

## 1168/ 'THE MEETIN'

### #1a 'The Meetin' Greeting

[MUMFORD]

HOWDY DO E'VERYBODY, PRAISE THE LORD! (LADIES) PRAISE THE LORD!  
 NICE TO SEE E'VRYBODY, PRAISE THE LORD! (LADIES) PRAISE THE LORD!  
 GLAD TO SEE SO MANY PEOPLE ON THIS SUNDAY AFTERNOON,  
 BUT WE HAD TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION FOR THIS SUNDAY AFTERNOON ON  
 ACCOUNT OF SISTER DALEYS' FUNERAL YESTERDAY.  
 PASTOR WENT TO VISIT BROTHER DALEY AFTER CHURCH TODAY  
 (WE HEARD HE'S BEEN FEELIN' POORLY FOR AWHILE)

[JENKINS]

IT TOOK A TOLL ON HIM, (YES,IT DID) TRYIN' TO CARE FOR HIS WIFE WHILE KEEPIN' UP ON HIS  
 LAND.

[JONES]

MY SAM SAYS, 'WHEN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER FOR SUCH A LONG TIME,  
 WHEN ONE OF THEM GOES TO GLORY, THE OTHER ONE AIN' TOO FAR BEHIND!'

[CORA]

AND I HEARD THAT THEY WERE TOGETHER FOR ALMOST SIXTY YEARS...AND THAT'S  
 A LONG TIME!

[ALL]

AND THEY FOUGHT LIKE CATS AND DOGS MOST ALL THE TIME!

[dialogue over safety vamp]

**Jones:**

Sister Mumford, please let the Rev'n know how much I enjoyed his sermon this mornin'!

**Jenkins:**

Yes, preachin' on tolerance came in handy right about now. There's so much goin' on.

**CRANE:**

Folk don't want to just let people be!

**DOVE: (teasing)**

Talk about tolerance,...Mother, I saw when you walked in church this mornin' and found someone sittin' in your seat. I liked to died when I saw you turn right around to go ask an usher to go get that man OUT YOUR SEAT!

**WIGGINS:**

Yeah, I guess I couldn't 'tolerate' him sittin' in my seat. Po' thang, you know he was a visitor 'cuz everybody know Mother been sittin' in that seat for the las sixty-some odd years!

**MUMFORD: (gently)**

That's okay, Mother. I bet he'll remember next time.

**HOLT:**

Won't be no next time. We'll probably never see that 'po man again!

[music continues]

[CRANE]

WE GOT TO PRAY FOR BROTHER DALEY...

(PRAISE THE LORD!)

HE TOOK SUCH GOOD CARE OF SISTER DALEY...

[PRAISE THE LORD!]

[DOVE]

BUT REMEMBER, BROTHER DALEY IS ALMOST EIGHTY-FIVE YEARS OLD!

[HOLT]

WELL, I KNOW HE MUST BE WORN OUT,

CUZ IF THE TRUTH BE TOLD

SISTER DALEY WAS A HANDFUL, AND SOMETIMES HARD TO CONTROL!

[WIGGINS]

HE WOULD NEVER DISRESPECT HER...

[DOVE]

BUT, HE SOMETIMES HAD TO SCOLD BECAUSE SHE WOULD NOT CLOSE HER MOUTH  
TO SAVE HER SOUL.

[ALL]

AMEN!

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**Wiggins: (fondly remembering)**

Bless her heart, she could sure run her mouth, couldn't she!

**Holt:**

Well, no disrespect to Brother Daley, but the man was almost 85 years old! We should all live so long!

**Wiggins:**

I did, praise God, and I ain't ready to be put to bed just yet.

**Jones:**

Well, we thank the Lord for you, Mother.

**Wiggins:**

Well, life may not have got the best of me yet, ....but these shoes might do the trick!

**Mumford:**

Mother, feel free to relax your feet awhile, since we are in the parsonage, not the church.

**Wiggins:**

Thank you, chile, but I don't want to get too comfortable. I actually wore these shoes on purpose because they hurt my bunions so bad, I knew they would keep me awake. We just got to keep things movin', cuz my feet cain't take too much!

**Mumford:**

Well, let's open the meetin' so we can get Mother home soon as possible. Sister Dove, would you open us up with a song?

**Dove:**

I'd be happy to.

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## #2-BE STILL

BE STILL, AND KNOW HE'S GOD

BE STILL, AND KNOW HE'S GOD

WHEN YOU NEED A PROBLEM SOLVED.....HE'LL ANSWER WHEN YOU CALL,  
BUT YOU GOT TO BE STILL AND KNOW HE'S GOD.

BE STILL (BE STILL) AND KNOW HE'S GOD

BE STILL (BE STILL) AND KNOW HE'S GOD

WHEN YOU NEED A PROBLEM SOLVED, (HE WILL ANSWER)

HE'LL ANSWER WHEN YOU CALL

BUT YOU GOT TO BE STILL AND KNOW HE'S GOD

HAVE FAITH, (HAVE FAITH) TO SEE THINGS THROUGH (2Xs)

WHEN YOU NEED A PROBLEM SOLVED, (HE WILL ANSWER)

HE'LL ANSWER WHEN YOU CALL

BUT YOU GOT TO BE STILL AND KNOW HE'S GOD

SWEET PEACE (SWEET PEACE) WILL FILL YOUR SOUL (2Xs)

WHEN YOU NEED A PROBLEM SOLVED, (HE WILL ANSWER)

HE'LL ANSWER WHEN YOU CALL

BUT YOU GOT TO BE STILL AND KNOW HE'S GOD

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### WIGGINS

Praise the Lord! Now,... let's get down to business so we can go home. Sister Jenkins, that was some mighty good eatin' we had last month. And it was plenty 'nuf that nobody left there hungry!

**JENKINS**

I made sure of that, Mother. You know how it is with some folk and 'pot luck' suppers. They leave their pot at home and come eat up everybody else's luck. I told 'em, 'if you wanna eat, you gotta bring something...and if you can't bring somethin', then help set-up and clean-up. That's just as much of a blessin'.

**PERKINS**

Sister Jenkins, you know how to make folk feel comfortable when you askin' them to do something. Some families round here don't have too much of anything, but every month you ask them to bring what they can and everybody always feels welcome.

**JENKINS**

It gives us a chance to let folk in the community know that if they got a need, the Missionaries at the church will do what we can to help.

**CRANE**

Speakin' of help, young brother Douglas might be needin' some pretty soon. I know you've heard about the little surprise 'ole man Crawford got when his wife had her baby last week. All I got to say is, we got to pray on the situation. Pray for the momma, the baby, and the daddy,...

**HOLT (quickly interjects)**

... which might happen to be Douglass.

**WIGGINS**

Sally's boy, Douglass? My Lord! So sorry to hear that. Ole' man Crawford is one of the few halfway decent white men in the county. I remember how excited he was when he learned he was gonna have a baby. (music vamp)

**CRANE**

It's been rumored that Douglass and Annabelle,... that is her name, ain't it?...anyway, hear tell they been sneakin' round long before she got married to ol' man Crawford.

**HOLT**

Well... 'look like they took one sneak too many. Sister Crane, you live down the road from her. Have you seen the baby yet? (Crane sings)

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### #3-Crane and Dove

[CRANE]

I HEARD, 'AIN'T NOBODY SEEN IT'.

I HEARD, 'AIN'T NOBODY SEEN IT BUT THE DOCTOR, THE MIDWIFE, AND HER POOR HUSBAND!'

I FEEL SO BAD FOR HER HUSBAND.

I FEEL SO BAD FOR THAT MAN WHO HAS BEEN LIED TO, AND LEFT WITH....

ANOTHER MANS' BABY!

(spoken) And a colored mans' baby, too! Ain't no way she can lie about that!

(spoken over underscoring vamp measures #31-32)

You know, nothing goes on in a small town without everybody finding out within 24 hours, especially when there are people around who have nothing else to do but mind somebody elses business.....(music stops) DON'T YOU JUST HATE THAT! (music continues)

[CRANE]

THIS IS A SMALL TOWN....YOU KNOW HOW IT IS IN A SMALL TOWN...

SMALL TOWN THOUGHTS LEAD TO SMALL TOWN REACTIONS.

SOMETIMES, SMALL THINGS CAUSE BIG INFRACTIONS.

YOU MUST WATCH YOU E'VRY ACTION!

IF YOU HAVE A LOVER, IT WILL BE UNCOVERED, AND YOU WILL DISCOVER, IT'S HARD...

TO RECOVER IN A SMALL TOWN!

[ALL]

THIS IS A SMALL TOWN...YOU KNOW HOW IT IS IN A SMALL TOWN

[JENKINS]

GOSSIP ALWAYS BREAKS UP THE BOREDOM.

[HOLT]

IF THERE'S NONE, SOMEONE WILL INVENT SOME!

[JENKINS]

DOUGLASS IS THE SUBJECT THIS TIME!

