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Deadline

By Mark Ethridge

You may have the grace
to look up and out
And into your sister's eyes
And into your brother's face,
your country...
and say simply, very simply,
with hope, good morning.
Maya Angelou, On the Pulse of
Morning, which she read
At president Clinton's
inauguration last month.
Come on, Vanessa,
that was too easy.
Ever, did you ever
sit down and wonder,
What freedom's freedom
would bring?
It's so easy to be free.
You start by loving yourself.
Nikki Giovanni,
Walking Down Park.
And Nikki Giovanni
went to Fisk.
Yeah, but what if you could
go to Harvard or Princeton?
Fisk was there for us when
Harvard and Princeton weren't,
And it's also closer to mama.
Your mama's strong. She'll be
just fine without you.
I'm all she's got left.
Beyond reason,
I'm attached to you,
The feeling of your touch,
my grandmother's soft skin,
Seeing in your eyes our unborn,
Smelling mama's kitchen
in your hair, family to be.
That's beautiful. Who wrote it?
Wallace Samson, family to be.
I wrote it for you.
Thank you.
I love you.
I love you, Wallace Samson.

A subtitle by R3VOLV3R.
Fire Matt Harper!
That's him! That's Matt Harper!
Fire Matt Harper!
It actually wasn't
that bad a story.
Yeah, well, I'm not the one
who wrote the headline
And then decided to only use
pictures of black people.
Matt, hightail it down to Amos.
Someone shot the police chief.
On it.
Supposed to have a good
barbecue joint there.
Teddy's barbecue,
the best in town.
"Come on, y'all. "
"The taste of life
is oh, so sweet. "
"They're finding money
in the street. "
"Some folks can live a life
that's charmed. "
"Some folks can
go through hell unharmed. "
"The taste of life
is oh, so sweet"
"But hard luck days
have caught me"
"In a corner full of kill. "
"So why does the road
seem the hardest when uphill?"
"I want a break that I don't
have to make. "
"I want a break that
I don't have to make. "
"I want a break
that I don't have to make. "
"I want a break that
I don't have to make. "
"I want a break
that I don't have to make. "
What are you looking at, huh?

Now, now, now,
it's all right, Emma Jean.
It's all right.
I'm sorry for your loss.
I understand the chief
was your dad.
Have you no decency?
Just doing my job, sir.
Well, I'm just doing mine.
Why don't you boys escort
this vulture out of town?
Are you serious?
I have a right to be here.
So sue me. I'm a judge.
Oh.
Such a shame, Matt.
They've got you all wrong.
Okay, I get the message.
Hey. What?
The wedding planner was today.
Uh, what are you...?
Delana. What?
Delana. Delana, hang on.
Never a good sign
when they take the key.
- Hey, Delana.
- Hey, Walker.
Hey, Matt, you got a...
you got a minute?
Hey, uh, yeah, sure.
This is Trey Hall.
Everett Hall the third,
actually.
Matt Harper the first.
What brings you to The Times?
I live in Amos, Alabama.
I saw you there yesterday.
I have some information you
might be interested in.
Oh, uh, great.
Wow.
So, what do you know about
chief Peringer's murder?
Nothing. I'm here about

a different murder.

Who?

Wallace Sampson,

A 15-Year-Old black kid,
shot in the head.

Where?

By the store,

Right near where chief Peringer
was killed.

- When?

- 19 years ago.

That's what I'm trying
to figure out,

But no one wants to talk.

No, no, no. I mean,

why... why... why now?

I was nine then.

You were probably in diapers.

Why do you care?

Wallace was the son of our
housekeeper, Mary Pell Sampson.

I knew Mary Pell lost a son,

But I didn't know until recently
that he had been murdered.

So, why come to me?

I need help.

The local

authorities are a joke.

We don't have

a real newspaper in Amos.

Plus, my father is seriously
hassling me

For getting into this.

The Wallace's shooting

Is still an open wound
in the black community.

It bothers them

that no one cares.

It should bother you too.

"We're travelin', travelin'"

This is Delana.

Leave a message.

Hey, honey, I'm really sorry.

I'm gonna be tied up

on a story all weekend,
But I'll see you Sunday.
"When the daylight's done. "
"This road is weary but
our work has just begun. "
"Come and go with me
down behind the sun. "
Windrow started
as a cotton plantation.
My great-Great-Great grandfather
bought it after the civil war.
I've been in and out
of schools up north,
But that house
is where I grew up.
I live in the left wing now
And my dad lives
in the extreme right.
My father likes to hunt birds,
but I like to hunt plants.
Plants and a cold case murder?
Mm mm.
Funny combination of interests.
Actually, they have
a lot in common.
Solving Wallace's murder
Is like finding a plant
I can't identify.
I can't stop until I do.
There's someone
I want you to meet
Who was here
when Wallace was killed.
It's been 19 years since
Wallace was killed
And it's still a devil that
won't be exorcized,
So it was no surprise
When black people want to know
who killed Wallace,
But when a white person does...
especially a Hall...
well, that's something
different.

