ma'am. Shelly is frustrated now, hobbles about the crowded white room, gazing at the red plastic laminated wall that says "reflective material, caution". "If you Sub to promise not to say nothing. We my name & daddy's done decided to let it go. Get on with our lives."

"If you gotta have a HIV test, that's one thing you can't get around."

"And if I got it...?"

"If you got it..."

"I got it, right?"

"There's all kinds of medicine now to help you live longer."

"What good longer?" Shelly starts to cry. "No ma'am," she says. "I ought not told. I oughta took my chances."

Wanda is eyeing her, the two open door. "Well, what you say am? Gang member but right here, but Bonnard then ought to be put away at least. Keep 'em from doing it again?" "But when they get out...?"

"Least they'd be in a while."

"I'd just as soon let it go, and fixer them out of my self. Mama & Daddy..." "I'll be back with a Daddy. You're the victim, you gotta get them then."

"I don't want to be a victim." Shelly cries harder, ~~the way they act.~~

Foster honey so hard that the Hall woman with brown hair steps to the door with her eyes at Wanda.

Wanda hugs Shelly. "Listen Honey,
I am & gone hell on soul. But if you're
you go on & think about it and if you
get back in here if you change an mind -
you need to get psychological help of some kind - just then don't let bare.
You can always get an abortion up to
the 4th or fifth month."

"Yes'm!" Shelly wipes her eye &
nose on her shirt sleeve, then the
slender one hand here & there.
She ~~falls~~ blows her nose.

Should leave around
Christ mass but won't

Nothing to think about really. If Shelly know
if her period doesn't start two weeks after starting school
she can start packing up to go back to her other
Mama's in E. Tennessee. And as far as
going to come strange to her ^{talk with her father, she'd just as} let her own head straight,
she'd just as soon deal with the rape alone.

A week passes and still no word from the sheriff and
Shelly can't help wondering if her Mama & Daddy aren't
relieved. They don't talk about it -- none of it -- and
Shelly finds that the ritual of cooling & cleaning & mending the
pore doesn't make ^{the} ~~responsibility~~ the rape less important,
just spells her from worrying. When she's still -- at night,
alone in her ~~room~~ ^{bed} in the room shared with Eulie -- she starts
worrying again about whether she's pregnant, whether she
has AIDS, and goes over in her head every word Wanda - the
nurse said.

III
III
III
III

Later, after school starts, she thinks of those nights and how
she should have been rebuking Wanda & Becky Sue's looks,

She honestly had & thought about other when the men were
raping her. Now she ~~thinks~~ ^{thinks} about it -- what if it's pregnant
what if the baby's part ~~black's~~ ^{black's} and recalls her mom and daddy's
reaction when she said the ~~last name~~ ^{last name} who was ~~black~~ ^{black} and
I might not have had his little talk with ~~Bonnie~~ ^{Bonnie} and a ~~three~~ ^{three}
& the boys -- Shelby might never know. If she's
pregnant, she's pregnant. If she has AIDS she has AIDS.
She only knows that being her made what's private
now public.

She wants to go back to E. Tennessee. She has
proof to make her mom & daddy let her -- if she leaves
she can start over. But if she tells them about
the rumors, she'll have to tell them how they started
and be telling on herself for telling. She places her
head against the ~~glass~~ ^{glass} and closes her eyes and hears
behind her somebody snuffling, then sobbing. She turns
around & sees Eulie ~~with~~ ^{with} her head on her books, her ~~hair~~ ^{hair} ~~like~~ ^{like}
"What's the matter, Eulie?"

~~Eulie has heard, but she doesn't~~

"Eulie shake her head."

"Look at me, sugar," says Shelby.

Black man is the issue. Eulie looks up with raw green eyes.

"What's ~~going~~ ^{going} on? Why're you crying?"

She places her head on her books again and

Shelby knows. Oh God! not the mother, poor
baby probably ~~doesn't~~ ^{doesn't} even know what ~~she's~~ ^{she's} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~happy~~ ^{happy} ~~young~~ ^{young} Eulie.

Shelby glances across the aisle at Buck & Buster

with their fresh crewed hair and shiny scalps as they
are holding their books & gazing out the other window.

Sad & sweaty & uncharacteristically silent. Then too?

Now the whole family has to talk -- no way around
it -- and if Gramma does & know and has a stroke
when she hears so be it. (She's lived a good ^{life} as
they say at funerals) Shelby might consider going to Tenn. to spare ^{love} the ^{make things}
family shame -- right now, she's hot, angry, hate-filled -- she'd
like nothing better, (over) →

So simple, life in the ^{poor} hills, where
you could go a whole month without seeing another person
except the mail man who ^{monthly} brought ^{from the sea or} sale circulars from ^{the mountains}
50 miles away, another world ¹ where ^{dark} ^(noise) ^{war} might be
conjured or ^(quiet) ^{peace} the kind of ^(quiet) ^{peace} that was
free & ever present ~~at~~ the farm at the end of the
winding dirt road through the green hills. At times
desolate & lonely, for Shelby, but now paradise. Stillness
as opposed to ~~the~~ motion, war as opposed to peace

might keep — but black man is
focus of the problem
conflict

X When the bus pulls off 929 to the narrow
gravel road that takes them past the Providence
Church & then two nearest neighbors, and
then Perdue Creek on a sharp turn, Shelly makes
up her mind to bring it up at supper.

But Aramie has had one her heart spells &
Genell has driven her to the doctor in Valdosta. That's
what the note on the door says. Shelly ~~stares at~~ drops
her books in one of the porch rocks & takes the
note down & goes into the kitchen where ~~Paulie~~
the boys are pulling into the refrigerator.

"Where's Eulie?" she says.

"In the pond. Bowling," says Buck & takes out
a quart of milk.

Shelly turns down the hall & goes into her bedroom.
Eulie is sprawled on the bed, face down, sobbing.
She sits beside her, touches her hot sweaty back.

"Eulie," she says. "Don't cry, honey."

She cries anyway.

"Listen, honey, I know why you're crying. I
understand."

"How come nobody told me?"

"Cause it was private."

"Huh!" She stops crying.

"I know."

"Everybody else knows."

"Your friends?"

"What friends?" She even yawns

Shelly sits gazing at the old night table ~~that she~~ ^{made of}
match at the bed. Tobacco sticks.