[ALL:]

IF RUMORS ARE TRUE, NOTHING ELSE WE CAN DO BUT ACCEPT WHAT WE KNEW ALL  
ALONG...AND NOW, DOUGLASS HAS A BABY

[CRANE:]

I FEEL SO BAD FOR HER HUSBAND,  
I FEEL SO BAD FOR THAT MAN WHO WAS EXCITED, THEN SAW THAT IT WAS'NT HIS BABY.  
IF ANYBODY KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT ANYTHING.....IT'S...LUCY DOVE!

LADIES:

(IF ANYBODY KNOWS ANYTHING, IT LUCY DOVE!)

[DOVE]

DOUGLASS' SISTER SAID, 'IT BEEN GOIN' ON BEFORE THE WOMAN GOT MARRIED'.

(LADIES) (MY, MY, MY....)

DOUGLASS' SISTER SAID, 'THEY DIDN'T CARE BECAUSE THEY WAS IN LOVE'.

DOUGLAS SISTER SAID, 'HER MOMMA IS SCARED SOMEBODY GONNA HURT DOUGLASS'.

(LADIES) ...MY, MY.MY....

AND SHE SAID , 'HER OTHER BROTHER IS SCARED ENUF TO PACK UP AND RUN'.

[CRANE]

WHY DIDN'T THEY STOP FOOLIN' 'ROUND AFTER SHE GOT MARRIED?...

WHY DID SHE GO AND MARRY THAT WHITE MAN FOR?

DOVE:

(spoken, music tacet)

Well, maybe she figured if she married a white man, everything will be okay....even if he is kinda' old. Plus, who wouldn't want to marry a rich man who lives in a big house....even if he IS kinda old. He owns his own business, his kids are all grown and out of the house....BUT...he is OLD

[WIGGINS]:

Aint' nothin' wrong with no old man!

[HOLT]: (half teasing)

Let's not get desperate!

[MUMFORD:]

Well, I don't see it myself, but he must have given her everything she ever wanted...

[DOVE]: (sung)

E'VRYTHANG.....BUT THE RIGHT THANG!

[LADIES:]

(MY, MY..MY,MY...MY,MY....OH MY! IF ANYBODY KNOWS ANYTHING, IT'S LUCY DOVE!

[CRANE:]

SO WHY YOU RECON SHE WENT ON TO HAVE THAT COLORED BABY FOR?

[DOVE:]

SHE MUST HAVE THOUGHT IT WAS HER OND MANS' BABY.

THE MIDWIFE SAID WHEN THE DOCTOR WAS THROUGH, HE HELD THE BABY SO THE MOTHER  
COULD SEE...

LADIES:(UH HUH,...)

BUT WHEN SHE LOOKED AT HER CHILE, LORD, SHE LIKE TO WENT BLIND BECAUSE THAT BABY  
WAS AS DARK AS ME!

[LADIES]:

(MY MY....MY,MY,...MY,MY...OH MY! IF ANYBODY KNOWS ANYTHING, IT'S LUCY DOVE!)

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### PERKINS

Has anybody even seen Douglass?

### DOVE

Me and Mattie saw him not too long ago when he stopped by our rooming house to  
fix up a few things. He helps us keep the best rooming house around these parts in tip-  
top shape!



**HOLT (wryly)**

Ya'll got the **only** rooming house around these parts.

**DOVE**

Even so, have you ever heard anyone complain?

**MUMFORD**

I must say, Deacon Jackson goes on about how he just loves your meatloaf on Thursdays.

**CRANE**

He does love **my** meatloaf. (Dove gives an indulgent look to Crane)

**MUMFORD**

He's been rooming with you for quite a while...

**DOVE**

...Been there as a permanent roomer since bein' a retired Pullman Porter. We overheard Douglas shyly talkin' with Deacon Jackson ...sayin he knows everybody's heard by now about the baby. He asked the deacon what he should do.

**WIGGINS**

What did he tell him?

**DOVE**

I couldn't hear that much, but Deacon Jackson was doin' more listenin' than talkin'. That was probably the best thing to do. The old woman that lives across the creek says Annabelle's husband is goin' to take her away from this place just as soon as she's able!

**JONES**

I imagine it would be kinda awkward if they stayed, with the baby showin' a bit of color an' all.

**CORA**

I wonder if Douglass would try to leave with her and the baby...

**WIGGINS**

He better take HIS fool self away before these white folk get madder

**MUMFORD**

Nobody knew that it was a colored baby until a few days ago.

**HOLT**

That probably includes the mama!

**MUMFORD**

Even if somebody thought she was carryin' Douglas' baby, nobody said it out loud.'

**SISTER JENKINS**

Sister Mumford, you know colored folk been suspectin' Douglass been eyein' that girl since God knows when, and she been eyein' him right back. In public, of course, they didn't speak no more'n a 'how do', but their eyes followed one another around just like a shadow.

**MUMFORD**

I had heard some talk about that.... Wanted to ask Rev'n what he knew about it, but I didn't want to seem like I was meddlin'. Besides, I don't think he could be of service anyway. He couldn't exactly ask them to come in for counseling. [slight laughter]

**HOLT [Sarcastically]**

I guess they in love. Mighty funny kind of love. Everybody know can't no good come out that kind of love! Everybody know that! ... and Douglass ain't no chile. He's closer to 40 than 30.

**WIGGINS**

There are plenty colored girls in Camden he could have courted ten miles up the road. One or two right here in Boyds' Center, so I don't understand why He had to go foolin' wid a white woman.

**HOLT**

He a colored man, ain't he?

**JONES**

Now wait a minute! We all know Douglass is a fine man. Let's give him credit for lovin' the woman for more reasons than that.

**CRANE**

We haven't heard that 'fine man' Douglass say one word!

**JENKINS**

Leave that man alone, girl!

**DOVE**

He's got to say something,...especially now that he's got this baby.

**WIGGINS**

Chile, what can he do? His hands are tied.

**HOLT (under her breath)**

He should have tied his hands a little earlier

**PERKINS**

People are going to be lookin' at him for explanation anyway. Maybe if he said something to us, we might be able to figure out how to help.

**HOLT**

Cora, that's a sweet thought but he wasn't confindin' in us when he was out sneakin' around. You know, I would have told him just because we live up north, down south memories run long and deep. It's a wonder they haven't grabbed that boy and done God knows what

**PERKINS (defensively)**

Douglass is probably tryin' to show everybody that he's not runnin' away from this. I'm sure he's feelin' all sorts of things..., but he's not runnin'.

That's got to count for somethin'.

**WIGGINS ( intuitively)**

Well... the dead comes alive! Cora, if I didn't know any better...and I think I do...I'd say you've been lookin' out for more than his' well being' for some time now. **all respond)**

**PERKINS**

I admit I've...thought about him some (comments made) Ok...I think about him a lot... (comments) but I never made anything of it because he is older than me. I've met some fellas my age who are...ok, but they seem kinda immature. Douglas is such a gentleman, and always takes the time to ask me how I'm doing, especially since Momma died. He just makes me feel... Special.

**DOVE (jokeing)**

Yeah, and I'm sure you make him feel old!

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## #4- IF YOU ONLY KNEW ME

[CORA] (recitative)

WE SEE EACH OTHER E'VRYDAY, IF ONLY IN MY DREAMS,  
AND WE EXCHANGE A FEW SOCIAL AMENATIES.

YOU'RE ALWAYS NICE TO ME, AND YOU GREET ME WITH A SMILE.

I DARE TO RAISE MY HOPES UP HIGH, NOT KNOWING ALL THE WHILE IF IT MEANS NOTHING TO YOU.....BUT FOR ME.....

(song)

IF YOU ONLY KNEW ME....AND KNEW HOW MUCH I LONG TO KISS YOUR LIPS...

AND IF YOU COULD FEEL THE WAY I FEEL WHEN YOU'R NEAR, MY LOVE, AND SEE THE LOOK IN MY EYES...

IF YOU ONLY KNEW ME...THEN YOU'D KNOW HOW MUCH I WANT TO LOVE YOU...

BUT I AM JUST AFRAID THAT YOU WILL NOT LOVE ME TOO

I'VE BEEN HURT BEFORE, AND I'M SCARED THAT I'LL BE HURT AGAIN.

BUT THERE IS NO GUARANTEE WE WILL EVER BE ANY MORE THAN FRIENDS, SO....

IF YOU GET TO KNOW ME, WE'LL TAKE EACH DAY FOR WHAT IT HAS TO GIVE.

AND THEN, WHEN OUR TIME IS THROUGH, I'LL BE GLAD...THAT I HAD THE CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW YOU.

[CORA]

HE'S SO HANDSOME!

[HOLT]

(SHE KNOWS THAT HE IS THINKING OF SOMBODY ELSE)

[WIGGINS]

(SHHH! SHE MIGHT HEAR YOU)

[CORA]

....AND HE'S GOT THE MOST PECULIAR SMILE!