Tell me what happened.
Well, it started out as some
bottles and rocks being thrown.
Police had to break it up.
The next night,
everything had quieted down
And Wallace was walking home
When he was gunned down
in cold blood.
You know why they shot him?
Sure, black kid
at the wrong place.
Let me show you something.
You see this cross?
It means a lot
to my congregation.
They call it
the lynching cross.
See, back in 1932, the Klan
lynched a black kid
Who was accused of
attacking a white Amos girl.
There was no trial.
They just hung him
from an oak tree.
Well, the boy's daddy
cut that tree down
And made that cross out of it.
You see, he could deal
with what happened
If he thought his son
died on a cross,
But it's time we get beyond it.
What do you mean,
"get beyond it"?
Well, to my congregation,
That cross is a symbol of
justice in the next life,
But to me, it's still
just a lynching tree,
And I hate that cross.
Miss Trey, what are you doing
on this side of town?
I'm sorry to bother you

on a Saturday, Mary Pell.
This is Matt Harper.
He's a reporter from Nashville.
Mary Pell raised me.
We'd like to speak with you
about Wallace.
Thank you.
Wallace was
a straight "a" student.
He never missed school
or church.
I told him not to be out late,
and he said, "yes, ma'am. "
Then, uh, reverend young
came to the door
And he told me
Wallace had been shot.
They took him to the hospital
but he had already passed.
I wanted to see him,
but they wouldn't let me.
I'm sorry for your loss.
I'm sorry to make you relive it.
I relive it every day.
You can't hurt me, Mr. Harper.
I've already been hurt
the worst there is.
Tell me, Mr. Big city
newspaper reporter,
What do you write about?
Whatever I'm assigned.
Does it pay well?
Not at all.
Then why do it?
To make a difference,
Comfort the afflicted and
afflict the comfortable.
Do they make you
drink the Kool-Aid
Or do they just brainwash you
when you join the ranks?
Father.
Why do you make so many errors?
I wasn't aware you read

the Nashville Times.
You don't have to.
The New York Times,
The Washington Post,
CBS, The Nashville Times.
If it wasn't for Fox News
and Rush Limbaugh,
We'd all be the same.
A liberal bias
does infect the media.
I mean, you said so yourself.
You want to
comfort the afflicted
And afflict the comfortable,
And that would be
people like us.
Mary Pell,
do you feel afflicted?
Father, please.
I've got my aches and pains,
Mr. Hall,
But God has blessed me.
Well, I see you have induced
Mr. Harper
To join you
in this wild goose chase.
I wouldn't call it that.
You're stirring up things
that...
that don't need to be
stirred up.
Now, the boy was probably killed
by his own kind and,
Well, he probably deserved it.
Not based on what we found
at his house.
You went to Mary Pell's?
In Nigra Town?
Please don't use that word.
It's an embarrassment.
No, no,
you are the embarrassment,
And I forbid you to continue.
I will not have my daughter

Riling up the whole town over
some dead nigra kid.
Now, other than you
and Mary Pell, no one cares.
Wallace Sampson had friends.
They care.
Mr. Harper cares.
And if you weren't
a blue-Blooded fat cat
Born on third base but you
think you hit a triple,
You would care.
That's enough.
This is Delana.
Leave a message.
Hey, sorry I keep missing you.
I'm down in Alabama,
chasing a story.
It could be big.
Anyway, see you tomorrow night.
Love you.
So let justice flow like
a river and righteousness
Like an ever-Flowing stream.
Amen.
Justice.
Yes.
And righteousness.
Amen.
My beloved, we have guests
here this morning,
Just in case
you hadn't noticed.
They're here
for sister Mary Pell.
Amen.
They're here
for Wallace Sampson.
Yes.
Every Sunday morning,
for 19 years,
Sister Mary Pell has offered up
her prayer to the lord.
Amen.

And I'm saying today, lord,
hear our prayer.

Lord, hear our prayer.

- How long?

- How long?

Wouldn't this be a good time
for justice?

Yes, sir.

- How long?

- How long?

Wouldn't this be a good time
for righteousness?

Yes, sir.

- For 19 years...

- 19 years.

She's wondered about her son.

Who stole his life?

For 19 years,

She's wondered about the waters
of righteousness.

When will justice flow?

- How long?

- How long?

Wouldn't this be
a good time for justice?

- How long?

- How long?

Wouldn't this be a good time
for righteousness?

- How long?

- How long?

Oh, wouldn't this be
a good time?

Hey. Hey, sorry about Friday.

I totally forgot
about the planner.

That was Friday.

This is Sunday.

Where have you been?

Didn't you get my messages?