The
The
The
The

notes Shelly will talk to parents this evening about going back to Tenn.
But Sheriff comes, Race is in jail --

space
Enough. Shelly will go on back to Tennessee ^{present or not,} as soon as her Daddy can take her. After supper, she'll make everybody, including Grammie, ~~talk~~ listen while she talks for a change.

morozely
Eulie is now under the grapevine out back with the boys, picking and eating from the meager black pods beginning to ripen, while Shelly washes the ~~dish~~ ^{dish} left on the duncan.

*Booker
stay
on
pouch*

Going out to dash the water to the hydrangea by the back door steps, she stands a looking out at the tapestry of leaves & blades of grass on a back-balcony by the hazy evening sun. The place where they might be between the grapevine & Grammie's black gum on Pearl Creek & her Grammie's house, or where her new brick house might be which she'll probably never see now and hardly seem to matter with the hollowiness inside. As if something's been ripped free and left her a shell, if she could ~~and~~ stand like this in the warm sun, spelled by the dry rattle of locusts, and not move, she would be O.K. But she see ahead of herself the constant motion of living, of beating against the ideals of her family, of guilt, and the rage & despair of ~~not being~~ ^{not being} guilty the destruction of her innocence. ^{It isn't fair.} And hate is a new flame in her gut ^{scorn} that she'll never get rid of, which she'll keep till she dies.

She goes to the end of the porch to hang wet dishcloths on the cord strung ~~and to~~ from the corner post to the white wall, and sees the brown sheriff's car with its ^{gold} emblem, and a fire streak that he ~~has~~ ^{has} just pulled up in front of the squat, one-room store.

The sheriff gets out of his car & struts toward the front of the store, and Shelby ducks & flattens herself against the back porch wall till he gets inside. Then she hops off the porch & follows the dirt path through the high grass ~~off~~ along the ~~vertical~~ side side wall of the store to the back. Cow-corn crates & hard cans form walls under the back shed and she stands between the crates & the open door, hiding to her daddy & the sheriff at the front door.

~~As if~~ ^{guarded} rows between her & them, and she has to quit breathing to hear, and even then she's catching only fragments. She ~~slides~~ ^{plants} around the door into the dim store & hunkers behind between shelves of potted meat & sardines & canned tomatoes. In a few minutes, the two men come inside & settle into the two ~~strong~~ cow-hide bottom chairs on the other side of the shelf nearest the front.

"Jessie," says the sheriff, settling into the chair & crossing one leg. "It's shoe hot."

Shelby knows she hasn't missed anything yet -- every body starts out talking about the weather, ~~but~~ ^{But} then:

"So you say ~~the~~ the air / owned up to nothing yet?" says Earl.

"Don't know so," says the sheriff, raring back onto his small perch bowed, "we got the word on him."

~~Willie~~ "What about the others -- ~~the~~ ^{Bosman} ~~the~~ ^{Thompson} ~~white boys~~?"

"Well sir, if ~~we~~ ~~went~~ ~~on~~ ~~out~~ wouldn't I put it apart then to be saying, but Bosman seen up & down hand, his boys ain't never laid a hand on your girl."

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"Shelly don't lie," Earl sits up.

The sheriff raises one ^{shelly} ~~hand~~ had to step in. "Naw, I ain't saying she did..."

"I ain't never knowed Shelly to lie."

Shelly starts to come out, but ~~he~~ ^{she} ~~feels~~ ^{feels} a freeze

"No see & nobody ain't saying she did," says the sheriff, "but Bosman claim when she come by the old house on Sickle road, looking for a phone, he sent the nigger to see he couldn't get it running and

"I ain't gone have this," Earl says and stands & puts his hands on his hips.

"Just listen now," says the sheriff and Earl sits. "Hear me out. Bosman claim the nigger didn't come back & didn't come back and finally he sent Stinker to check on 'em and said weren't no where in sight."

"Shoot!" says Earl.

"Well sir," says the sheriff slapping his knee, "I'm just here to say could be your girl over yonder might've been scared to say it was just the nigger boy. You know how that goes. Who could blame her?"

"Huh uh," says Earl, stably again, "not Shelly, besides she told you in the first place that boy was in on it."

"I ain't saying yep nor nay, understand, I'm just supposing." He stands up, banging his belly. "Anyhow, we got no ~~boy~~ ^{boy} one open. And don't think he won't talk."

"O K O K," Earl paws, Shelly deck lowering watching through the ^{bonaten} scene. "Set in just

try to keep it quiet, that's all I ask."
"Well, you know we gone have to go
by the book - Grand jury and all."
"Short!"

"Course, you can't never tell how long a
boy like that 'll last. ~~At~~ ^{at} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~door~~ ^{door} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~city~~ ^{city} ~~to~~ ^{to}
niggers messin' with white women. These Bosmond
them's ^{likely to go away with him} ~~likely to go away with him~~
I shore wish they was some way to hush
it up."

"Best thing, in my estimation, just get him
sent on off to the pen. Not have him setting
around in the jail up there at the court house,
jabbering."

"Well, I prebate it, sheriff," Earl heads
toward the open door & leans into the fan flapping
his ^{brown} plaid shirt.

"Reckon you know, Earl, I'm looking out
after you. Generally, we'd ^{have to set} ~~need~~ ^{you} ~~on~~ ^{on} ~~girl~~ ^{to}
come on in & identify the scoundrel, but ~~but~~
I can't ~~go~~ ^{go} ~~ask~~ ^{ask} -- make a Official
statement. Done relax the law, in this case,
being as how y'all who you are."

"Thenhyon, sheriff." Earl stands back to let
the sheriff pass thru the door, then follow him out
where they stand looking out over the ~~road~~ ^{road} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~railroad~~ ^{railroad}
track with yellow flowers blowing in the breeze.

Shelby eases out and waits next the ~~door~~ ^{door} ~~on~~ ^{on}
her left, listening to them while they conversate ~~fade~~
and then the sheriff can change & starts & motion
~~over~~ ^{over} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~road~~ ^{road} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~around~~ ^{around} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~corner~~ ^{corner}
~~by~~ ^{by} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~home~~ ^{home}.

Carl steps ~~into~~ ^{his eyes} the door, ~~George~~ ^{feasting} at Shelby,
Then comes on up of steps and the counter,
sett perching on a ^{high} kitchen stool.