[HOLT]

(SHE'S GOT TO BE DREAMIN'!)

[JENKINS]

(CORA'S SUCH A SWEET GIRL...DON'T TALK MEAN ABOUT HER.)

[CORA]

...AND IN MY DREAMS, HE TAKES ME IN HIS ARMS AND TELLS ME THAT HE LOVES ME SO!

[LADIES]

(IT HURTS TO LOVE SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T LOVE YOU BACK)

[CORA]

...BUT THEN, I WAKE UP AND I'M THERE, ALL ALONE.

I'VE BEEN HURT BEFORE, AND I'M SCARED THAT I'LL BE HURT AGAIN

[LADIES]

(YOU'VE BEEN HURT BEFORE, AND YOU'RE SCARED THAT YOU WILL BE HURT AGAIN)

[CORA]

BUT THERE IS NO GUARANTEE..

(NO GUARANTEE THAT YOU WILL EVER BE)...

WE WILL EVER BE ANYMORE THAN FRIENDS.

SO....IF YOU GET TO KNOW ME,

WE'LL TAKE EACH DAY FOR WHAT IT HAS TO GIVE.

AND THEN, WHEN OUR TIME IS THROUGH,

I'LL BE GLAD..

I HAD THE CHANCE...

TO GET TO KNOW YOU...

I WANT TO GET TO KNOW YOU.....

I WANT TO GET TO KNOW...YOU!

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**Cora (longingly)**

This is one of those times I miss talking to my Momma. I never told that to anyone, but her. She knew I had this big naive crush on Douglass, but she would just listen to me ramble on, with both of us knowing that my dream would probably never come true.

**Wiggins**

Well, I promised your momma that I would be there for you....(jokeing) even to listen to your crazy dreams. (all respond)

**Cora**

(jumping all the way in the water)

Well, since I told you this much, I may as well tell you about my latest crazy 'Douglass' dream. ....I've even dreamed about taking care of that baby!

**Holt**

That's a whoooooole lot of dreamin'!

**WIGGINS**

Cora, I know most people, especially my age, want you to get married and have lots of babies. But you need to finish school before you even dream about takin' care of anybody's baby,...that includes your own. Education is very important and you young people have more opportunities now than we ever did. Save the 'get married and have baby' part 'til later.

**Holt:**

What do you know about takin' care of a baby, anyway?

**Perkins:**

What does anybody know about takin' care of a baby, at first. There are a lot of people walking around who are not babies anymore, so it must not be too hard. I'd figure it out.

**Holt: (joking at Coras' naivity)**

How old did you say you was?

**Jenkins: (joking chide)**

Sister Holt, I done told you to leave that chile' alone!

**Jones:**

Ain't nuthin' wrong with being a romantic, Cora. But seein' Douglass in your dreams, and takin' care of a baby for real, is two different things. In a dream, you can wake up, roll over, and go' on back to sleep.

**Jenkins:**

I'm sure that you would give that baby all the love it needs, but you got to have a little more than that.

**Mumford:**

Yes, baby! You got to give all your time... patience...understanding,... (music cue)

It was a long time ago, but I still remember when my baby started teethin'! Ooh Weee!

Cora, when that happens, sometimes you gonna wish it was a dream!

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## **#5-MORE THAT A NOTION**

**[JENKINS]**

**WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TAKING CARE OF A LITTLE BABY?**

**WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TAKING CARE OF A LITTLE CHILD?**

**[JONES]**

**SO MUCH TO KNOW ABOUT TAKING CARE OF A LITTLE BABY**

**SO MUCH TO KNOW ABOUT TAKING CARE OF A LITTLE CHILD.**

**[LADIES]**

**IT'S MORE THAN A NOTION...TAKING CARE OF A LITTLE BABY.**

**[JONES]**

**WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE ALL ALONE,**

**JUST YOU AND YOUR PRECIOUS CHILD,**

**AT TWO O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING?...**

YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO SLEEP,

[LADIES]

(BUT THE BABY IS CRYING)

[JENKINS]

YOU'VE DONE ALL YOU KNOW HOW TO DO.

[LADIES]

IT'S MORE THAN A NOTION...

TAKING CARE OF A LITTLE BABY.

[HOLT]

YOU'VE CHECKED HIS PANTS..

[MUMFORD]

YOU'VE CHECKED FOR GAS

[DOVE]

HE DOESN'T WANT TO EAT

[ALL]

SO WHY WON'T HE GO TO SLEEP?

[MUMFORD] (recit)

YOU'RE TIRED, AND YOU NEED A BREAK...'

CAUSE THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE THAT YOU CAN TAKE...

[LADIES]

WHAT WILL YOU DO... (music tacet)

[JONES] (spoken)

Remember Cora, you said that in the Douglass asked you to take care of his child, not be his wife. You will be in this all by yourself!



[CORA] (spoken)

Hmmm...I might have to re-think this a little bit. The dream is not as romantic as I thought it was.

[LADIES] (sung)

IT'S MORE THAN A NOTION...

[CORA]

(I JUST NEED SOME SLEEP!)

[LADIES]

TAKING CARE OF A LITTLE BABY

[CORA]

(IT'S MORE THAN A NOTION)

[JONES]

TIME GOES ON....IT'S ALMOST DAWN....

IT'S YOU AND YOUR PRECIOUS CHILD

AT FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING...

YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO SLEEP...

BUT THE CHILD ISN'T SLEEPY

[LADIES]

(YOU'VE DONE ALL YOU KNOW HOW TO DO!)

[JONES] (recit)

YOUR PATIENCE IS WEARING THIN....BUT THE CHILD JUST WILL NOT GO TO SLEEP!

[LADIES]

(WHAT WILL YOU DO?) (music tacet)

**[CORA]** (spoken with uncertainty in her voice)

I changed him,....he doesn't have gas....He's not hungry because I just fed him...(expectantly) Mother Wiggins, I can come to you, just like I always do when I have a problem!

**[WIGGINS]**(dryly)

Not at no 5'o'clock in the mornin'. You got to figure out somethin' else, Babygirl!

**[CORA]** (sighs, then pretends to look at the baby saying...)

...but look at him,...he's so cute!

(sung)

**I'D WALK HIM AND ROCK HIM, AND KISS HIS LITTLE FEET,  
CUDDLE HIM AND COO TO HIM...PRETEND THAT HE TALKS TO ME.  
AND THO I'D BE TIRED, IT'S TRUE....  
THERE IS NOTHING ELSE THAT I COUD DO.....  
BUT KEEP WALKIN'...ROCKIN'....SQUEEZIN'...HUGGIN...  
COMFORT HIM, UNTIL HE GOES TO SLEEP.**

**[HOLT]**(dryly)

...(She doesn't have a clue) (music bump)

**Jenkins:**

Let that chile' be! She'll find out all she needs to know in due time.

Wiggins:

Now, back to business. Sister Jenkins, you know you got to make Mother some of them rolls.

**Jenkins: (light hearted)**

I know, Mother. Ain't no way to get around makin' them rolls. I just made a batch yesterday for Douglas' mama. I thought it might make her feel a little better, but she honestly doesn't know what to do.

**Wiggins:**

I been livin' in Boyds Center for a long time, at peace wid these white folk. Ain't had no trouble....til now. Now, people just actin' like a pack 'o wolves.

**Jones:**

I was born here, and you're right. I ain't never seen folk this upset. But people better not think they can walk over my Sam and me. We own our land, bought and paid for.

**Crane:**

...and Douglass still not sayin' a word!

**Dove:**

He better not think he's gonna keep his fool mouth shut and let the white folk take it out on us.

**Holt:**

Well, white folk just need to hold their horses and remember that there is a reason why colored folk come in many shades of Negro! This ain't nuthin' new!

**Dove:**

The man who owns the store is messin' with Douglas' mama, too!.....won't let her have any supplies at the store unless she pay cash. She don't have no 'up front' money.... He knows she'll pay him....she always does!

**Mumford:**

It's at the point where anything is liable to happen. We've seen a lot of things changin' in this country. I hate to say it, but it might be easier to change laws than it is to change some peoples' minds.

**Jenkins:**

I must admit, I am a bit nervous. You know Ohio ain't nothin' but the south....up north!

**Wiggins:**

Lord knows, we law abidin' people. Ain't harmed a soul. And that baby ain't nobody's business but Douglass and that woman. But if somethin' does happen, I'm too old and too tired to be goin' nowhere.

**Jones:**

Not runnin' Sam and me off, either. It's a shame Douglas got us in this mess!

**Holt:**

Mess or no mess, I got my .22! [response all around]

What!...Ya'll don't have a gun?

**Wiggins:**

I don't need no gun. These white folk up here don't scare me none' cause I grew up down south!. Now that' a whole different kind of white folk down there. I done yes ma'med and no sir'd more times in my life than I'd care to remember. I been bullied by poor white folk, and bossed around by rich ones. I've raised their kids, cleaned their houses, tended their gardens, and cooked their food. I would be so tired, but not once did anyone care if I had enough strength to take care of my own family. God gave me strength and saw me through all of that! I don't fear nobody!