I had to work.

Really? The paper
didn't know about it.

I did it on my own.

Delana, seriously, Friday
was a complete accident.
Accident, my foot!
You asked to skip
the cake-Tasting party
And the stationery selection,
okay?
Then you blow off the meeting
with our minister?
I had to work overtime.
And now you forget the planner.
I'm upset, but what do you do?
You go out of town when you
don't even have to.
Your priorities
are abundantly clear.
The wedding's off.
Fine.
Fine. Fine.
Hey, I'm on to one heck
of a story.
Just hold your horses, partner.
I've got the publisher moseying
down here,
Which means
I'm facing more crap
Than a cowhand at the tail end
of a cattle drive.
He's funny.
What do you think Baxter wants?
Ah, my hide, more than likely.
What'd you do now?
Well, you've seen
the headlights
On the new assistant librarian,
right?
Mm mm.
Well, I thought it'd be funny,
so I asked personnel,
I said, would it cost me my
pension if I nuzzled them?
Well, apparently, there's some
questions you just don't ask.
Like that one.

Yep. That, and why there's
no white history month.
You redneck.
Given the protesters,
maybe Baxter's after you?
Me?
Think Baxter has
the guts to fire the son
Of the legendary Lucas Harper?
Harper!
Oh, boy. Better
you than me, prepster.
Hey, is Baxter after me,
or what?
Bulls-Eye.
Right.
Excuse me, may I ask you
a question?
Anything you say will be used
against you. Promise.
Oh, well. Hmm.
So it's a cold case story.
Rich blue blood's obsessed
with the forgotten killing
Of her housekeeper's son.
No, no, no, not forgotten.
Never even investigated.
Trey Hall's search for justice
Against the objections
of her big-Shot father,
That's the least we get.
Best case, we solve the murder.
Well, it's a good story,
all right.
But so's the murder
of the police chief...
only that's still news.
The murder
of the police chief's
Already being investigated.
Wallace Sampson's murder isn't.
Amos isn't even
in our circulation area.
Amos isn't in anybody's

circulation area.
If we don't do it,
it won't get done.
Well, I'm not frettin'
About stories in Amos
not getting done.
I'm worried about stories in
Nashville not getting done.
We've got a newsroom
full of empty desks,
And Baxter the Axter's
Talking about
culling the herd even more.
Your name's come up.
You know the protests
aren't my fault.
That's not
the only bullet he's got.
He's done a count of every
reporter's stories,
And you ranked dead last,
with no blockbusters.
Well, to get a blockbuster,
you need a good story.
Matt, you never handled
a big investigation.
I don't know that you're ready.
Look, I've already
done some work.
I can get it.
You've got a few days.
Thank you.
Screw up and you're stew meat.
I won't.
Matt, take Bullock with you.
What?
If we use one of our top
reporters, Baxter will notice.
But Bullock?
With all this nuzzling crap
from Bullock
And your black hole problem,
I need you both
out of sight for a while.

Besides, Bullock may be crazy
But he's got
every gadget you need.
"Bad news. "
Testing, one, two, three.
"Bad news. "
"Bad news. "
"Bad news. "
"You've seen me shuffling
down the sidewalk. "
"I know I ain't
no Marlon Brando. "
"Hey, what can I say,
this ain't no trash talk. "
"I've got you any way,
any way I choose. "
"Bad news. "
"I'll show you what I can do. "
"Bad news. "
"Soon you'll see the picture. "
"Bad news. "
"Before I say or do. "
"Bad news. "
"Yeah, I'll tell
the truth on you. "
Okay, we're taking my LeMans,
'Cause your rice burner
Is an insult to
the American working man.
Besides, my LeMans has an
engine. It might come in handy.
Get off it, Bullock.
When's the last time a reporter
was on a high-Speed chase?
Hey, it could happen.
I think you're forgetting
who's in charge here, boy.
I'm kind of sorry
I've got to take you with me.
Hey, this is my story.
You think I'm happy about
working with you
And your racist
caveman attitude?

Huh!

Ow.

Now you listen to me
very carefully, you little punk.

My job is to learn things
people don't know about
And put it in the paper.

It's called news.

And I don't worry about
if it's for rich people,

Poor people, black,
white, men or women,

Or people you can't
tell the difference.

I know what you think of me,
and most of the time,
I couldn't care less, but
let me tell you something, boy.

I am not a racist.

Fine, you're not a racist.

All right.

You're just a sexist.

Thank you.

- Let's make a list.

- All right.

Well, we need to see
where it happened,
Check the police records.

We need to interview
Wallace Sampson's girlfriend.

She was the last one to see him
before he got killed.

Okay, write that down.

I've got a pen and pad
in the glove box.

Uh...

.22 Magnum.

That'll stop a bad guy.

That thing could have gone off.

Nah. The hammer block is in.

Put that away for me, will you?