"In the greeny darkness of the store, Shelby sees
red sparks and how to grab her teeth to keep screaming,
Her heart flattens like bird wings. Still she
turns & turn, does & face him, ~~it heard over~~
~~word of that~~ "I don't lie, not about

"They got the Negro boy, right?"

"I ain't never knowed you for a sawdripper, Sal."

"They ~~try~~ try to make me out a liar, an' they?"

"I ain't never knowed you for a liar either."

"Why would I lie?"

"Why was you on that dirt road?"

She turns, palming the cool dusty counter.

"I'm done told you, I took a short cut. What did
you think?"

"Just warning you up for what's coming if
they goes to trial."

"I wanted go home."

"Go ahead then."

"I mean to Ironman's, in Tennessee."

"~~That~~ Don't imagine it's your work like that?"

"You mean I gotta stay for some trial, right?"

He doesn't answer. Then finally, "Let's just
try to keep it quiet while we can. A little peace..."

"It's done out, all over school."

"The site high, sucker in, 'Lord in heaven!'"

"Daddy, I've seen ~~stand~~ the one told."

"You? ~~Who~~ Who?"

"When I went to the health dept to get

an attempt shot, I don't need thought...
I told the county nurse."

"Shoot!"

"She swore she wouldn't tell."

He stood stark now with his face red.
"Don't matter. How long you reckon before
it'd be all over the county that a nigger boy
raped you."

"And that nigger boy helped me get away, prob'ly
saved my life."

"You ain't taking up for him, are you?"

"No sir," she says, "only now" "I just
don't want ~~Bosman~~ there to but if I got to
go to a trial and all, I'd like to see
Bosman and them get hung too."

"Well, I reckon he'll talk. Thana's gone
home or fit."

~~Thana's gone~~ He means Thana, Shelby
knows and again she is overwhelmed by
how what seems to matter is that nobody knows
find out, not that she was raped. She writes
again she'd never told, or died, because she's
~~committed~~ ~~to be~~ ~~forgiven~~ ~~and~~ ~~murder~~. ~~known~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~
~~not~~. But not a living, breathing girl who's been
raped by a Negro.

Not yet. She can't tell yet, but she gets
~~longer~~ the every evening when she gets off the
bus, she drops her books on the chair by
the front porch door, listens to Grom's ~~usual~~
usual grumbling monologue, then goes inside
& stays in her bedroom till she has to come out.
Evenings are hot or too mornings are cool,
and a ghostly silence to the once, bustling house,
and nothing has changed except that the sun
has arced a little southward so that it doesn't
shine directly into her through the west window of
her bedroom.

"Sugar" calls her ~~Mama~~ "I need you to run
in a ~~and~~ help me get her down into town & pick up
Grom's ~~meppine~~ Shelly string ~~of~~ the lead and tighten her
ponytail before the mirror that glances back the
blush fall light through her window. She looks
white & stony, her freckles stand out under her
tan. She smells that usual, usually starchy & bright
cow man, so that she hardly recognizes herself
and neither does she want to. She doesn't want to
go to town. But neither does she want to stay.
She wants to sleep. Sleep & wake up & have it
all over, or never happened.

She goes out thru the kitchen, picking up the
20 dollar bill & empty perscription bottle, out the
back & along the path between the house &
the store where Mustangs bark & swan
with white goats like paper ~~shells~~.

She pops thru the door of the store. "I need the key, Daddy," she says bluely her eyes in the contrast of sun & shadow. "None wants me to go get Gran in medicine."

He gets up from behind the counter & comes around. "Sheriff come by today."

She freezes.

"Says that by still won't talk. Larkie better be gone take the blame by herself."

"Is that all that? You mean the sheriff's just gonna let it go."

"You know the node. Larkie's like it. Maybe just as well. You know what they say, the more you stir, the worse it stirs."

"I mean should've told." She takes the key from the counter & starts out.

"Hark & oughta been on that road neither."

She has reached the edge where she can't tell a gasp from fear, anger from pain, just a heightening of feeling like fever. And feverish, she gets into the blue pickup, out front, starts it, and easier across the sun-shaded rail road track, past the old store facing the highway and across it to a big white house nobody lives in. She turns left onto the shady gravel road and drives into the sun sparkling the concrete river bridge, and when she gets to Larkie's road she doesn't even turn on the blinker, just turns left & brings across the trading not even looking, just

Urgon says don't
know when pub dates is

Graviter

sitting forward and holding to the steering wheel
with her white hot fingers, and coasting up
on the shady curve when the old hand starts
turn in & set a wiper to the engine idly, facing
the house. And then she knows she is mad.

That if she ^{knows where to} find them, she would kill
them.

all the way onto town, ~~twelve~~ miles of hazy woods
& fields & scattered houses, she feels almost giddy
with excitement at the thought of justifying them &
maybe finding them, maybe facing them with
a gun, can even imagine ^{casually} talking to somebody
she can't picture while she shoots them one at
time. Her faces go before her too, she is
sure they are in the pack when the last time they
raped her, and when she gets to Rancie's place
she stops thinking there.

She can go to home. He's one she can find &
get to & can get back at her. She heads toward
the south end of Valdosta, ~~drives~~ ^{drives} in the brassy
sun haze, so dazed she is hardly aware of
picking up & paying for the next prescriptions &
degreasing mat. This time along ~~94~~ toward Cornville
she used to worry that she'd would exceed the
speed limit since the speedometer doesn't work, get
caught for speeding & be in trouble at home. But
not this time. This time she drives through
the strip of sun & shade, fencerub in the
blaze of ~~sun~~ setting sun in the rear mirror.

6/14/68

By the time she gets to the Alayola Bridge, City limits of Lake County, the sun has gone & dusk has settled over the house & stores divided by the crossroads. She turns right at the blinking red traffic light then left at the ^{street} ~~crossroad~~ and pulls up ^{before} ~~at~~ along the ^{front} ~~front~~ one-cell brick jail.

~~Suddenly~~ Rance shows steps toward the bare ad starker at her. (describe)

(Describe)

~~She rights to speak but instead she seems to sit there forever, till the dusk turns to dark, till~~

~~She~~ He just stands there, saying, while she sits saying back while the dusk turns to dark & the clothes over the ^{little} ~~low~~ town. A dog barks in the east, the truck idles loud in her ear so that even if she knew who to say he probably couldn't hear. And finally she just drives away, the fever of ^{madness} ~~madness~~ unspent.