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## #6- I Live to Serve the Lord

[WIGGINS] (recitative)

I LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD, I LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD

I LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD, I LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD

I'VE BEEN 'ROUND HERE A LONG, LONG TIME..

WORKED MY LAND...RAISED MY KIDS...AND WATCHED MY HUSBAND DIE!

GOD HAS BROUGHT ME THROUGH IT ALL. HE DIDN'T BRING ME THIS FAR,  
TO LET ME FALL!

WITH MY HAND IN GODS' HAND...HERE I STAND

(time starts here)

I LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD, I LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD

I LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD, I LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD

[LADIES] (repeat refrain)

**[WIGGINS]**

**HOW CAN YOU CALL YOURSELF A BELIEVER WHEN YOU LET YOURSELF BE LED BY THE DECEIVER?**

**I'VE BEEN HERE A LONG, LONG, TIME AND HERE I'LL STAY...**

**WITH THE HELP OF GOD, I AIN'T RUNNIN' AWAY!**

**[LADIES] (repeat refrain)**

**[WIGGINS]**

**GOT MYCHURCH..., GOT MY LAND...**

**I TRY TO LIVE MY LIFE ACCORDING TO GODS' PLAN.**

**THE FOLKS BEFORE ME HAVE SHED THEIR BLOOD...**

**HOLDIN' TO THE PROMISED LAND.**

**SO WITH MY HAND IN GODS' HAND, HERE I STAND!**

**(SPOKEN OVER VAMP)**

You know, the Lord must be a bit of a jokester because some of the things He leads me to do...1<sup>st</sup>, I don't understand...and 2<sup>nd</sup>, fold are going to think I'm stone crazy when I do it. (ladies respond) But, I guess He must pick those of us who are crazy enough not to care what other people think. So...I MUST be crazy and I praise God for it!

**[Cora] (sung)**

**MOTHER WIGGINS, I HAVE ALWAYS ADMIRERD THE WAY YOU LET THE LORD LEAD YOU....**

**LIKE THE TIME WHEN A FAM'LY OF HOMELESS AND HUNGRY FIELD WORKERS CAME INTO THE TOWN....AND EVERYBODY SAID:**

**(quick responses all around)**

**(Mumford)**

...I remember that. The pastor and I said you proved yourself to be a true woman of God!

**(Jones)**

I felt so sorry for them.

**(Holt)**

I felt sorry...but not that sorry.

**(Jenkins)**

Honestly, Mother Wiggins, most of us were a bit afraid to take in those strangers!  
**(music continues)**

**[Cora]**

**BUT YOU, YOU TOOK THEM...AND YOU, YOU FED FED  
AND YOU ALLOWED THEM TO STAY 'TIL THEY FELT THEY COULD FIND THEIR WAY.  
YOU LIVE TO SERVE THE LORD! (music fades into dialogue)**

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**Wiggins:** (as music fades)

Don't give me too much credit. I had to really pray on that one 'cuz it was something about that husband that I didn't trust. So, every night before I went to bed, I just prayed 'the blood of Jesus' ...and slept with one eye open all night long!

**Mumford:**

Cora, that was a long time ago....you and your mom didn't even live here then. How do you know about this? (all come to the same revelation)

(Cora looks to Mother Wiggins for unspoken permission to tell their secret)

**Cora:**

It was my family that Mother took in all those years ago. (response all around)

**Holt: (lovingly)**

Cora...you were that pretty lil' nappy-headed girl I remember runnin' around here! I always wondered whatever happened to that family. How come you never said anything?

**Wiggins:**

Truth is, when Cora and her momma came back here after all those years, she didn't remember who I was.

**Cora:**

I just knew that Mother FELT familiar to me. I asked my Momma if she knew a Mrs. Wiggins. That's when Momma told me the story. After that, I went over to Mothers' house to thank her for what she had done. She told me that we can keep it just between us.

**Wiggins:**

I knew there was something special about you from the moment I laid eyes on you! **(loving memory)**

You were always tryin' to help,...gettin' in the way more'n anything!

**Cora: (innocently revealing her truth)**

I just remember trying to do everything I could not to make this woman be mad at us. I didn't want her to tell us we had to leave.

**Wiggins:**

I almost did because, like I said, I didn't trust your daddy then. I knew I didn't have much....but I wanted to **keep** what I had! But that second night, after you and your momma fell asleep, he asked if he could kindly speak with me on the porch. That's when he told me that he made his livin' as a migrant worker, following the crops from place to place. He said that when he was by himself, he just did the work and moved to the next place. But, he said, after he met your momma,... then you came along,... he wanted to make a home for his family. Asked if I could give ya'll a little time to rest up. He offered to fix up some things around my house. Ya'll stayed a while, then after a spell, you went on your way. I came to know your dad as a good man.

**Cora:**

I didn't know that part.

**Wiggins:**

You were no more'n 4 or 5 years old. I never heard from ya'll again, until you and your momma moved up here a few years back. She told me that your daddy got a job workin'

for the railroad and ya'll never moved again. After Mr. Perkins passed away, your momma had a hankerin' to move back here. When she took sick, she made me promise to look after you. That's why I need you to go back and finish school!....I promised her I would do all I could to see that you did that.

**Mumford:**

The Rev'n is askin' prayers to be lifted up for Ida Mae Jackson, Douglass' momma. Mr. Webb at the store won't let her have her groceries on credit. He knows she can't afford to pay up front!

Jones:

Mr. Webb know she's gonna pay him.

**Jenkins:**

She always does.

**Crane:**

He's just being a bit mean spirited on account of old man Webb bein' his uncle and all. I just don't understand folk!

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## #7- HOLT'S DILEMMA

[HOLT] (recit)

I know you're a prayin' woman, Mother....

[JENKINS] (spoken)

Maybe we can put together a few items and drop them over to her tomorrow.

[HOLT]

So I ask you to pray for me, Mother...

[JONES]

Ms. Ida Mae is so proud, we best leave the basket at her door. That way, she won't feel shame.



**[HOLT]**

**Cuz I can't stand stupidity, Mother...**

**[WIGGINS]**

No need for shame....we all need help sometimes. But, just in case, leavin' it at her door will probably be best.

**[HOLT]**

**Like what's goin' on, in here Boyds' Center!**

**[Holt] (underscore dialogue)**

I have a mind to have words with Mr Webb. He knows..(Wiggins cuts her off)

**[WIGGINS]**

...now Holt, what do you think you can say to change his mind? It's his store!

**[HOLT]**

That don't make it right!...and he knows his momma, God rest her soul, would'nt stand for that. She was white,... but she was fair.

**[DOVE]**

Girl, you got to be careful what you say to these folk!

**[CRANE]**

We **are** livin' in troubled times.

**[HOLT]**

Well, somebody's liable to get their little feelin's' hurt!

**[MUMFORD] (half joking)**

We pray that it won't be you.

**[WIGGINS]**

Just be careful, Holt. I have never known you to mince words.

**[HOLT]**

Mother, I'm still workin' on it, after all these years.

(Holt sings)

MY FOLKS KNEW MY MOUTH COULD, ONE DAY, GET ME IN TROUBLE,  
 SO THEY TAUGHT ME RESPECT, SINCE YOU CAN'T TEACH PATIENCE.  
 MY MOMMAS' WAY WOULD BE TO PRAY,  
 AND THEN, START FUSSIN' AT ME.  
 SHE WOULD PRAY AND FUSS....FUSS AND PRAY...  
 TO PROTECT ME.

[PERKINS], (spoken playfully)

That sounds just like you, Mother

[WIGGINS]

Chile' you better hush!

[HOLT] (sung)

DADDY WOULD SAY I NEED TO LEARN TO PICK MY BATTLES!  
 HE KEPT WORKIN' WITH ME,  
 BUT I TRIED HIS PATIENCE!  
 HE SAID THERE'S GONNA BE A DAY WHEN YOU WILL HAVE TO SAY  
 WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND...  
 BUT YOU GOT TO ACCEPT THE CONSEQUENCE OF YOUR ACTIONS.

(music tacet)

Dove:

I've heard you speak of your momma, but I've never heard you say anything about your  
 Daddy, until now.

[HOLT] (spoken)

Daddy always wanted a boy, but I was the only child, so....(jokingly) he had to make  
 due with what he had. Taught me pretty much everything you would teach a boy; how  
 to shoot a gun, work the land, fix things....how to take care of myself in sticky situations.  
 But Daddy always said that there might come a time when you just have to speak your

peace, 'cuz holdin' it in goes against everything that you are. For him....that day came much too soon.

(GO DIRECTLY TO #8-HOLTS' LAMENT)

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[CORA] (music SAFETY vamp)

Sister Holt, what do you mean? Did something happen to him?

### #8- HOLTS' LAMENT

HE DIED WHEN I WAS 12 YEARS OLD

AND IT WAS SUCH AN ORDINARY DAY.