So, it's true,

you do carry a gun.

On this trip, three.

The 22 Magnum.
I got a270 in the trunk.
And when all else fails,
I've got a little Henry...
a double-Shot Derringer.
Nice, huh?
I can't believe you
brought all those weapons.
This is Alabama, boy.
Alcohol, tobacco, and firearms
ain't a government agency,
It's a dang shopping list.
Oh, boy, here we go.
Oh, boy. We got a cop
with a big hat.
Officer.
License and registration.
Uh huh.
Officer Peringer, hey.
Matt Harper
from The Nashville Times.
We met the other day.
Sorry about your dad.
You were speeding,
We were doing 55.
Well, it drops to 35
at the town limit.
I didn't see a sign.
I'll handle this.
Officer, how much is the fine?
\$100. Or we can
go see the judge.
Just pay him. Actually,
you know what? Pay him \$200.
The next time
we come through here,
We'll be going
the exact same speed.
I've heard enough from you.
Hand me the registration.
Officer, I can explain
the pistol in the glove box.
Freeze, you keep your hands up
where I can see 'em.

Up, both of you.
I've also got a270
in the trunk.
Move.
Come on, this way.
I'm gonna have to
call you back.
You too, buddy.
What you got, Olen?
Speeding and carrying
concealed weapons.
And one of them threw up
in the patrol car.
Ma'am, we didn't mean to
speed, and we're not dangerous.
We're reporters.
Which one of you is sick?
Take off the handcuffs, Olen.
Go get the judge.
Sit.
You're not gonna throw up
in here, are you?
No, ma'am.
Mm-Mm.
Carrying concealed weapons
Is a serious violation
of the Alabama criminal code.
It would be, yes, sir,
but, uh, I have a permit.
- That a fact?
- Yeah.
Mm mm.
I remember you.
You're that rude reporter.
Sorry, sir. We don't
mean to make trouble.
So, are you reporting
on the chief's death?
No, we're here for
something else, actually.
Ever hear of a kid
named Wallace Sampson?
Well, I'll be jiggered.
Trey Hall must have

latched on to you.
How'd you know?
Because I've known Trey
and her daddy
Since Moses was in diapers.
Oh, Trey's a good girl.
Bless her heart,
I know she means well,
But too much money
and too little to do
Is a bad combination.
Meaning what?
Meaning I'd had to see you
waste your time,
Especially since your little
expedition down here
Is already costing you a fine.
We never saw
a city speed limit sign.
Yeah, that sign got shot up
a few years back.
We haven't had the money
to replace it.
That is ridiculous.
How much
could it possibly cost?
It ain't the cost of the sign.
It's all the revenue in money
we'd lose writing fewer tickets.
It's like my daddy always said,
Every Yankee tourist
is worth a bale of cotton,
And a whole lot easier to pick.
Welcome to Amos, boys.
Man, you almost blew it.
Oh, I almost blew it?
Wouldn't have got in trouble
in the first place
If you hadn't
lipped off to the cop.
Ain't you ever heard of "never
complain, never explain"?
Well, I wasn't the one speeding
And you didn't say anything

about the derringer.
What if he searched you?
The whole point of
a Derringer is surprise.
Yeah, well, it was
an unnecessary risk
And it jeopardized the story.
Well, all right.
I'll tell you what.
I'll play by the rules
If you act like
you've done this before.
I have done this before.
Investigated a murder?
Well, not exactly.
That's all right.
I've never exactly
played by the rules.
Come on,
let's go to the crime scene.
- Hey.
- Hey.
- This the place?
- Yep.
Wow.
There's nothing
to see in there.
Wallace and the chief
were killed out front.
They were both killed
in the same spot?
practically the same place.
That's weird.
There's a dozen places
a shooter could hide. Yeah, boy.
Looks like somebody lived here.
Or worked here.
Gross.
I say we move on.
This place may be abandoned,
but somebody owns it.
Let's go back to the cop shop,
Try to dig up
that police report.

This place really is nowhere.
I can't even get a signal.
Sometimes I can
get one outside.
I found something.
Okay, the night
before the shooting,
Someone threw
a firebomb at the store.
The firebomb was reported when
the man who runs the store,
A Braeford Watson,
Gets here to work
and saw the scorch marks.
Wallace is shot
the next night as he walks by.
All right, so let's say
Wallace threw the firebomb.
It's a dud,
So he comes back the next night
to finish the job.
Watson shoots him.
He's there
to protect the store.
There was never any evidence
of Wallace having a firebomb,
And I really don't think
he was that kind of a kid.
Mm mm.
Well, let's get the newspaper
And see if Watson's name
shows up in any old clips.
Yeah.
Not so fast. Put those files
back where you got them.
Your mama's not here to
clean up after you.
Yes, ma'am.
Lord have mercy.
Where's Rhett and Scarlett?
That's Delana's car.
Oh, boy. Bet I could sell
tickets to this fight.
Who's Delana?