#

But now she has something to do beside sit & wait for her period and figure how to break the news to Earl & Jewell. She has someone to threaten who can't ^{thrust} ~~beat~~ her back. And even when she ^{goes only in spirit} ~~doesn't~~ go, can't get the truck, she can soothe herself with the fact that she can go to the jail & see her rapist anytime. She no longer even considers finding Bernard & the boys, just considers Rance as representative of the whole Gang. ("no longer overruled")

Everybody acts as if Race is the only racist
black man the only issue.

By the first of October, cool & bright, she
~~accepted that~~ she might be pregnant and quits school on
Tuesday without going to work - Not even
to Earl & Jewell, who must have guessed when
she didn't go on Wed, Thur & Fri and
must have guessed why, though no one asks
& no one is told.

Saints
at in
paint

They no longer depend on her to run errands
or help with chores and it's as if she's
no longer a member of the family, as if she
been excommunicated or exiled. And she has whole days
of fearing what she'll say ~~to~~ ^{to the rapist, Race,} the next time she
goes to the jail.

Once she even ~~found~~ ^{found} the shotgun behind
Earl & Jewell's bedroom door and considers taking
it, but not yet. So far, ~~two babies~~ ^{her pregnancy}
isn't a baby, and so far, she isn't mad
enough yet. She's never shot a gun - another
problem - and she's hoping Race will tell about
Bosman's two boys - another problem: if she
kills him, he can't talk.

Word has gotten around to the church ~~about~~ ^{about} the
murder in the road and at ~~the~~ ^{the} night prayer
meeting, they have prayer for the ~~knights~~ ^{knights}. She's
~~there~~

They She no longer has to go to church ~~either~~
and while the whole family, including Granja, goes to
Wed night prayer meeting, the following week, she

~~She~~ through dreamy self pity phase
What if somebody sees her?
A hell till she knows she is pregnant in Oct. ^{2nd week}

Also, she feels ^{generally sluggish} tired to ~~too~~ pick up the
shot gun or ever to dream up excuse for
using the truck. What if somebody sees her?
A laugh. What does that matter now? Still
it doesn't ^{matter} because ~~still~~ her second ^{missed} period is
~~two weeks~~ ^{state} two weeks away and it might come
after all -- one less burden.

On Wednesday night, the entire family goes to
church, including Grandma, pebble & Gumbly but
Gumbly because she has 7 missed church in so
many years, and while they are gone Shelly
sits on the front ^{steps} & stare at the two ton in
~~the gate~~ ^{on the other side of the store} trying to decide whether to go to the jail or go to
bed.

The train shoots through the
she feels jolted ^{by its rumble} & pierced by its whistle,
and she ~~steps to the dirt and walks to the two ton truck,~~
^{steps to the dirt and walks to the two ton truck,}
opens the door & gets in. The minute she is
seated, she ~~begins to be~~ ^{becomes} afraid to go. What
~~can happen~~ if it breaks down again? What if
she gets raped? ~~She~~ What can happen that hasn't
happened already.

She switches it on, then backs onto the road,
turning to go across the railroad tracks rather
than take the short cut to Cornwall 129 by the
church. But even then, even on her way
to Cornwall, she knows she has to
have more energy than she has ^{now} ~~now~~ if she's
going to do something or say something to her rapist.

She'll just drive past, she decides, seeing the red light blinking beyond Troublesome Creek. A car & a black pickup are parked at the ^{capitol island} Delta store on the right side of the intersection and again she tries to recall what color & make was Bosman's or the other's truck,

And like ~~something~~ ^{an accident} that can't happen because you've just thought about it, the ~~black~~ Stinker steps ~~down~~ through the Delta store door, looks right at her and goes to his ~~truck~~ pickup parked and gets in.

Lights flare behind in the huge side mirror and she feels blinded and hot and cuts left at the side road by the jail, hardly glancing at the dim lit cell as she turns left around the courthouse square & left again ^{or} ~~the~~ heady toward the traffic light. She has to pump the clutch to get the two-ton in first after stopping and realizes that the side mirror is black. No lights behind & no black pickup anywhere in sight and still she expects ^{the black pickup} ~~him~~ to materialize behind her as she takes turns onto 129 and guns the truck about north along 129.

She can't stop shaking and halfway home along the dark stretch of highway ahead finds herself sitting forward ^{with} ~~her~~ ^{white knuckling the steering wheel} ~~her~~ fingers gripped to steering wheel. She can't figure if she's madder at ~~herself~~ the sheriff for not picking up Stinker, or madder at Kance for not talking, or madder at herself for going to Conoverville at night.

But she knows she'll go back, even ~~stiff~~ ^{stiff} as she is with terror right now because fingers all she has, all that keeps her from going mad.

When there is no doubt that she is pregnant, when her ^{time to her} second period rolls around, she comes out of her lethargy and begins to hope. Quitting she isn't pregnant, and starts ^{morning} hoping that the baby isn't black. She has to stay in Swain County till the trial -- which hasn't been mentioned again -- she accepts that

(She tells them her name)

and begins ~~convincing~~ ^{convincing} her chaps to the belief that if the baby is white everybody will adjust to that. Even accept it. Especially Earl Jewell & Grannie the children. (might not use)

Then Grannie hears about the rape. On ^{Wednesday night, around the base of the} ~~the~~ ^{the} deacons at the little Baptist Church near the house across from the creek begin praying out loud for the sick, for Grannie Knight and the rest of the family, who the Lord knows has in special need of prayer in their time of special trouble, and Grannie usually drawn into herself, begins questioning Earl & Jewell. "Now, Mama" says Earl ^{the living room} when they get the old lady home & Jewell starts her usual routine of settling Grannie into bed. She balks.

"Now, Mama" he says again and steps back to the couch & sits.

"I don't wanta hear no more of this now Mama business," says the old lady, creeping around Jewell to face him, "I wanta know what's goin' on," she demands.

(dark bedroom) Shelby ^{in the} ~~in the~~ ^{in the} children in the kitchen & hopes Eula don't come in ^{in the bedroom} to start talkin' before Shelby hears ~~what they~~ whether Earl &

hold

Jewell ~~manages~~ to stall Grammie.
"Ever time I turn around" ^{says} ~~not~~ Grammie shrilly,
somebody's talkin' behind my back.
No answer.

"Got to have something to do with ^{Shelby} I know that, I ain't blind and I can see she ain't going to school no more. Don't act right to me."