BUT ON THAT DAY....

A DAY I'LL NEVER FORGET,

MY DADDY WAS FACED WITH A DILEMMA WHEN HE MET WITH

THREE YOUNG WHITE MEN WITH HATE IN THEIR EYES....

WHO WANTED HIM TO STAND THERE AND APOLOGIZE

FOR NOT BOWING HIS HEAD AS HE DARED TO SPEAK.

AND WHAT'S EVEN WORSE,

FOR NOT CROSSING THE STREET....WHEN GOOD WHITE WOMEN PASS BY.

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE LOOK IN MY DADDYS' EYES.

(mood changes)

WHEN HE SPOKE, HE WAS POLITE AS CAN BE

HE DIDN'T WANT TO LOOK AFRAID IN FRONT OF ME.

I WAS PROUD OF MY DAD, AS HE TOOK A STAND.

HE SAID, 'I'LL NEVER BOW DOWN TO ANOTHER MAN!'.

HE SAID, 'THAT'S ALL THAT I'VE GOT TO SAY'....  
THEY SHOT HIM AS HE TURNED TO WALK AWAY!

HE DIED IN MY ARMS,  
AND NOT ONE DAY GOES BY, WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES,  
THAT I DON'T SEE MY DADDY CRADLED IN MY ARMS  
AS HIS LIFE JUST SLIPS AWAY  
HIS LIFE... JUST... SLIPS... AWAY.

AND WHEN I FINALLY GO TO SLEEP,  
I HAVE THIS DREAM OF A GUN THAT IS GLARING IN THE NOON-DAY SUN.  
AND THEN, I HEAR THEM!...  
I HEAR THREE SHOTS,  
AND WHEN I LOOK AROUND  
I SEE THOSE BODIES!  
IN MY HAND,  
I'M HOLDING A GUN,  
AND I SEE BODIES!  
I SHOT THOSE MEN WHO KILLED MY DADDY!

---

**Holt: (spoken)**

Then, I wake up...and remember....I remember that I did nothing to help my daddy...nothing at all. I was too shocked to cry, and too scared to get mad. I just...sat and held his body while somebody ran to get my momma. Been carrying that shame with me every day of my life. (underscoring ends)

**Wiggins:**

Chile, what could you have done?

**Holt:**

I could have...I don't know..I could have...

**Wiggins:**

You could have done NOTHIN'! Not one thing. It wasn't your job to defend your daddy. He was a grown man. You were a child...his child,...His baby. You just told us how very proud you were when your daddy stood up to those men with DIGNITY. We don't know why some people have to die early, especially behind some foolishness like that. But he was moved by righteousness to do what he did. He also knew that if he lost his life, you would be strong enough to let God lead you to do what's right. So...if the day ever comes for you to wave that gun of yours, let it be for the right reasons. Just like your daddy taught you.

Jones: (breaking the somber mood)

You wanna know what my Sam says?

**Holt: (good naturedly)**

What does your Sam Say? (light laughter all around)

**Jones:**

He says all the time that there are good and bad people anywhere you go.

**Holt: (wryly)**

You must tell Mr. Jones 'thank you' for that piece of information.

**Jones: (unphased)**

I believe that too. Ya'll know that there are a few white folk around here who are the salt of the earth. And we also know some Negroes you can't trust as far as you can throw them! Mother Wiggins, I trust in the Lord, I do. And Sister Holt, I even have a gun....even though I ain't picked that thang up in years. Anyway....I really believe most folk around here are pretty decent, for the most part, so we won't have to worry about using no gun.

**Wiggins:**

Either way, I'm too old and too tired, so I ain't goin' nowhere.

**Holt:**

Either way, I'm ready too!

**Jenkins:**

Well, ladies...speakin' of bein' ready, we GOT to finish tendin' to this pot luck business.

**Jones:**

We just need to give that situation time enough to blow over. Why, last night after dinner, my Sam said, 'Mrs. Jones, I'll bet in about a year this whole....

**[she gets abruptly cut off by Jenkins]**

**Jenkins: [astonished]**

Mrs. Jones?

**Jones:**

Yes?

**Jenkins:**

You mean to tell me...even your husband calls you....Mrs. Jones?

**Jones: [a little defensive]**

Yes.

**Jenkins:**

All the time?

**Jones: [more determined]**

Yes!

**Holt:**

Under...EVERY circumstance? **[reaction all around]**

**Jones: [emphatically]**

Yes! What in the world is the matter with that?

**Jenkins: [a bit hesitant]**

Well...it just occurred to me that I've NEVER heard ANYONE call you by a first name

**[all ladies look at Ms. Jones]**

**Cora:**

Mrs. Jones,.....what IS your first name?

**[all sit on the edge of their seats in anticipation]**

**Jones:** [very defensively]

Well,...if you REALLY must know....It's...**Caldonia**....**Sapphire**...

[she spits the rest out quickly]

...**Delilah Washington Jones!**

[All get very quiet]

**Wiggins:** [breaking the silence]

Great day in the mornin', chile! That's some name you got on you!!

[ladies respond light-heartedly]

**Jones:** [a little pitiful]

I know....and I really can't stand it, for more reasons than just being plain ugly!

**Crane:**

Who gave you all them names?

**Dove:**

Yeah, who's the culprit?

**Jones:**

My momma named me after my great Aunt Caldonia, who took care of Momma and her sister after their momma died. Aunt Caldonia was quite a character...had absolutely no class! And she didn't take no mess. She had this knife that she carried in her bra, and she would cut you before she asked you to leave her alone. But you know what,... I really loved her because I knew that she really loved us. She would do anything for anybody. As outrageous as she was, no one would hesitate to go to her for anything 'cause they knew whatever she had...they had. Many times she would have a fish fry/card party on Friday night and give any money she made to whoever was havin' it rough at the time.

**Mumford:**

Nothin' to be ashamed of there. She sounds like a pretty honorable woman.

**Jones:**

Yeah, but that's just my FIRST name! (**ladies react**) What do folk call a colored woman with a lot of sass?...a sapphire!

**Wiggins:**

Chile, the sapphire is a holy stone...means wisdom and royalty! In the bible, King Solomon and Abraham both wore sapphire....I don't see what your problem is.

**Jones:**

Okay,... but I know you can't say nothing good about Delilah! We all know what she did to Sampson!

**Wiggins:**

Well, you got a point there.

**Jones:**

When I did domestic work, all those bossy people callin' me by my first name was a nightmare! 'Caldonia, do this,..Caldonia, do that!' From job to job, I would switch my names around, but hearing somebody say, 'Sapphire, do this' was no better. So when my Sam asked me to marry him, I said I would....only if he promised never to call me by any of those names. He said, ' you'll be my Ms. Jones'. I was so grateful that I started tryin' to be what I thought Sam wanted me to be. Stopped thinkin' for myself and took on all of his opinions. I wanted to always be pleasin' to him. (just realizing)

I guess I call myself rising above what I took all those names to mean. I probably couldn't form my own opinion even if I knew the Rapture was comin'.

**Crane:**

Well, we gonna have to help you get over that 'cause we all wanna be ready when Jesus come, now don't we.

**Wiggins:**

Don't be too hard on yourself, now. It's no crime to try to better yourself. You just can't give **yourself up** to try to please somebody else. Let me say that again...don't throw yourself away to try to please nobody else. Folk need to be shook up from time to time. Sam is a good man, but you done got him spoiled. You need to start lettin' him know how you feel about things. You're leavin' an awful lot of room for him to do stuff he ain't got no business, just because he knows you won't say a word.

**Jones:**

My Sam would never do that to me.

**(She notices a slight reaction form the ladies)**

...I don't think I take his actions for granted, but I don't think he would step out on me.

**(ladies have further uncomfortable reaction) (defiantly, she says..)**

Chile', he bed' not!!



**Jenkins: (trying to keep peace)**

We can never speak 100% about another person. For instance, do you know where your man goes and what he's doin' the last Friday of every month?...Steppin' out the house all dressed up smellin' like he took a bath in a bottle of Old Spice Cologne?

**Jones: (slightly defensive)**

He goes out with the boys! I'm guessing they go into the city. He's been doing that for as long as I can remember. My Sam says that a man has got to let off steam every once in a while....and....**(tentatively)** How do you know he smells like Old Spice Cologne? **(now, looking for an argument)** You know something that I don't know?

**Jenkins:**

Now wait a minute, Ms. Jones. I'm not insinuating anything, but after all these years, my point is....I'll bet you still don't know exactly what 'the boys' be doin'. That's why I say you can't know 100% about another person. I'm quite sure it's all very innocent.

**Mumford:**

You just can't say what a man will never do. Don't assume. It'll save you a lot of wear and tear on your heart.

**Holt: (amused)**

Well...listen to the preacher's wife, soundin' like she been around the world and back again. What makes you know so much about life?