Hey, I'm so glad to see you.
Listen, I know
you don't believe me
About the wedding planner
thing,
But I was just distracted with
the protest and everything.
This isn't about us.
Matt, your father's very sick.
- What is it?
- They don't know for sure.
He's going in
for tests tomorrow.
You need to be there.
Is it cancer?
They're not sure.
Uh, you drove all the way down
here to tell me that?
Your dad called me.
He couldn't get you
and I couldn't either.
Oh, jeez, I forgot to call him.
- Oh.
- Hi.
- Delana Calhoun.
- Trey Hall.
I thought... thought you
were a he.
Yeah, I get that a lot.
Must be my manly physique.
I'm sorry. I've got to go.
Wait, you just got here.
We've got things to talk about.
I can't.
Yeah, the man
who ran the store,
One of the grand dragons
of the Alabama Klan.
He got convicted
Of clubbing a civil rights
marcher in Montgomery.
- We've got a story.
- Yeah, we've got a story.
Braeford Watson was a bad man.

Where is he now?

Burnin' with the devil,

I imagine.

He passed years ago.

Okay, there's unrest in Amos.

Somebody throws a firebomb

at the store.

It does not burn down.

Watson's not taking any chances.

He spends the night there.

- Where?

- In the back room.

- You paying attention?

- Sorry.

Anyway, maybe it was Wallace

who threw the firebomb

And now he's coming back

for another try.

Or maybe he's just

a school kid on the way home.

Watson decides to shoot first,

ask questions later.

- Only one problem.

- What?

It's all circumstantial.

No witnesses.

Watson's dead. No one ever

interviewed him.

Well, that's our story.

Authorities ignored an obvious

suspect in the killing.

Police investigating the

killing of a black teenager

Never questioned

a potential suspect.

Okay, make it "failed to

question. " It's stronger.

Okay, "failed to question

a potential suspect",

"A Klan member who operated

a store near the shooting

And who had previously been

convicted of racial violence. "

Not "near the shooting. "

Make it "near the scene
of the murder. "
What are you doing here?
You should be with your daddy.
In a minute. Hang on.
Just hang on a second.
Let's see how you cowboys
Have been spending
the stockholders' money.
Well, I'm not bookin' my ticket
To the Pulitzer prize
ceremony yet,
But it's a start.
Fix the lead. Make it, "never
bothered to investigate. "
And the
fourth paragraph's weak.
You've got all the facts,
but there's no outrage.
A 15-Year-Old is dead.
The cops don't care.
"Almost 20 years later,
The crime remains
uninvestigated,
Unsolved, and unpunished. "
Are you gonna pitch it
for the front page?
Already did.
Amos, ala-Frickin'- Bama?
The name of the paper
is The Nashville Times,
And our competition's
craigslist,
Not The Washington Post.
How long did we spend on this?
A couple days.
A couple of days?
Two reporters?
Wake up, people!
We are losing
advertisers every day!
We need to write about stuff
that matters to Nashvillians.
This is a heck of a story,

all right?
It'll matter to our readers.
Well, you'd better be right.
Hey, Trey.
Let me put you on speaker.
I just found another
police report.
Right after the firebomb,
Braeford Watson
suffered a heart attack.
He was in the hospital
when Wallace was shot.
Perfect alibi.
Story's dead.
Deader than an armadillo
on a truck stop exit ramp.
Trey, hold on. Let me
call you right back.
Hey.
Are you sitting down?
Uh, yeah.
Matt, I'm sorry, it is cancer.
Multiple myeloma.
Will you go with me?
Of course.
You didn't tell me
Trey Hall was a woman.
Does it matter?
I don't know, does it?
What are you saying?
Would you be chasing
this story all over Alabama
if Trey Hall was a guy?
Thanks a lot.
Well, Matt, what else
haven't you told me?
I haven't told my dad
we're not getting married.
What?
I should have.
Matt, how does this
not come up?
I haven't spoken to him.
You would have

if it was important.
Well, are we gonna eat out
here or are you two coming in?
How are you doing?
Fine, thanks.
Transfusion helped.
I start chemo tomorrow.
You look beautiful.
How long do you have
to do chemo for?
You mean, "for how long
do I have to do chemo?"
To paraphrase
Winston Churchill,
"Ending a sentence
with a preposition
is a practice up
with which I will not put. "
Come on in, Matty.
So without this Braeford Watson
in the picture,
You're no closer to
getting your story
than you were
when you started out.
Yeah.
Hmm.
Tell us about your treatment.
Okay.
Uh, there's these tubes here.
They go right into
my circulatory system.
Uh, chemo goes in.
No needles. Pretty neat.
I'll have it done on Fridays,
And then I should be ready to
work on my column by Mondays.
You scheduled so you can
be sick at home
But be well to work?
Home life's overrated.
It always was.
The world's more important.
I just, uh, don't see how you