"Yes ~~same~~" says Earl after a long pause.
Shelby hears Jewell padding up the hall to the kitchen talking to the children. Now it's just Carl & Grammie and if he's ever lied or stood up to the crochety old lady, Shelby doesn't know of it.

"What it is, Mama" ^{he says} "is Shelby's got herself ~~present~~ in the family way."

"Hush yo' mouth!" says Grammie.

"Yes'm," says Earle, "we've been tryin' to keep it from you for your own good."

"Who's the boy then?" She hasn't bought it.

"Well, we ain't shore of certain. She ain't said."

"Shelby, sugar," calls Grammie. "Get on in here."

Shelby hadn't expected that. What she'd expected was Grammie would have a heart attack, and she wouldn't have to face her again.

Shelby starts to slide off the bed, then legs back with her arm over her eyes. ~~She didn't have to~~

"Shelby, I say, get on in here," call Grammie.

Shelby hadn't intended to pretend she's sleeping till Jewell passes along the hall & ~~lets~~ Grammie & Carl that she probably is.

favorite, rascal child - the first
Gamin fights for her ^{hold} ^{start} ^{to} ^{stern} ^{gritty}, spunky (past with her)
to snoring -- met ^{change her}
Grandmotherly ^{maybe just look busy}

"Jewel", I'll wasta know who the day is?
"Grand, an' no need in getting yourself
all riled now."
"I ain't riled!" Shemin pokes along the hall ^{top of} ^{head} ^{with} ^{her} ^{cane} ^{pecking} ^{at} ^{the} ^{floor}.

Ruth Conner

Shelby takes her arm from her eye, the
door creaks open & the light from the hall
casts a runner across the ~~dark~~ brown floor. Shemin
stands ~~at~~ ^{at} ^{the} ^{entrance} ^{to} ^{the} ^{room} ^{and} ^{looks} ^{at} ^{her} ^{with} ^{white} ^{hair} ^{part} ^{of} ^{her} ^{mouth}
^{straight} ^{and} ^{she's} ^{mad},
^{straight} ^{and} ^{she's} ^{mad},
"I got riled, Grannie."

[Ruth Conner type -- change from stern to soft - takes over family,
supports Shelby]

Wrath like, she moves through the runner & light to the
bed and lays a dry pale hand on Shelby's head.
"By a ~~black man~~ ^{black man}, Grannie," says Shelby, ^{the hand stays} ⁱⁿ ^{her} ^{hair} ^{and} ^{she} ^{is} ^{sure} ^{she} ^{is} ⁱⁿ ^{trouble}

Grannie
Ruth

might as well say it now. She expects the hand to
move but it stays, then brushes Shelby's hair
back. ~~She~~ ^{she} ^{sits} ^{on} ^{the} ^{edge} ^{of} ^{the} ^{bed}, her brown ^{reptilian} ^{eyes}
cover now; ~~then~~ ^{then} ^{she} ^{speaks}, ^{surprised}, ^{soft},
"The night you was missing -- you was..."

The hand holds Shelby's hair back, as if to see her
whole face.

"Yes'm," says Shelby, "Two-ton broke down on
Sible road where I took a short cut and I had
piled down from that big old house over there where
about ^{when} ^{you} ^{were} ^{hanging} ^{around}. I
wondered ^{if} ^{you} ^{would} ^{call} ^{daddy} ^{and} ^{that} ^{is} ^{when}."

"I'll see," says Grannie, "Close that door, Earl." ^{(Shelby didn't really} ^{he} ^{was} ^{there} ^{till} ^{he} ^{closed} ^{the} ^{door} ^{when} ^{he} ^{closed} ^{the} ^{door}.)
"They got the colored man in jail in Comville, the
rest of 'em claim they didn't do it."

Ground in ~~Ruth's house~~ ^{Mabel Dukes} her father
Troy is husband, fox hunter, etc.

"Who was it?" hold

"Somebody named Bassman was the my leader."

"I've heard of him."

"And Stutter was another one, him & Renee & Bert and Boy."

"You got away," ~~Shelly~~ ^{Ruth} says, "that's what's important."

"Yes, my, but now I'm pregnant."

"But you ain't dead."

"I guess I'll wish I was."

"Well, I don't. Your daddy & mama don't."

"I should've gone in that road by myself."

"I should've gone to church tonight, maybe. Truck could've broke down & I could've ran up on Bassman & Stutter & whoever the hell the other was & I'd got raped."

Shelly had never heard her curse, and it felt good to have somebody curse for her. She sits up and Grace Ruth's arm slides around her, hugging her. Boy & Stiff are as tender as if Shelly might break. While they hug, Grace Ruth whispers and rocks. ~~One~~

"One time a girl I knowed in ~~school~~ ~~Sanville~~ got herself raped by a ~~old~~ man ~~that~~ took up with her family, and she like to never got over it. But she did. ^{Didn't get a living soul but} and now she'd me, be a old lady, and could n't hardly give you the details or remember his face."

"Was he black?" says Shelly,

"I ~~couldn't~~ ~~tell~~ ~~you~~ ~~his~~ ~~skin~~ ~~color~~."

"Did do get pregnant?"

Shelly pulls away & stares at her. ~~That's Grace~~
~~who was my mother's, stern & platted & tough~~
She nods.

Looney
dipped
in mushy
flesh

Cha 5⁻

third person present ^[winter fall]
liver in old jail now alone

1993

+ black daughter corner - "Is this the old jail?" (considered crazy town)
"I came to see who gave me up, now I know!"
"You don't know anything," she tells

model
beloved

(1965) first person past tense - ~~present tense~~ (Summer)
slipped off to river, lonely after husband leave

throw
back in
Joyce
family

Kathy - married out of high school, boy
went to Viet Nam

she's raped, afraid he'll find out

now
shown
along
store
from
74

(follow for an out line)

Shelly is drawn to ^{the} jail — lonely, pregnant,
enraged

Alfred may not have told Dolly ^{that} Shorter is pregnant. Maybe
he told Rand have told Dolly - suppress

Chapter 2

notes

chapter 1 - go back & put Ep (name from Fuller Sedwick)
~~being tossed by~~ Moss's foreman fighting with Alfred --

- Jane Smiley's Two Thousand Acres - model
- turpentine still - always fears it catches fire
- adoption of Dolly's baby? (Shorter loses here)

Ray Gram
Fode

"I ain't no baby," said Tally. "You tell Mally
to keep her mouth shut or else ..."
"Land," said Deke, and toddled over ^{to the next yoke} to take
his bucket to the next pine tree to be dipped. "You
got a bad mouth on you. Yo man a'd hear you
hide."

