



Joe Trace

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Citation Information

Morrison, Toni. 1931-

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1 folder (partial)

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Date Rendered: 2019-09-05 12:45:28 PM UTC

Available Online at: <http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/ng451p07z>

Joe Trace

1. When Joe Trace gets the gun to kill Dorcus he handles it, fondles it. Its sensuality and male-type power/penetration are transformed into his remembrances of Hunter who taught him how to track and shoot. Also his recollections of Wild: her hand sticking out of the bushes for him to touch. Perhaps the bushes are covered with with flowers. This hand is no more than that acknowledgement that she is his mother. He has asked her once and for all to say it yes or no. She shows him her hand--only--and he touches it and the sweetness that travels from the touch makes him tremble. All this--the tracking of Dorcus through the city, using his country skills and the gun (taught its use by Hunter his father figure) becoming his hand touching and wanting more of Wild will propel him and give his stalking the innocence and menace needed. When he finds her at the party its surreal, separating her out (by her odor of jasmine or orchids or whatever) and shoots, he wants to stay. That is, he wants to stay at the party, freeze the moment? and in fact has to be pushed out by the raucus crowd, none of whom has seen what happened, except "me."

2. His song begins as country/folk, fairly religious. The lyrics become increasingly urban, and change from the religious implications to the romantic ones. This is the "blue music."

3. The thoughts and speech have this sound as well. The

truncated, imagistic language; the deliberate coining and re-coining of metaphor and synecdoche: "turn your damper down"; "thin dime"; "case quarter." CF; Nate Shaw oral record; Gwaltney's interviews; maybe Hurston and Toomer for the residues of this speech. His song (as well as the other characters') contain a little bit of Wild's song--which

everybody refers to hearing but only Joe Trace has actually heard

snatches of and has incorporated into his own.

and change from the religious to the romantic ones. His is the "blue music."

Nothing wild in you but me,
The way I need,
The what I need,
Come away from that tree,
Stay by me,
So I can see,
The brimming cup,
You used to be,

By my side, hungry eyes,
Nothing wild in you but me,

Rain in the woods,
Track in the grass,
Nothing but a moonbeam,
Move so fast.

Sms

Joe Trace: Songs

Woman, Hold My Hand

Woman, hold my hand: partner

Mama, hold my hand: supplicant

Baby, Take my hand: protector

Baby, here's my hand: gift.

Mama, hold my hand is a young boy longing for Wild--his possible mother.

Woman, hold my hand is a young man marrying Violet and going to NYC.

Baby, take my hand as a middle aged man falling love with Dorcus. The mode is protective.

Baby, here's my hand is the re-union of Joe with Violet. The mode now is the offering of a gift.

Examples: They say you Wild\
Nothing wild in you but me\
The way I need\
The what I need\
Come way from that tree\
Stay by me\
So I can see\
The brimming cup\
You used to be\
By my side\Hungry eyed\
Nothing wild in you but me.

Rain in the woods\
Track in the grass\
Nothing but a moccasin\
Move so fast.

Sms