can be so philosophical.
Here's what I think about...
if I died today,
how would my obit read?
Long or short?
Front page or buried inside?
Above the fold? Below the fold?
Would they remember
my preferred epitaph?
You were a fool for the truth?
Yeah, exactly.
I think if I died right now,
it'd make a pretty good story.
Fine for you. What about me?
I hate that you're sick.
Son, I happen to have
A particularly aggressive form
of cancer,
But we're all dying
of something.
They push the death rate down
for this, it goes up for that.
It's a zero sum game.
No one gets out alive.
I can't believe you talked
that way to your father.
You're more worried about
your feelings than his.
At least I have feelings.
He's a wonderful man.
A wonderful, very sick man.
Let me tell you something
about my father.
If he's ever said "I love you,"
I don't remember it.
I don't believe that.
I'm not kidding.
I've played this game
Where I try to see
if I can make him say it.
I've never won.
We've got to get
back down there.
All we need

is a couple more days.
We've got to find out
who owns the store,
And we haven't even talked to
Wallace's girlfriend
Vanessa Brown yet.
I don't think Walker
will buy it,
And our credibility isn't
exactly at a high point.
Well, who says we need to ask
Walker's permission?
We could do it
in a series of trips.
If we get the story, nobody's
gonna care how we did it.
I'll pick you up at 6:00.
Sorry to bother you,
But we need to ask you
some more questions.
I told you about
the night it happened.
Yeah, but we need to
make sure we know everything.
That's even things that you
might not think are important.
I have to live here.
You two get to leave.
You can trust me.
Ask anyone who knows me.
I don't know
anyone who knows you.
Your timing sucks.
My porcelain cracked.
I got a horrible review.
Oh, yeah, I almost forgot.
You got cold feet three months
before our wedding.
Now you want me to drop
everything
And help you
with a reluctant source?
You're trained to get people
to open up to you.

You're good at it.
That was my old life.
Now I sling mud.
It doesn't talk back.
No codependency issues,
no enabling issues, nothing.
Please, Delana?
Why doesn't Trey talk to her?
Trey tried. I just... I think
there are some things
Mary Pell is not comfortable
talking to her about.
Trey's like her child.
At least convince Mary Pell
that she can trust me.
Delana, my job's on the line.
Which matters to me
exactly why?
I'll help,
but not because of you.
I'll do it for Mary Pell.
My sanctuary.
That's how I feel
about my studio.
No one bothers me here.
Mary Pell, I know
it must be hard for you,
But may I ask you
some questions?
You can ask.
I understand Braeford Watson
was in the Klan.
Is that why someone threw
a firebomb at his store?
Everyone knew Braeford Watson
was a Kluxer,
Plus he charged twice what he
should have for everything.
But that's not
why the store was firebombed.
- Hey, guys.
- How are you doing?
I forgot patty has Fridays
off, but the door was open.

What is this?
I've been collecting
plant specimens.
That one's called
cnidoscolus stimulosus.
Cnidoscolus stimulosus.
A natural aphrodisiac.
Country people call it
"the courage plant. "
Freeze. Y'all keep your hands
up where I can see 'em.
Up. Now, just what do you
think you're doing?
We're looking at
real estate records.
Just put the gun down. Hold it.
Now, you're all under arrest.
For what?
For attempted theft of
government property.
That's crazy.
This is all public record, so
you can't steal what you own.
Olen, no harm's been done.
Why don't we just come back
when miss patty's here?
Mm, that's up to
judge Buchanan.
He'll be in after lunch.
- Mr. Bullock and I have to be
back in Nashville by 3:00.
Uh huh, well, you should have
thought about that
Before you broke in.
We didn't break in.
It was open.
Oh.
Olen, please, lower the gun.
I promise, we won't go anywhere
Until judge Buchanan shows up.
Why don't I make us some coffee
while we wait.
- You can pour a cup for me.
- Okay.

Braeford Watson started
running girls out of the store
From a room in back.
Workers from the nuclear plant
Were the main customers.
The workers were white.
The girls were black.
The black community hated
what was going on.
Matt and Bullock will
want to know how you know.
My daughter worked there.
She was an addict.
Always needed money.
She's dead now.
Oh, Mary Pell.
You carry so much pain.
I carry a lot.
Mary Pell, do you know
who could have shot Wallace?
Don't know anything
about who shot Wallace.
Did Wallace throw the firebomb?
No!
Do you have any idea who did?
Mary Pell, where are you?
Coming, Mr. Hall.
I've told you everything I can.
Uh...
Y'all get in there.
What do you mean?
Get in the closet.
Just do as he says.
Get in there. Come on.
All right, all right,
all right.
Move.
All right.
- Move.
- I'm going.
Go on.
Mission accomplished.
Lady's slipper, a member
of the orchid family,