"She's gone to Franceann's."
~~She ain't study me.~~

"Bet she is. Bet she gone haw all head
with her looked when ya gotten tonight." Deke
set the bucket down, hold his back and gazed
up at the noon day sun. ~~Who gets hit you nigga.~~

"OK," said Tally, "what you want me to
do?"

"Mr Eps say Mr Well say, ~~grab the dog~~ do
what you do the other folk do." He look
square at Tally.

"Which is what?"

"See that tin there?"

"What about it?"

"Well, you take it like this ... you put
yo hand on it, you ain't gonna hurt you."
~~That~~ Tally reach out & grab it. "Shit,
Yuk!"

Deke cackles, looking back. "There come the
man to check on us. Better do like he
tell you."

Tally look back at Eps leery, thru the pines
not her even yellow teeth show.

"I ain't got to do nothing that old song about
sings. He don't own these woods."

W.A. - July

"Yeah" said Dicky "let go for our hen."
"What I mean," said Tally.

~~"I'm"~~ "Dicky" screamed, "but you got him started?"
"I ain't trying to stick my head in that mess," said Tally.

"Ep stopped. What you say, boy."
"Say I ain't trying to stick my head in that mess."

"You smart-mouth me one more time, boy, and I'll have you go to your daddy."

"Go to him, me if I care. I ain't no gun nigger." Tally can feel himself going ~~to~~ ^{for} before he says, "It's your ~~own~~ ^{own} take a look to you myself, boy." He leaps away through the perfectly spaced row of perfect pipes, imperfect in his gumpy body.

And ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~night~~ ^{next} night, he ~~goes~~ ^{went} back to the cabin on the hill for Tilly to stroke saline into the belt cuts on his back, fussing while Dicky hums & strums his guitar. A fire in the ~~pot~~ ^{pot} ~~bellied~~ ^{bellied} stove heats the cabin & katydid strucks outside the ~~card-board~~ ^{card-board} patched screen of the window. Carly heads ~~only on the floor~~ ^{only on the floor} play ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~her~~ ^{her} ~~pool~~ ^{pool}. "Tell you, one of these days," she says. "Smart-mouthed him."

Tally gulps, sobbing, her cool light tender fingers stroke his back. "Tell you old man to get that humming."

"He can hum if he want to," she says, "Get it his home."

at atmosphere of cabin (fresh detail)

"I'm sick & hard humming." Tally ~~looked~~
his ~~eyes~~ ^{around} ~~tears~~ ^{tears}.

"Hush now," she said, "hush!"

The baby crawls after a spoon and Milly
dashes away, grabs her & sets her in her
spot on the ~~littered~~ floor. Come back.

"What you doing with a baby, Milly," Tally has
lifted his head to watch.

"Ole gal Roosevelt up & wavered down run

"~~Oh~~ "Sorry thing."

"That the truth!"

"I'll be too old to be talking on a baby."

"That the truth!" She hums ^{a few bars}
with Dale. "I don't know ~~how~~ ^{she} gets up
with that man?"

"Who?"

"You know."

"Better not let ~~him~~ hear you say that."

"You take me for a fool?" she laughs, hums,
struck his back. "Liner of fire to his brain."

That very night Tally went back to the cabin ^{next door}
to the hill, ~~slipping through the~~ ^{put} ~~from~~ ^{from} Milly's bedroom window of
the big house, to PC's, Milly's cabin, where she
stroked ^{his} ~~his~~ on the belt cuts on his back &
crowned and PC prowled the kitchen where the
door stood wide and a fire burned in the cookstove.

"Hush now baby, hush," said Milly gathering
Tally in her arms, from the cot ~~in~~ ^{heard}
and holding him in her arms, all the words in

~~the~~
~~the~~
~~the~~
Just shuffling noise
cabin
tickling
to walk
peace to safety
now

P.C. disgruntled over ^{the} whipping & the new child to raise

Katydid, beat (Atmosphere)

her head seeped from her torn flesh.

"The minute Miss ~~Edith~~ took off to France and Mr. Well show herself." Mully grumbled & gatted Gally closer while he cried. "Hush, baby, I got you. An' I gone let him hurt you."

Gally sobbed harder, feeling the rub of her arms & bones on her flesh against him.

Get that baby back from the feet, P.C. "You an' I got no business ^{with} that boy. What Mr. Well be learnin' a lesson." said P.C. Shoot

talk of
enough in
the box
brownie

"Shoot! An' I want you get is he?" said Mully. "Get that baby back from the cook-stove." P.C. She's liable to get burnt.

P.C. caught the baby with knots of curls & dragged her to the center of the room & set upright the tipped sewing thread spool.

"Kossmelt ought not a took up with that gal in the first place," said Mully, rocky hard.

"He say ~~of~~ he had ery heavy from her."

"No heavy to it," said Mully, "she gone."

Gally cried again.

"Hush now, baby. You gone learn not to sass back." She to P.C. "He pat him ⁱⁿ like that, then whip him for it." "The will just show ^{him} ^{his} ^{place}," said P.C. "I did I saw him Mully, I passed ^{it}."

don't have time
to go talk
into kitchen
with ^{my} ^{own} ^{idea}
what they
say

"~~He~~ "Sense change." He to sleep. "He was drunk."

wanted him
rooster
get me.

"Tomorrow he be sober & an' I see same man. Be like a better than he set that drink out of him."

at any
night

P C Carving some o-bass
wall of life house --
when he paints

That night he stayed with Melly & P C ^{that night}
falling asleep to the shuffling quiet in the cabin
& the baby's soft protest when Melly put her
to bed. Sally on the cot in the kitchen and
the other in the bedroom at the front of the
cabin where P C had trimmed megaphone pictures
of birds & mountains & pasted them on the
walls.

Sally woke to Melly's same soft shuffling in
the kitchen or if she'd never gone to bed --
bulldog's fire in the cookstove and putting on
a pot of coffee to boil. She didn't cook breakfast
at the cabin; she cooked it at the life house
where P C would come to eat, ~~at the cook~~.

