



## "The bottled cotton-mouth..."

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The bleakness of  
the ~~made~~ lives  
stretched from  
violence to  
coma

The bottled cotton-mouth, not Peter Paul's  
parents undid them. Some <sup>of Junior's</sup> ~~uncles~~, idle  
~~in their teens~~ <sup>teenagers</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>violently</sup> brain damaged by the  
bleakness of their lives did not believe the  
~~Snake~~ Jarred Snake was for a class assignment  
- as ~~Junior~~ <sup>Junior</sup> ~~answered~~ <sup>told them</sup> when they ~~said~~ asked  
"What's <sup>it</sup> you hauling off, girl?" Or if they  
did believe her, ~~it~~ <sup>the act</sup> was <sup>even more</sup> ~~equally~~ offensive.  
Something belonging to the Settlement being  
transferred to the site of <sup>a</sup> their failure so  
dismal it had not registered as failure at all -  
but as the triumph of contempt over ~~come~~ <sup>TK</sup>.

Junior was asleep the morning after Christmas  
Her ~~head on~~ <sup>stained</sup> ~~pillow~~ <sup>Jesus saucer</sup> ~~pillow~~ [given to  
her by an uncle's wife] (who got it from ~~her~~ the trash box  
of her <sup>then</sup> ~~current~~ employer); ] wrapped in a blanket  
that serving <sup>also</sup> as mattress. ~~and~~ The pillow [above]  
encouraged dreams of the Crayolas <sup>degraded</sup> ~~distorted~~ them.  
So ~~the~~ an uncle had to tap her behind  
more than once with the toe of his boot to wake her.

They questioned her about the Snake. The  
Crayon colored dreams drained slowly as she  
tried to figure out what they wanted. Not why  
there was no paint in wandering, the why of anything  
with them. They <sup>didn't know themselves why</sup> ~~would just as soon~~ set fire  
to a car seat rather than remove it,  
or why they

Or why they ~~wanted~~ a cotton-mouth returned to its home  
among them.




if she didn't bring it home <sup>on</sup>

Among ~~the~~ threats ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> "break your pretty little neck" and "marry you off to Vosh". This latter she had heard before. ~~Vosh was an old man.~~ And the possibility that it could happen made her <sup>up</sup> ~~burst~~ from the floor and ran out the door holding the Crayola's in her hand. The uncles chased her, but she was swift. Out ~~fast~~ <sup>chained</sup> ~~dogs~~ growled, loose ones joined in. On her way down the path, she saw Korian returning from the prison.

Ma, she called

Leave her 'lone <sup>you go</sup> screamed Vivian

later. She took a few running steps ~~the~~ <sup>to</sup> 

spaded with rocks being tossed at the  
backs of her whooping younger brothers.  
Lick

~~the~~ trees mixed with ~~the~~ healthy. Giant  
black <sup>cauliflower of disease</sup> roses <sup>grew</sup> smelted on their trunks. Some  
marked <sup>marked</sup> <sup>bleem</sup>

were looked well until a wind <sup>light and pleasant</sup> ruffled <sup>cracked and</sup> ~~their~~ top branches and they fell like heart <sup>the crown</sup> victims of heart attack. <sup>unmanned</sup> Then the <sup>Brown and gold</sup> meal of the packed <sup>pairing</sup> inside could be started <sup>off the crack</sup> ~~spilling~~ out <sup>soiling</sup> the <sup>stri</sup>

<sup>the</sup> pausing  
 starting, creeping Junior  
 made her arrived at a ~~the~~  
 patch of bamboo  
 strangling ~~the~~ <sup>in</sup> Virginia creeper  
~~the~~ No howling. She  
 waited. Then climbed  
 a tk and scanned <sup>the hills around,</sup> No  
 under in sight. Just the  
<sup>tree</sup> parking where the creek ran.  
 And the road.

before fatigue  
endure the  
futile rock-  
throwing at  
the disappearing  
backs of her young  
brothers, \* Huge

if not truly meant they were

\* hears her 'lone,  
~~come back here~~ Polcats  
Come yw better mind me  
Urgent, deeply felt, the last  
words the runner give  
her mother <sup>Yambo</sup> Speak, Barforn  
clutching a box of Crayons.  
Junior dodged, but from  
and eluded the howling  
uncles. She was <sup>that made</sup> ~~was~~ driven  
~~the~~ a wood lumber men  
salivate. Pecans, not seen  
since the forties. Maples  
sprouting to and seven  
arms, each, Locust,  
butternut, white cedar  
ach.