**Mumford: (cooly)**

I may be the preachers' wife, but I'm a woman who had a life long before I married the Rev'n.

## **#9-Mumford's Blues**

(spoken soliloquy/w underscoring )

**MUMFORD (SASSY AND SLIGHTLY SARCSTIC)**

**WHEN I BECAME OLD ENOUGH TO LIVE ON MY OWN, I WAS SO NAÏVE AND SO READY TO FIND OUT WHAT LIFE WAS ALL ABOUT. I MET A MAN WHO WAS LOOKIN' FOR A WOMAN THAT WAS YOUNG AND STUPID....**

**AND THERE I WAS!**

THIS MAN WAS AS TALL AS A TREE, WITH SKIN AS SMOOOOOOTH AS CHOC'LATE PUDDIN'.  
WHEN HE SWEET TALKED ME, I COULD HAVE SWORN HONEY WAS DRIPPIN' FROM HIS LIPS!  
WHAT WAS REALLY COMIN' OUT OF HIS MOUTH WAS LIES!, BUT I WAS TOO TAKEN TO SEE IT.  
MY FRIEND DOROTHY TRIED TO WARN ME, BUT I WOULDN'T LISTEN. I KEPT TELLIN' HER THAT HE'S  
NOT LIKE THAT.

I TOLD HER HE SAID HE LOVED ME,... WANTED TO MARRY ME, AND HAVE HIS BABIES.

I JUST KNEW HE WOULD NEVER HURT ME!

DOROTHY SAID, 'GURL, DON'T EVER SAY WHAT A MAN WILL NEVER DO!

THEY DO THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT THEY SAY, AND SAY THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT THEY DO.

IT'S THEIR NATURE!

'HE'S NOT LIKE THAT'!, I KEPT SAYIN'. 'HE'S A GOOD MAN AND I KNOW HE'LL NEVER HURT ME.'  
WELL...THAT MAN...TALL AS A TREE AND SKIN AS SMOOOOOH AS CHOC'LATE PUDDIN' ASKED  
ME...

(MUSIC/STOP TIME STARTS HERE)

'BABY, DO YOU LOVE ME?'

I SAID,'I DO'

HE ASKED,'WILL YOU MARRY ME'?

I SAID...'YES!!!'

...THEN, HE TOLD ME ABOUT THIS JOB HE HAD A CHANCE TO GET IN ANOTHER TOWN AND  
ASKED ME, 'BABY, WOULD YOU WAIT FOR ME WHILE I GO AWAY, GET SITUATED, AND COME  
BACK AND GET YOU?'

GUUURL, I WAS SO IN LOVE THAT I DIDN'T EVEN ASK HIM WHERE HE WAS GOIN'...

OR WHEN HE WAS COMIN' BACK!

I JUST SAID, 'YES.'

...THEN, HE ASKED ME IF I WOULD LOAN HIM SOME MONEY?!!!

CHILE, DID THAT MAN NOT ONLY STEAL MY HEART, BUT STEAL MY MONEY TOO?

[ALL] ( WAIT A BEAT BEFORE RESPONSE)

YESS!!!

(PUT A CAP ON THE BLUES)

---

**Mumford:**

My heart was so swollen with hurt, I felt it would bust wide open. But, time went on. I got over it,...or should I say, I got through it. But I didn't want nothin' else to do with **no other man!** Then...I met this man...tall as a tree and skin as smooooth as choc'late puddin'.

**(ladies respond to the turn in the story)**

He was a preacher man... with the most beautiful eyes! But he had the saddest eyes I had ever seen. After I slapped myself for even giving him a second thought, and commenced to runnin' as far away from him as possible,....I

heard a small voice whisper to me, 'don't ever say what a man will never do'. I'm thinkin....that's the same thing my girlfriend said! Then the soft voice whispered, 'how do you know that this man won't love you? Trust me....and look into his eyes again.' Well,...I looked,...and I saw love lookin' back at me. What I saw was someone who needed to be needed by someone special. At that moment, I gave him my broken heart, and he gave me his. It took some time, and a lot of trust, but we helped each other heal. Since we've been together, I try not to second guess how he feels, or what he thinks,...though it's hard not to 'cause he don't talk much. But I know his heart, and he's a good man. When you say, Mother Wiggins, that the Lord is a jokester,...you're sure right because He put together two people who were so afraid of being hurt again that they didn't want another thing to do with another person. But loving that quiet man of mine made me see that God doesn't make mistakes.

Plus...being alone.....no fun!

**Wiggins:**

Well, I can understand that. Since my husband died, I got to talk to my self and answer myself back to get a good conversation sometimes! (all chuckle)

**Jenkins:**

Most everybody in here except Sister Mumford and Ms. Jones can relate to that.

**Jones:**

Oh no, I know how that feels...

---

## #10- Loneliness

[Jones]

**WHEN YOU WAKE UP IN THE MORNING WITH AN EMPTINESS INSIDE...**

[CORRA] (SPOKEN AFTER 1<sup>ST</sup> MUSIC PHRASE)

Sometimes, you can be in a room full of people and still be lonely.

[JONES]:

**...AND NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, IT JUST CAN'T BE FILLED...**

[CRANE] (SPOKEN AFTER 2<sup>ND</sup> MUSIC PHRASE)

It's amazing to me how two people can be with one another, and yet, don't have the slightest clue as to what each other needs.

[JONES]:

**YOU'LL GO THROUGHOUT THE DAY WITH A RESTLESSNESS YOU JUST CAN'T HIDE;  
FEELIN' ANXIOUS AND ANGRY, BUT YOU DON'T NOW WHY....**

[DOVE] (OVER MUSIC VAMP)

IT'S ONE THING WHEN QUIET IS JUST...QUIET

[WIGGINS]

I UNDERSTAND THAT, TOO. ME AND MY HUSBAND WOULD SIT ON THE PORCH AFTER SUPPER SOME NIGHTS, JUST LIS'NIN' TO THE NIGHT. THAT WAS ALL THE CONVERSATION WE NEEDED.

[JONES] (SPOKEN)

THAT'S WHAT I MEAN, ...I WOULD GIVE ANYTHING TO HAVE THAT WITH MY SAM. FOR ME, QUIET IS JUST...

(SONG CONTINUES)

...LONELINESS.

**WHEN YOU'RE SEARCHIN' FOR PEACE, YOU'LL GO THROUGH MANY CHANGES, SOME  
ARE POSITIVE, SOME ARE NOT.**

**BUT MY NEED TO BE INCLUDES SOMEONE IN MY LIFE BECAUSE**

**I CAN'T BE ALONE!**

WHEN YOU GO TO BED AT NIGHT NEEDING SOMEONE TO BE THERE...  
 AND YOU REACH FOR THAT SHADOW THAT'S IN YOU DREAMS...  
 JUST TO FIND MORE LONELINESS.

WHEN YOU'RE SEARCHIN' FOR PEACE...

[LADIES]

(YOU'LL GO THROUGH SOME CHANGES),

JONES:

SOME ARE POSITIVE, SOME ARE NOT,  
 BUT MY NEED TO BE INCLUDES SOMEONE IN MY LIFE  
 BECAUSE I CAN'T BE ALONE!

(I CAN'T BE ALONE)

WHEN YOU GO TO BE AT NIGHT NEEDING SOMEONE TO BE THERE...  
 AND YOU REACH FOR THAT SHADOW THAT'S IN YOU DREAMS...  
 JUST TO FIND MORE LONELINESS.

---

**Jenkins:**

Love and loneliness will make you do all sorts of crazy things. I knew a case once, in Detroit, where a Negro man lived ten years with a white woman, and her husband didn't know it. He was her chauffeur. That was the only way they could be together without anyone suspecting anything. They were in love.

**Holt:**

Mighty funny kind of love, sneakin' and goin' on. Everybody knows can't no good come out of a love like that. Seem to me, if you can't come out in the open and let the world know, what's the point? The only thing you get is pain, heartache, and if you're not careful....

**Jenkins:**

...a baby! An innocent baby! Love is hard! The word is overused, seldom understood, and most, the hardest thing to do! Now, we've all said, 'poor Douglas, poor mamma, poor sister, poor everybody else,...but what about that baby? **(music starts)** Ain't nobody said nothing

about the baby, who's here through no fault of his own. He's gonna be walkin' through life with some folk hatin' him cause he's half colored, ...and some folk not claiming him 'cause he's half white. He's got a hard way to go, and it's up to us to make it better for him, so he won't end up hatin' himself!

---

## #11- Babys' Lullabye

[JENKINS]

BABY?... WHAT ABOUT THIS BABY?

WHAT ABOUT THIS POOR LITTLE CHILD WHO WAS BORN TO THIS WORLD THROUGH NO FAULT OF ITS' OWN?

SHE, WITH HER WHITE SKIN AND EYES OF BLUE,

HE, WITH HIS BROWN SKIN AND BROWN EYES TOO,

THEY CAME TOGETHER AND THEY MADE YOU....BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?