But now she had the baby and she was
slow & with noise, making Sally open & close
doors behind her while she grumbled & ambled
& spoke to the baby's missing mama through her.

~~It don't~~
"Now ya mama could just pick up & take off
in a moment I can fix ya. She ain't had it no
bad here."

Sally knew that was a lie and if he hadn't
been so stone up & sore & sleepy he'd have
told her. He wandered across the muddy dirt
yard staying close to Melly; when his daddy
got out, he'd slipped out the window he'd
be ~~right~~ ^{right} ~~with~~ ^{with} him. But not with Melly around.
And not because ~~his daddy~~ ^{Will} ~~feared~~ ^{scared} Melly; but he
loved Melly, better than Evelyn what he'd been

up to while he was gone.

Strang to Sally even at 10 hours on the
one hand her daddy was the boss over
her mama and on the other hand she
was the boss over him. As far as Sally
could tell Evelyn Lewis was winning
the race. Just say nothing by getting
in the car & leaving when Will had
been bad.

Neither
child were
grown up
fighters

While day broke ~~blue~~ over Mayday along the
pines ^{over} and the tin top ~~was~~ in the of the
double row houses ~~front~~ the ^{best road} highway a black
man wandered out on his porch & began singing (hoosy
Sand)

"I wish he'd shut up," said Sally march close
to Milly across the hooded together yard of
her cabin & the highway.

"Boy" ^{she said} ^{as possible} "I don't blame yo pappy for
laying the strap to you."

"He better not do it again," said Sally
punching the back door open & "I will step
to bed down steps."

"What you mouth man, you ya got in
trouble?" said Milly.

"What's that you talking Milly?" said Will,
sitting & phipping on his boots.

She laughed, "You mean the baby, huh?"

"Yeah, who she belong to?"

^{inf} Roosevelt "That who?"

"What?" he' up & gone her to you & p.c."

describe Mayday, early in the morning

"Lutha done took off summer."

"That a fact?"

"Yesson, sho is now."

"Well, ya tell Roosevelt, she left
over."

"You don't mean it."

"Yeap," he said, stady & stumpy but
hook on, "run up ~~the~~ bill till it's a ~~right~~ ^{right}."

He stumped after door steps, stoppin' at to
chuck the baby under the chin. "It's a
doll baby, Mily."

"You go over there & open up before
ya eat."

"Yep" he swaggered off thru the doorway
toward the front. "You can just send Tally
when ya get it done."

That is what Tally hated most: being
reduced to nigger-boy status after he'd
misbehaved. More than the whippin' he hated
that. P C was the one who always went
to the commissary to get Will and took care
of ~~the~~ customers ~~till~~ while Will ate breakfast
Tally hangs back while Willey goes up
the ~~back~~ door steps with the baby and watches his
daddy swagger across the high road to the
commissary, a raw square building with
a half porch set on a skirt of dirt before
the railroad tracks. Mist hangs above
the tracks on a backdrop of pine & gum woods,
low frame houses & woods - pines, gum,
sawyer & palmettos.

When Will gets to the steps of the commissary, he looks back at Will, tiny in dwarfed by the giant lineoaks surrounding the big ~~the~~ house, a reductive look that says, "I ain't done with you yet."

Milly ~~ain't you be around~~ Wait till Milly's gone home, after supper, then it's me & you boy, boy.

Fally can hear Milly fumbling in the kitchen, scolding the baby, then speaking softly. The rattle of pots & pans & then the smell of coffee. Then the train east bound, an earthquake rumble, shoving part the commissary & into the morning sun.

On Friday, payday at the commissary, and usually Evelyn is back from by-seater Francann's to ~~work in the payroll in the~~ office behind the store into back room of the commissary. (No mention of ~~Will's~~ Tally's initiation in the ^{woods} ~~the~~ ^{woods} or his whippers. (over))

For Tally, Fridays are the longest days of the week. ~~It~~ ~~was~~ because supper is delayed till after dark, so Evelyn & Will can wrap up the work week. On Fridays, Tally is on his own. He can hang around the commissary porch for all the hands & Will's buddies to pick at, or he can wander the quarters & the woods or ~~go~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ Alapaha river bridge and spit down ^{into} the ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~flooring~~ ^{flooring} ~~blocks~~ ^{applies} water. He's not allowed to go swimming by himself; - Milly tells him horror stories of

Tally might be sent back to the woods ~~then~~
early again - he might not. He was accustomed
to Will's whims, yet couldn't foresee what
his next whim would be. ~~But~~

swimmer who have been sucked into the vortex of the
deep black spots in the river - - so he watches
the big boy ~~working~~ ~~bathe~~ & swing from the logs
on the east shore. Some of them work for
shell in the The black boys ~~swim~~ ~~from~~ ~~play~~
silently ~~into~~ ~~water~~ in the water along the
west bank. Some who work for Will, some
who work in tobacco for the farmer in
the Howell community 3 miles west of
Mayday. Tally knows them all by name and
they know him, and frequently they ~~try~~
~~to~~ try to tease him off the bridge. And
same as at the commissary with the older
black head & Will white head, they
try to get him started cursing, get him
mod. The boss boy, the Rooster,
All ~~blows~~ ^{mod.} ^{all} ^{at} ^{the} ^{boss} ^{boy} ^{the} ^{Rooster},
he cusses them from the bridge, even tosses
sticks & rocks & pine cones at them &
they laugh & pitch the back ducking underneath
when the sticks & rock & cones go
down. He passes off the bridge by peeing on the ledge, ^{terrified}
What name ~~Will~~ ^{modder} is the ^{ecream} ^{curse} ^{word}
embarrassing fact that his life motto
is ~~God~~ & go with his cowardice. If
he were truly a rooster, a devil - Mully is
name for him - he'd go swimming anyway
and tell Evelyn & Will to kiss his ass.
He tells Evelyn that, and often, and Will
just laughs and Evelyn smiles & walks
away. When Tally was smaller, every

since he can remember, his mama used to wrangle
physically with him, constantly shouting "~~Tally~~
~~or~~ "Salvadge Randolph Lewis!" But for
the whole summer since school let out, she's
been smiling & getting in her rear ends off
to try Francean's in Valdosta, Lewis
Milly to holler & stomp when he curses & ~~to~~
ad pet him when Will gets taken her belt
to him.