Valley below



The sun was high when she got to its' edge.  
Of no consequence <sup>to her</sup> were the <sup>fresh</sup> cuts, the  
torn dress, twigs in her hair. She mourned  
only the <sup>seven</sup> crayons ~~broken~~ before she'd get to use  
them.

Savestra Wilms  
h. 323 752 9113  
3422 W. 82nd St  
Inglewood CA 1233  
90305

baby

Her mother could not protect her from  
Vost or her uncles. She decided to locate  
Peter Paul's house - wait for him nearby  
and - what? Well he would help her somehow.  
And she would never ask him to return the  
cotton-mouth.

(1000)  
She stepped out onto the road  
and had not gone fifty feet when  
the truck <sup>ful of passengers</sup> clattered behind her.  
She jumped left <sup>of course</sup> instead of right and  
but they anticipated that <sup>when</sup> the front  
fender knocked her <sup>sideways</sup> ~~down~~ the  
rear tire crushed her toes.

40  
A bumpy ride in the truck bed,  
a place in her mother's cot, whiskey in her  
mouth, camphor in her nose - nothing  
woke her until the pain <sup>finally</sup> hatched down  
to unbearable. Then she opened her  
eyes to <sup>a</sup> hurt so stunning she could not  
cry out.

Day after day she lay there refusing to  
cry or ~~answer~~ <sup>speak</sup> to Vivian. who was thankful,  
she said, <sup>that</sup> the uncles had found her - lay in on



her baby Junior  
struck down  
the roadside. ~~hit~~ by a car they recognized  
from town. Luckily they ~~brought~~<sup>2nd</sup> her  
home in one piece you'd think those  
assholes would stop after running over  
a child and ~~Teastwise~~<sup>check to see if she was dead or</sup> goes her a lift somewhere.

Junior watched ~~the~~ her toes swell, red, then  
turn blue then black, ~~then~~<sup>they gray then</sup> merge.  
~~The hand that once clutched~~  
She ~~where~~ the Crayons ~~once were~~ was now held  
a knife waiting for Nash, an uncle or anyone  
stopping her from the new purpose in her  
life: getting ~~her~~ away. Clean away from  
people who preferred ~~a~~<sup>the company of a young</sup> cotton mouth to a  
~~young girl~~. Who chased her down, ran over her, <sup>swat</sup>  
lied about it, ~~and~~ called her lucky and

In ~~another~~<sup>one</sup> year she was gone. In  
another she was blossoming in the Correctional  
Fed, Bathed, clothed, <sup>& educable</sup> ~~educated~~ ~~parent~~ ~~blame~~

Some of that education was academic;  
most of it was not - was in fact the  
~~survival~~ skills ~~needed to handle~~<sup>that waged / secure</sup>  
the job she managed her place in the big  
comfortable house on Port Road.

She looked <sup>again</sup> out of the window <sup>while</sup> ~~she~~ Heed  
bedrooms. rummaged in a trunk.

Earlier <sup>she saw</sup> Christine ~~last~~<sup>short</sup> blown down the driveway  
leaving a young boy - <sup>Back to Paul</sup> met bunch in hard-  
shiner (slightly) in the yard.



Note:  
She took the Snake  
out of the "garden"  
- bottled - as a gift  
at Christmas to a  
friend. <sup>before</sup> he moved  
for her own  
expulsion. As though  
she is the substitute for  
the serpent and  
therefore cast out.  
The mark of the  
hoof - crushed and  
matted too - is  
upon her. Who is  
after all the daughter  
of Payne (pair)

"Here it is. I found it." She held up a ~~picture framed in silver~~ <sup>silver framed photograph</sup>.

Junior came near and kneeling  
next to the trunk. Junior gazed at the  
photograph. A wedding. Fine people. <sup>girl</sup>  
The groom looking to the left at his bride  
~~but who~~ <sup>holding</sup> held a single rose <sup>her frozen smile</sup> ~~stood~~ <sup>stared</sup> ~~glumly~~  
<sup>held only for</sup> the camera. \* ~~to the right~~ <sup>head</sup> ~~to the left~~ <sup>to the right</sup>  
Carrying orange blossoms To <sup>the bride's</sup> ~~her~~ right

Harry <sup>the bride's</sup> To <sup>for</sup> right  
a slickly handsome man ~~smiled~~ at the  
woman <sup>whose ~~clenched~~ hands emphasized the absence of a</sup>  
bouquet. <sup>Who is that?</sup> "That your" Brides maid? <sup>Isn't too,</sup>

Who is that? "That your" Brides maid? <sup>isn't</sup> ~~isn't~~ too happy?"  
Can you tell that was me → "the guy next to her" "No." <sub>to</sub>

~~How different do I look?~~

Do <sub>but</sub> I look much different.

no-but why is  
Is that your husband looking at ~~the~~ her  
not you?  
Is not?