BABY?...PRECIOUS LITTLE BABY,

WHAT ABOUT THIS INNOCENT CHILD WHO HAS GOT TO GROW UP IN AS IMPERFECT WORLD?

SKIN THAT'S A MIXTURE OF OPPOSITE HUES,..

EYES THAT CAN SEE LIFE THROUGH TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS...

YOU'LL LOVE THE WORLD,..WILL THE WORLD LOVE YOU?

PEOPLE ARE SCARED OF WHAT THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND!

YOU MUST BE STRONG AS YOU GROW FROM BOY TO MAN.

DON'T LET YOUR HEART BECOME AS COLD AS THIS OLD WORLD.

IT'S GOT TO CHANGE...I KNOW THAT IT CAN HAPPEN!

BUT UNTIL THEN....UNTIL THEN

YOU'RE JUST A...BABY,....

PRECIOUS LITTLE BABY

WHO DESERVES OUR LOVE AND AFFECTION,...

AND OUR PROTECTION,....  
 AGAINST WHAT THIS WORLD CAN DO!

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## #12-ABOUT THE HAIR

(MUSIC PLAYS 1<sup>ST</sup> PHRASE, THE PERKINS SINGS)

**CRANE:**

SISTER JENKINS, WHAT DO YOU THINK WE'RE GONNA DO?....

(2<sup>ND</sup> MUSIC PHRASE PLAYED, THEN..)

**DOVE:**

DO YOU THINK WE'RE NOT GONNA DO RIGHT BY THAT CHILD?

**JENKINS:** (SPOKEN, A BIT DEFENSIVE)

THAT'S BECAUSE I KNOW HOW PEOPLE TREATED ME.

**HOLT:** (SPOKEN)

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, 'HOW FOLK TREATED YOU?'

(JENKINS STARTS LOOKING UNCOMFORTABLE WITH WHAT WAS SAID. WIGGINS AND HOLT ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO NOTICE. CRANE AND DOVE WILL CONTINUE ON WITH LIGHT-HEARTED BANTER, OBLIVIOUS TO JENKINS' DISCOMFORT)

**CRANE:** (SINGS)

I SAW A PICTURE OF YOUR MOMMA AND DADDY WHEN I CAME TO PICK UP THOSE ROLLS FOR DOUGLAS' MOMMA.

YOU'VE GOT SOME GOOD-LOOKIN' FOLKS!

YOUR MOMMA WAS BEAUTIFUL, AND YOUR DADDY WAS A GOOD-LOOKIN' MAN!

**DOVE:** (DIALOGUE UNDER VAMP)

I SAW THAT PICTURE, TOO AND GURL....YOUR DADDY WAS A GOOD LOOKIN' MAN!

I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE HE WAS VERY LIGHT-SKINNED-ED.

**WIGGINS:**

THAT'S WHAT WE CALLED 'HIGH-YELLA' IN MY DAY.

**MUMFORD:**

YOU GET YOUR FEATURES FROM YOU MOMMA.

**JENKINS:**

YES, EVERYBODY SAYS I LOOK A LOT LIKE MY MOMMA.

**HOLT:** (LIGHT-HEARTED TEASING)

...BUT YOU GOT HAIR LIKE YO' DADDY!

**JONES:**

YOU NEVER HAD TO WORRY ABOUT THEM 'EDGES' AND THAT 'KITCHIN' GOIN' BACK, NOW DID YOU, SISTER JENKINS? (COMMUNAL LAUGHTER)

**PERKINS:**

...AND YOU PROBABLY KNOW HOW TO SWIM, TOO, DON'T YOU?

**JENKINS:** (TEASING HERSELF)

I DO! YOU KNOW, IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME BEFORE I FIGURED OUT WHY MOMMA NEVER WANTED TO GO IN THE WATER. I JUST THOUGHT SHE WAS SCARED....IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO REALIZE SHE JUST DIDN'T WANT TO GET HER HAIR WET! (LAUGHTER ALL AROUND)

**CRANE:** (SONG CONTINUES)

**GIRL, MY MOMMA WOULD HAVE A FIT IF ME AND MY SISERS....  
WERE EVEN OUT IN THE RAIN!**

**JONES:** (SPOKEN)

YOU KNOW WE CAN'T BE GETTING' THIS HAIR WET!

**JONES:** [SUNG]

**THERE WERE THREE OF US GIRLS, SO SHE ONLY HAVE TIME  
TO STRAIGHTEN OUR HAIR ONCE A WEEK.  
WE RAN THROUGH JARS OF 'DIXIE PEACH'!  
AND IF WE GOT OUR HAIR WET IN-BETWEEN TIME, WE WERE OUT OF LUCK  
'CUZ MOMMA DIDN'T DO NO TOUCH-UPS!  
WE WERE SO GLAD WHEN WE GOT OLD ENOUGH TO DO  
EACH OTHERS' HAIR!**



**HOLT:** (SPOKEN ON MUSIC LAST NOTE (FORMATA))

YOU ARE THE **ONLY** NEGRO WOMAN I KNOW THAT CAN SWIM! (SONG ENDS)

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**Cora:** (thoughtfully)

I've seen that picture, too. Respectfully, Sister Jenkins, since your mom was much darker than your dad, did she have to suffer that awful paper-bag test?

**Jenkins:**

Momma told me about one place they went where she was not allowed to enter, but Daddy would have been welcome. It hurt her so much to know that some of her own felt about her the same way most white folks do. They just stopped going to the places where she might be treated differently from Daddy. Some were even churches.

**Wiggins:**

Cora, these are the 60s,...what do you know about no paper bag test?

**Cora:** (wryly)

Enough to know I wouldn't pass it. Mother, you'd be surprised how much it still matters. I learned that at school.

**Crane:** (trying to make a joke, but crossing the line)

Well, they wouldn't 'of even had to hold up the paper bag for your daddy! He would have passed with flyin' colors!

(they all notice that Doves' comment went just a little too far!)

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## #13- Jenkins' Reveal

(DOVE) (recit)

SISTER JENKINS, DON'T PAY US NO MIND! WE MEANT NO HARM.

(HOLT)

BESIDES...WE ALL KNOW YOU DADDY WASN'T WHITE! (ALL NOTICE JENKINS' LOOKING UNCERTAIN)

YOU DO KNOW...THAT YOUR DADDY...WASN'T WHITE...

(THEY SEE THE TRUTH IN HER EYES)

(LADIES) (JAW-DROPPING REACTION)

WAS HE WHITE!

[JENKINS]: (ANXIOUSLY (singing) EXPLAINING)

E'VRYBODY JUST ASSUMED THAT DADDY WAS A LIGHT-SKINNED NEGRO

(LADIES)

SO, YOU'RE TELLING US HE WAS WHITE?!

[JENKINS:]

THE ONLY ONES WHO KNEW THE TRUTH WERE MY MOM AND DAD...

(LADIES)

HOW COULD YOU NOT KNOW!?

[JENKINS:]

THERE WAS NO ONE TO DISPUTE THAT DADDY WAS A LIGHT-SKINNED NEGRO!

(LADIES)

BUT THEIR FAMILIES KNEW THE TRUTH!

[JENKINS:]

THEY DECIDED THEY WOULD MOVE WHERE THEY COULD RAISE A FAMILY..

(HOLT) (RECIT)

HOW DID IT FEEL AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS OF THINKING THAT YOU KNEW WHO YOUR FATHER WAS?

[JENKINS] (RECIT)

THERE WAS NOTHING TO THINK ABOUT...

(CONTINUES IN WALTZ-FEEL)

I NEVER CHANGED ANY PARTS OF THE LOVE I HAD...

(HOLT)

...BUT AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS, HOW COULD YOU NOT BE MAD?!

(JENKINS)

ALL THAT I KNOW IS THAT I LOVE MY DAD!

I DON'T SEE ANY COLOR BUT LOVE! (end)

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**Cora:**

When did you find out?

**Jenkins:**

When I started growing up, I began to see...and feel, that most whites saw Negroes as different from them. I started taking notice of the 'funny' looks our family got when we were together. Make no mistake, we got funny looks sometimes from Negroes too, but early on I learned about the light-skin/dark-skin thing....I understood that, even tho it still wasn't right. But once, when I was about 12, I overheard some white people making comments about how Daddy should be ashamed of himself. I didn't understand, so I asked my parents what those people meant. That's when they told me.

**Cora:**

How did you feel?

**Jenkins:**

I know that the world sees me as a Negro, and I'm proud of that. But I began to wonder if I was obligated to tell any friends I gained as I grew older that I was half white. I came to the conclusion that I didn't owe **anyone** an explanation of who and what I am.

**Holt:**

Obviously not.

**Wiggins:**

Holt!

**HOLT (kind of apologetically)**

Sister Jenkins, you've been listening to me talk about white folk this, colored folk that, and I'm sorry,.... I got my reasons for feelin' the way I do.