~~the~~

Tally misses his mama, her ^{the safety of} ~~her~~ ^{her} ~~her~~
her there in the house, though Will had
whispered Tally many times in front of her --
~~that~~ ~~at~~ ~~tally~~ ~~bold~~ gonna make a man out
of him -- But even scared of his daddy
Will feels safe because he's the boss's
boy & the boss owns all the woods
& the people around Mayday, which means
"we" own them; ever being anybody make
with the last name of Lewis. ~~But Tally~~
~~the~~ ~~more~~ A fact that Will has drilled
into him though Tally has been saying
that at school, not everybody cares, enough
to though, a few of the boys in his
grade also live on farms ^{outside of}
Mayday look up to Tally -- even some
girls, though most of them tolerate
Tally. What he'd like is to make everybody
at school uniformly understand who
Tally Lewis is and to be on the lookout for

one of his trades. Not the same trade at home though, not anymore. When he was younger I felt starting to school he'd tried that, but after enough paddling & teacher visits to Evelyn ~~the~~ Tally had given it up. What he does not -- and will again when school starts -- is say "Shut!" a lot when he's disgusted & stony off. Also he's beginning to want to fit in with ~~some~~ the quiet studious boys who get praised for being silent & ~~blissful~~ submissive. The other way around just has 7 worked.

Besides, Tally is finding that it's ^{less dependant} ~~more~~ peaceful to be silent and studious. Big problem is when the sun drops him & in Mayday each evening he has to switch roles again.

All the blacks in the quarter along the road leady to the commissary on the ^{left} south side the big house on the north ^{right} side call him Mr. Tally. All except PC & Mully. But he'd never thought about that day is ~~Wed. Sept~~ when he got off the bus at the intersection of 129 & ~~Mayday~~ road &

They do 7 count. They're family yet not family, ~~may be~~ ~~perhaps~~ more of a backdrop in the day that gets Tally fed & dressed & sometimes even serves him hide by lying for him. Especially PC, especially after Tally discovered PC's big weakness & error one evening in September after getting home from school.

P.C. generally flunking & like Sally, ~~the~~ Will's
object of Will's joke, was painting the
hall wall for Evelyn. A cool dusky green
that made Will feel disoriented after he'd
just grown accustomed to the yellow.

Will came thru the front door with his
brush, backed the paint cans, threatened to
topple them, then going on down the hall
pretended he was fixing to back P.C., bent
over the left to paint the baseboard with
green the kitchen entrance.

"Watch yo'self, boy," P.C. said & ~~unfolding~~
his long lean body and laughed. He always laughed,
once even at a funeral for one of the black
~~in~~ the hell section of Thursday, across the 129.

"You better watch it, you sonofabitch," said
Jaly & sauntered on into the kitchen when Willy
was cooking & the baby was playing with
plastic cups on the floor.

"What's to eat, ~~butcher~~?" he asked Willy,
"Nothing, ~~you don't~~ ^{over eye}

"A big glass of soap suds water," she said,
"if there's Evelyn & satish you talkin' sash a way."
She pushed her thick leaved glass up on her
nose, took a dish from the drawer in the sink
& dipped banana pudding from the counter.

"That paint makes me waster pale," said Jaly &
flopped on a kitchen stool watching the baby with a
spoon, watching her with liquid eyes.

~~Her name is~~
"Kossend't a old hussy any come back yet?" he
said.

Will
picking ^{up} dog

nothing at first, just fresh green paint like
~~brush~~ starts to walk away and spin
a raw etch in the paint on a spot where
Evelyn usually keep a table. He squats,
squinting at the knife ~~and~~ etch "Mr. P. C.,
Brown".

(more about turpentine brush more
atmosphere — draw reader on other senses)
— more on father mother relationships, well
roving & drinking & Evelyn's pride, her changing

(have ^{Milly's} dog's car dogs to unify)

dox hilly ~~will gets drunk~~
will gets drunk
make Tally help
load on ~~the door~~
Evelyn gone

Cha. 2

Tally had bouts of believing that he could predict Will's behavior by day ~~and~~ the week:
Mondays ~~thurs~~ Thurs were hectic work days, either in the summer chippy ~~and~~ dippy from ~~shanty to the market or~~ ~~valdotes~~ streaking ~~and~~ ~~get~~ ~~their~~ ~~preparations~~ for the summer. Friday, payday, meant Will like the body would start drinking, a continuation on into Saturday. Then Sunday, usually calm, the bleck would go to the church on the hill, and ~~while~~ ~~will~~ ~~rode~~ ~~the~~ ~~woods~~ ~~and~~ ~~they~~ ~~would~~ ~~take~~ Tally to the church beyond the tracks while ~~if~~ she was home.

More & more she was off to Traceman in her new Olds or maybe to her sister, Betty Jean's in Atlanta. She never asked to take Tally on trips, and so he was left to ride the woods with Will or go to church with Mully or, if he absolutely refused, got stuck with P.C. whittling on the front porch of the cabin.

Evelyn's trips, which ~~accelerated~~ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~time~~ Tally was 14, when a monkey wrench in his prediction of days, became when she was gone Will drank more, craved more, and kept everybody in an uproar.

Her Saturday night drinking bouts ~~of~~ ~~carried~~ ~~over~~ into Sunday and when they did, Tally could feel the tension in Mully & P.C.

One Sunday morning in December ~~the~~ week before Christmas, Sally had woken to hear Will rant in the kitchen ~~and~~ Mully grumbling at him the way she'd do when he ~~was drunk~~. It was as if she couldn't contain her feelings when Will was drunk, or maybe felt that anything she said on Sunday would be forgotten on Monday, or maybe Will wouldn't dare retaliate by running off his cook.

"You just hush up bout them Evelyn now, ya hear," she said.

Will was used to his badmouth Evelyn though what Will said was usually some general remark about her not being a fit mother or wife -- no real accusation that Sally could pinpoint. Later he would learn that to openly accuse his mama of another man, would mean injury to his pride ego. What Will couldn't understand was why Will didn't just make her stay home. He made everybody else do what he wanted, why not Evelyn?

"I'll tell ya what, old woman," Will said to Mully that morning, "your days are numbered here if ya don't watch it."

"Shoot!" she said. "Who gone make you age then?"

"You are the only cook in the quarters."

"I'll hear ya," she said.

"You better."

"Why don't ya just go on ~~to~~ ^{lock to sleep?} there?"

she said. "Nobody don't want to be messed up with ya the way."