"She looks like Christena"  
a little  
like Christena  
a younger woman  
\* traces of ~~seemed~~  
Christena ~~her~~ but  
but she ~~was~~ much older  
than ~~she~~  
on the whole

Probably trying to cheer her up

She held the groom's arm. This other looking at  
~~The groom's~~ arm was around the shoulder of his  
 young bride. Head almost swamped by  
 the sword.



Can't say it was <sup>a</sup> the happiest wedding.  
Bill was ~~is~~ very marriageable. Rich. widowed,  
+ ~~thought~~ <sup>thought</sup> A lot of women wanted to be in my  
slippers.

Junior looked at <sup>again</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> groom - ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~father~~  
~~Heed~~ <sup>was</sup> old enough to be <sup>Heed's</sup> her grandfather.

Who's that guy?

Our Best man a very famous musician of  
his day. You too young to ~~remember~~ <sup>know</sup>

These the people you're writing about?

Yes. Well, same. Mostly about  
Papa - Bill - . His people, his father. You  
can't believe how hard it was for them. MTK.

There were a couple of  
reasons <sup>why</sup> Junior stopped listening. ~~She~~ Already  
she ~~thought~~ <sup>guessed</sup> Heed didn't want to write a book; she  
wanted to talk. The question was <sup>Why</sup> she  
had to hire somebody to talk to. <sup>In hadn't figured out yet</sup> The other  
reason was the boy ~~she~~ with the pail  
Shivering. She could hear <sup>the faint scrapes of</sup> his shovel  
scraping <sup>moving</sup> slush, tapping ice.

I'll be back, in a sec. She said  
and left ~~Heed~~ <sup>Heed</sup> ~~in the kitchen~~

Close to  
Same one, her own age (on the premises)  
~~instead of those foreign girls~~



than he live <sup>around</sup> here?

Who

1 kid outside.

" Must be Sandler's boy. He runs errands <sup>keeps</sup> the yard <sup>up</sup>. Nice boy.

What's his name?

Umm. Robert I think. Robert. His grand father was a friend to my husband. They fished together. You know Papa had two boats. One named for his first wife and one named for me. \* He took important people out for deep sea fishing. — & — . But he ~~left~~ <sup>was</sup> Sandler. ~~at this he was~~ <sup>he</sup> He was just <sup>a</sup> local working in the cannery like most everybody, but Papa liked him. \*\* (see next p. for H's monologue) (A)

\* (ital) <sup>sixteen</sup> ~~thirteen~~ He, maybe older. MTK nice week.

\*\* (ital) he <sup>won't</sup> ~~might not~~ like this old lady suit.

\*\*\* like the boys in Campust. <sup>shooting</sup> ~~staying~~ basketball. ② looking back at us through the fence.  
① us looking at them, dares, promises.

\*\*\*\* Guards roughing them up ~~just~~ because we kept <sup>on</sup> looking greedy. fans, the fan club watching their <sup>sweats</sup> pants rise.

sixteen at least. maybe more. Shoots basket. I can tell.

\*\*\*\*\*



Everybody loved him and he loved  
everybody. Thoughtful even in  
death.

He was like that. ~~She~~ Left him a boat in his  
will, Sweet man. ~~Naturally of course~~ he left me the  
most. (tho' to hear some people you'd think a wife shouldn't be  
treated like a ~~rk~~) <sup>that</sup>

I was lucky, I know. My mother was against it at  
first 16 1/2 age, you know, so much older, but daddy knew  
true love when he saw it. And look how  
it ~~ended~~ <sup>turned out</sup>: Twenty-nine years of perfect bliss 5

Between us, I mean. Neither one of us ever looked  
at anybody else. But it sure wasn't ~~easy~~ <sup>easy</sup>  
~~greasy~~ <sup>running</sup> ~~at the hotel~~. Everything was on me.  
With nobody to count on.