**Wiggins:**

Holt, three men shot your daddy, and those men just **happened** to be white. You gotta learn the difference between the two....and move on! If you don't, everything your daddy died for would be for nothin'.

**Mumford:**

And Sister Jenkins,....truth be told, you don't trust folk any more than Sister Holt. I might be wrong, but I think that piece of information you shared with us is holdin' you back from really

living your life. Obviously, your Daddy knew how his family was going to handle his situation. Or, maybe he just didn't trust them enough to even try. But you can't be afraid of someone rejecting you if they knew your daddy was white. If anyone does that, they don't deserve you anyway!

**Dove: (dryly)**

You want to hear a rejection story....here's one. My daddy was a drunk, and my momma **loved that man**,... who was a drunk. That's two strikes right there. I learned a long time ago that fear can look a whole lot like love. Momma was afraid to leave, but I was more afraid of stayin', so I left. I had to make a choice between rejecting my parents way of life OR saving myself. Strike three was not an option for me! It was hard, but it made me strong. Good things grow from bad situations sometimes. Think about it,...when things don't go right in life, it's always compared to a rainy day,..... but if it wasn't for the rain, things wouldn't grow. **(reflective)** One thing I remember about my momma is that she loved the sound of rain! I think it was because she could lose her sadness inside of the sound. Even so, I know that she did the best that she knew how. Me, I love the sound of rain because it gives me comfort, like a nice warm blanket snuggle.

**Holt:**

Well, the sound of rain just makes me sleepy! (music enters)

If it rains in the day, I'm too busy workin' and don't have time to listen. If it rains at night, I'm sleep, so I can't hear it anyway!

[ladies respond to the humor]

**Dove:**

I understand, Sister Holt! Believe it or not, there are some days I don't feel so cheery. I just start thinking about where I would be if I hadn't left home.... And my disposition changes immediately!

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## #14- 'Give Thanks'

[DOVE]

**TAKE TIME TO GIVE THANKS!**

**TAKE TIME TO COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS JUST A LITTLE BIT E'VERDAY**

**MAKE TIME!**

**MAKE TIME TO GIVE THANKS!**

**MAKE TIME TO COUNT YOU BLESSINGS JUST A LITTLE BIT E'VRYDAY**

**MAKE TIME TO GIVE THANKS!**

**(LADIES)**

**(REPEAT REFRAIN)**

**WIGGINS: (SPOKEN OVER UNDERSCORING)**

CHILE', AND DAY I WAKE UP AND CAN MOVE THESE OLD BONES AROUND IS A GOOD DAY FOR ME! (ALL RESPOND)

**[DOVE] (SUNG)**

**SOMETIMES, I WAKE UP IN THE MORNIN' AND I JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE MOV'IN ON WITH MY DAY,  
(MOVIN' ON WITH MY DAY)**

**BUT WOULDN'T IT BE SOMETHIN' IF I DIED IN MY SLEEP AND I COULDN'T GET UP ANYWAY!'**

**(MY LORD!)**

**SO I GET ON UP AND SAY 'THANK YOU, JESUS, FOR WAKIN' ME ONE MORE TIME!**

**(CORA) (SPOKEN/UNDERSCORE)**

MS. LUCY, ARE YOU LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME

**(CRANE)**

I'VE KNOWN HER FOR QUITE A WHILE...TRUST ME...SHE IS! IT DOES GET A BIT ON MY NERVES SOMETIME, BUT HER BEIN' HAPPY ALL THE TIME IS SO MUCH BETTER THAN HOW SHE WAS WHEN I FIRST MET HER.

**(DOVE)**

AIN'T THAT THE TRUTH! IF I HADN'T MET YOU AND YOUR MOMMA, I DON'T KNOW WHERE I WOULD BE.

**(CORA)**

HOW DID YOU GUYS MEET?

**[DOVE] (SUNG)**

**I WAS LOST, PAPER FOUND, IT SAID 'ROOM FOR RENT'**

[CRANE] (SPOKEN)

SHE LOOKED LIKE A LOST CHILD!

[DOVE] (SPOKEN)

I KNOW I DID.

[DOVE] (SUNG)

I ASKED IF I COULD PLEASE WORK FOR MY RENT....I WILL DO ANYTHING

(MOOD CHANGES)

[CRANE] (REFLECTIVE)

MY MOMMA WAS PROUD OF HER ROOMING HOUSE,

SHE MADE EVERYONE FEEL AT HOME...WHETHER YOU STAYED, OR JUST PASSING THRU,

SHE KNOW YOU.

AND WITH LOVE, SHE WOULD CARE FOR THEM EVERYDAY.

[DOVE]

(I'D NEVER SEEN LOVE LIKE THIS BEFORE!)

AND WITH LOVE, SHE'D WORK UNTIL SHE COULDN'T ANYMORE,

(SO I WORKED...)

SHE BEGAN TO TIRE SO EASILY..

(AND I WATCHED.... AND I LEARNED TO CARE FOR SOMEONE OTHER THAN MYSELF)

AND THAT LOOK IN HER EYES... THAT'S WHEN I KNEW THAT HER JOURNEY HERE WAS ALMOST THROUGH!

(I WORKED....AND I WATCHED....AND I LEARNED WHAT LOVE WAS ALL ABOUT)

SO, WITH LOVE, I WOULD CARE FOR HER EVERYDAY...

(THEN I HELPED HER CARE FOR HER MOTHER)

[BOTH]

AND WITH LOVE, I WATCHED HER CLOSE HER EYES FOR THE LAST TIME!

(MUSIC CON'T WITH DIALOGUE)

**[DOVE] (DIALOGUE OVER MEASURES 74-79)**

I saw how lost Mattie was without her momma, and all I could think of was how relieved I was to leave mine. I didn't know what to do, so I just kept workin' around the roomin' house, doin' the best I could to make the roomers feel comfortable while Mattie had her time.

(music mood changes back to thankful)

**[CRANE] (STARTS AT MEASURE 80)**

BLESS HER HEART, SHE COULDN'T COOK WORTH A DARN! If it wasn't for a couple of my live-ins helpin' in the kitchen, we might all be sittin' at Jesus' feet by now! (all respond)

**[DOVE]**

I admit I almost burned down the place a few times, but workin' at the roomin' house changed my life. Now, I know how to cook.

**[WIGGINS]**

Praise Jesus!

**[DOVE]**

...and how to talk to folk...

**[HOLT]**

You learned that on real good!

**[DOVE]**

I make sure everyday to be grateful for something. Sometimes I worry about things,...but I can't even be worried about that!

**DOVE: (SUNG)**

**WHEN MY MIND IS WEARY AND MY SPIRIT TIRES OF ALL THE TROUBLE IN THE WORLD...**

**THAT'S WHEN I DO SOMETHING FOR SOMEONE ELSE.**

**[SEEMS LIKE FOLK JUST CAN'T LEARN TO LOVE]**

**I THINK OF SOMEONE BESIDES MYSELF.**

**THEN MY MIND IS LIFTED AND MY SPIRIT IS EASED!**

**THAT'S WHAT LOVE WILL DO!**

**[LADIES]**

**LOVE CAN LIFT YOU SPIRIT EVERYDAY...**

**DOVE:**

**IT'S AMAZING....SO AMAZING HOW WE...**

[LADIES TAKE THE THOUGHT AWAY FROM HER]

[LADIES]

.....NEVER STOP TO SAY THANK YOU!

TAKE TIME TO GIVE THANKS....TAKE TIME TO COUNT YOU BLESSINGS JUST A LITTLE BIT EVERYDAY. MAKE TIME!

[DOVE]

IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE

LADIES:

MAKE TIME TO GIVE THANKS

[IT'S LOVE, GIVE LOVE..]

TAKE TIME TO COUNT YOU BLESSING....JUST A LITTLE BIT E'VERYDAY.

[DOVE]

AND GIVE THANKS!

[ALL]

TAKE TIME TO GIVE THANK!

(SONG ENDS)

**Jones:**

Sister Mumford, we have taken up enough of your time and hospitality, and we thank you for having the meetin' at the parsonage.

**Mumford:**

I just wanted to show appreciation on how well the potluck went last time. Some folk came that never been before.

**Jenkins:**

That was nice to see. We'll keep reachin' out to people who might be a little shy of coming because they don't have much to give. This supper might be the best meal some folk have all month. (response)

**Holt:**

Since we didn't get around to sayin' who's gonna do what for the next time, can we all just do what we did last time?



**Wiggins:**

That's fine with me. Now, can we kindly dismiss. Not only am I tired, but now I done got hongry. I need to take my achin' feet home so I can eat and watch my TV show.

**Holt:**

We know you have a fit when you miss Ed Sullivans' show!

**Wiggins:**

It's one of the few times I get to see colored people on TV.

**Mumford:**

Well, we better get you on home, Mother. Would you kindly close us out?

**Wiggins: (all bowed in prayer)**

'May the Lord.....watch between me and thee....while we are absent....one from another...'

**(OUT)**

