



## "from her joint..."

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Morrison, Toni. 1931-

"from her joint..."

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*duplicate*

from her joint into one of the alabaster vaginas in the game room. She could almost see the men contentedly knocking their cigars into those ash trays. Or perhaps just resting them there, knowing without looking that the glowing tip was slowly building a delicate head.

She avoided the bedrooms because she didn't know which one had belonged to the dead person, but when she went to use one of the bathrooms she saw that no toilet activity was not reflected in a mirror that reflected in another. Most, set firmly into wall tile, had been painted. Bending to examine the mermaids holding up the tub, she noticed a handle fastened to a slab of wood surrounded by floor tile. She was able to reach and lift the handle, but not able to budge it.

Suddenly she was fiercely hungry again and returned to the kitchen to eat and do as the woman had asked: be a darling and watch while she slept. Like an antique version of a tripper afraid to come down alone. She was finished with the macaroni, some ham and another slice of cake when the woman on the floor stirred <sup>then</sup> and sat up. *stet*

She held her face in both hands for a moment, then rubbed her eyes.

"Feel better?" asked Gigi.

"No. But rested."

"That is better."

The woman stood up. "I suppose. Thank you--for staying."

"Sure. Hangover's a bitch. I'm Gigi. Who died?"

"A friend," said the woman. I only had two; she was the last."

"I'm sorry," Gig said. "Where's he taking her?"

"Far. <sup>to</sup> a lake named for her. Superior. That's how she wanted it."

"Who else lives here? You didn't <sup>cook</sup> ~~do~~ all this food, did you?"

The woman shook her head <sup>as</sup> She filled a saucepan with water

"What will you do now?"

"Gigi Gigi Gigi Gigi Gigi. That's what <sup>(</sup>frogs sing. What did your mother name you?"

"She gave me her own name."

"Well?"

"Grace."

"Grace. What could be better?"



What could be better than that?

31-32

31-33

Nothing. Nothing at all.  
~~Grace~~, Mercy

And simple  
Good fortune seemed to have died

from  
But where  
would it  
come and

how fast?

In that holy

space between a July day years

righting

and following

through

around

Grace slip

get in at once,

later.

might

have to do.

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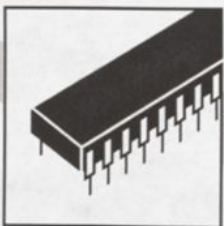
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