A natural sedative.
I brewed it in his coffee.
Cool. Let's get out of here.
Help me out, will you, pal?
Yeah.
Okay, time for little Henry.
Here we go.
Uh...
okay.
It's a double shot, but I
got one bullet in here, so...
heads up.
One shot's gotta do it.
Come on, little buddy.
And you thought this wouldn't
come in handy.
Hey, Bullock, you got a 20?
Yeah.
Drop it here, would you?
Let's get Delana and roll.
Free at last!
Howdy, men.
Have a little dustup, did we?
Anybody facing a felony?
No, it's a misunderstanding.
You were back in Alabama!
We were on our own time.
Do you know
how many subscribers
We have in Amos, Alabama?
Zero!
Look, I know y'all call me
Baxter the Axter,
But this is a waste
of resources,
Reporters wandering around
Alabama, getting arrested.
Nobody got arrested.
If you're gonna be
involved in journalism,
Get your facts right.
Then what are the facts?
The fact is, we were in Amos,
Doing investigative reporting

on our own time
Because The Nashville Times,
is unwilling to.
It made you late.
You're right. I'll put in
an extra hour the day I retire.
I command you to end
your ceaseless thrall
With Wallace Sampson!
You can command our hours
and our assignments
And what goes in our paychecks,
But as long as it's on my time,
I, not you, will decide
when I end my ceaseless thrall!
Wow.

Look at you.

- Yeah!

- Whoa!

Spectacular.

I've seen publishers
told off before,
But I've never
seen it done better.

Sorry, Walker.

Matt, disappear
for a couple days, okay?

Visit your father.

But put Amos on hold,
at least for a while.

- Hey.

- Hey.

Oh, sorry.

Stuff really zaps you, huh?

Ah, not so bad.

I go to radiation after this.

It's no sweat.

Well, it's good to see you.

Nice of you to come.

I actually need your help.

The paper wants to run
a story about me.

I want you to
talk them out of it.

Why?

'Cause the hook
Is gonna be
this multiple myeloma,
And they're gonna make it
sound like I'm dying.
I'm not, so there's no story.
I'm gonna beat this thing.
Please, Matty.
I need your help.
I'll see what I can do.
It's amazing
I still have a job.
Because the fight was public.
Baxter can't fire you
over a discussion
About journalistic differences
without looking like a jerk,
But you're not
out of the woods yet.
He'll find a way
to make it tough for you.
Ah, I shouldn't have done it.
Now, wait a minute.
You believe in your story?
Yeah, of course.
It's important to Mary Pell
and a lot of people in Amos
And it should be to people
in Nashville and Memphis
And Dallas and Denver and
Seattle and New York too, yeah.
Stick with it.
Screw the consequences.
Besides,
you did the right thing.
But how do we pursue it now?
Well, Baxter's got
a thing for obits, right?
Yeah, sure does.
All right.
You don't have to be in
Nashville to do that, do you?
No. The dead don't

interview well.
Exactly. So set up shop
in Amos,
Report your story by day,
do the obits at night.
Baxter picks up the paper,
He sees you and Bullock's name
with bylines...
over the obituaries, no less...
and he's happy.
It might work.
All right. Love you, dad.
Take care.
See ya.
What'd you say to Baxter?
Told him reporters are crazy.
The truth is always
the best defense.
You didn't change his mind
about the story, did you?
Didn't try.
That'd be like trying to talk
sense to an Oklahoma fan.
And I didn't want to win
the battle and lose the war,
And it is a war.
How so?
It's a war for journalism,
and if we don't win,
It's not worth
being at The Nashville Times.
It's a war for the people
we write about
And the people
we're writing for.
Baxter calls 'em customers.
I call 'em citizens.
My dad had an idea.
What if we set up shop
down in Amos,
Cover the Wallace Sampson story
during the day,
And write obits at night?
Yeah, your dad

was always a sly one.
So you'll cover for us?
Just get the story.
Let's go track down
Wallace's girlfriend.
I think we need to
change course.
What?
The last thing
Vanessa Brown needs
Is to be intimidated
by some redneck
Who looks as if he
just rolled out of bed.
Hmm. What about you?
I ain't seen a man
in Amos with a tie on.
What's she gonna think you are,
a Jehovah's Witness?
Let me guess, you want me to
interview another woman for you.
Hi, Delana, how are you?
Am I right?
Yes.
Who?
Wallace Sampson's girlfriend,
Vanessa Brown.
Hi.
Why is she here?
Uh, this is Delana Calhoun.
She's my... friend.
Uh, is everybody
in this town armed?
I got this gun 19 years ago.
Vanessa, do you have children?
Two. Letitia is 12
and Wallace just turned 16.
What a handsome young man.
Thank you.
You must have loved Wallace
very much
To name your son after him.
I loved Wallace more than
anybody I've ever known.

