"up and moved, towns intoxicated with wealth..."

No Known Copyright

Princeton University Library reasonably believes that the Item is not restricted by copyright or related rights, but a conclusive determination could not be made.

You are free to use this Item in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use.

Princeton University Library Disclaimer

Princeton University Library claims no copyright governing this digital resource. It is provided for free, on a non-commercial, open-access basis, for fair-use academic and research purposes only. Anyone who claims copyright over any part of these resources and feels that they should not be presented in this manner is invited to contact Princeton University Library, who will in turn consider such concerns and make every effort to respond appropriately. We request that users reproducing this resource cite it according the guidelines described at http://rbsc.princeton.edu/policies/forms-citation.

Citation Information

Morrison, Toni. 1931-

"up and moved, towns intoxicated with wealth..."

1 folder (partial)

Contact Information

Download Information

Date Rendered: 2019-09-05 12:55:29 PM UTC

Available Online at: http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/5h73q163k

up and moved, towns intoxicated with wealth. Other towns affecting sleep--squirrelling away money, certificates, deeds in unpainted houses on unpaved streets.

In one of the prosperous ones he and Steward watched nineteen Negro ladies arrange themselves on the steps the town hall. They wore summer dresses of material the lightness, the delicacy of which neither of them had ever seen. Most of the dresses were white, but two were pale blue and one a salmon color. They wore small, pale colored hats: beige, dusty rose hats that called attention to the wide sparkley eyes of the wearer. Their waists were not much bigger than their necks. Laughing and teasing, they posed for a photographer lifting his head from beneath a black cloth only to hide under it again. Following a successful pose, the ladies broke apart in small groups, bending their tiny waists with laughter, walking arm in arm. One adjusted another's hat; one exchanged her pocketbook with another. Slender feet turned and tipped in thin leather shoes. Their skin, creamy and luminous in the afternoon sun, took away his breath. A few of the younger ones crossed the street and walked past the rail fence, close so close, to where he and Steward sat. They were on their way to a restaurant just beyond. Deek heard musical voices,

low, full of delight and secret information and in their tow a gust of verbena. The twins did not even look at each other. Without a word they agreed to fall off the railing. While they wrestled on the ground, ruining their pants and shirts, the women turned around to see.

Deek and Steward got the smiles they wanted before Big Daddy interrupted his conversation and stepped off the porch to pick each son up by his pants waist, haul them onto the porch and crack butt with his walking stick.

Even now the verbena scent was clear; even now the summer dresses, the creamy, sun-lit skin excited him. Even now he knew that if he and Steward had not thrown themselves off the railing they would have burst into tears. So, among the vivid details of that journey—the sorrow, the stubbornness, the, cunning, the despair—Deek's image of the nineteen summertime ladies was unlike the photographer's. His remembrance was pastel colored and eternal.

The morning after the meeting at Calvary, pleased with his bird quota and fired, not tired, from no sleep, he decided to check out the Oven before opening up the bank. So he turned left instead of right on Central and drove past the school on the east side, Ace's Grocery,