What did you love most
about him?
He made me feel pretty.
He loved me.
He wrote me poems.
It's hard to keep breathing
When you've lost
someone like that.
Y'all ever lost
anyone you loved?
I lost my father
when I was seven.
But Matt...
that's my brother Luke.
He was 15.
He died from a bullet
in the head.
They never figured out
If it was an accident
or on purpose or what.
Heavenly Father,
We don't pray for those
who have gone ahead
Because they are with you.
We pray instead for those of us
who are left behind
And don't know why.
Thank you.
He had given me a poem
he had written for me,
And he told me he loved me.
Those were the last words
he ever said...
"I love you. "
Then I watched him
walk toward home,
And when he got near the store,
he stopped and he waved.
Oh, he had the sweetest look
on his face.
Then I heard the shot
and I saw him fall.
If it was dark,
how could you see him?

Lights. Some lights were
always on at the store.
Then I saw Billy Baker
running away.
Billy Baker?
Some old redneck.
He used to work on cars.
Haven't seen him around
in years.
Did he have a gun?
No.
Vanessa, why didn't you
tell anyone this before?
Nobody asked.
Plus, I was scared.
I still am.
We gotta get out of here.
Get in.
Bad news.
It's got to wait.
Trey did some more digging.
Guess who owns the store.
Who?
The judge.
Buchanan? You're kidding.
We left notes at his mansion
and town Hall,
Saying we want to speak to him.
All right, what's your news?
Uh, it's about the LeMans.
You did not wreck my car.
Uh...
Oh!
Oh, no!
Man!
Oh, mama!
Oh, no!
Okay, now it's personal.
Who the hell is Ronnie Bullock?
That would be me, sir.
I only shake hands
with gentlemen.
That note was not
intended for you, sir.

It was for judge Buchanan.
How dare you drag Rut Buchanan
into your cockamamie
Investigation
of some dead nigra kid?
You must do things differently
up there in Nashville.
'Cause around here,
when we have business
With a man, we go see him.
We don't write a note.
Sorry, I was just trying
to move things along.
Yeah.
Look...
we've been out bird-Hunting
all day.
We got skunked,
So we were kind of upset
before we saw your note.
So fetch some glasses.
Let's sit down.
I don't know
what I can tell you
About whatever
y'all are looking into,
But I'll try.
Come on.
Yes, I own the building
where they had the store,
But I own most of this town.
My daddy was judge before me
and his daddy before him.
It's been our habit to buy
foreclosed properties.
That may have been good for us,
But it also kept the property
on the tax rolls.
So it's been good for Amos too.
I've known
Rut Buchanan my whole life,
And there's not a man alive
that has done more for Amos.
Especially for the coloreds.

That's a mighty fine weapon.
Whose is it?
It's mine.
You a sportsman?
All my life.
Easy, father.
So you leased the store
to Braeford Watson?
No, Braeford was the only one
willing to go in there
And sell those people groceries,
doing them a favor.
Thing is, they didn't
seem to appreciate it
'Cause there were
cuttings and shootings,
All the stuff
that comes from being
On that side of the tracks.
I understand a firebomb
went off the night
Before Wallace Sampson
was killed.
Ah, that's a bunch of hotheads.
Probably been hopped up
on dope.
Judge, you ever hear
about prostitution
Being around in the back
of that building?
Never had a case like that.
That's not what I asked.
I don't believe
I like your tone.
I don't think the judge
answered my question.
That's it.
You, sir, need to get gone.
Calm down, Everett.
Mm.
What kind of southern boy
are you,
Taking up for the nigras?
I'm the kind of southern boy

who don't care
About the color
of murder victims.
You are a traitor to the south.
Is that a fact?
Mm.
He's the kind of bigot
who gives the south a bad name.
Ah, come on with yourself.
Matt, I don't wanna go.
- It's dangerous here.
- Well, you're staying.
I have to. You don't.
Okay, one thing before you go.
Hop in.
Okay, you see this thing
right here?
Whatever you do,
do not touch it.
The top doesn't come down?
The top comes down fine.
It's going back up
that's the problem.
Shoot, I always wanted
a convertible.
- Well, get on. Have fun.
- Be careful.
I can't believe you made her
take the LeMans.
Swapping cars keeps us
under the radar.
Besides, I had to get
the LeMans out of Amos.
It's been trashed
all I can stand.
Come on, let's go
track down Billy Baker.
Billy Baker?
Billy Baker?
Oh, you mean Possum?
That's Possum right there.
Uh-Huh.
Hey.
Hold on, you're breaking up.

It's a camera.
What? My god, all right.
We're coming to get you.
No, don't. I'm okay.
The LeMans
is a little roughed up,
But at least
I got my convertible.
Are you sure
you're okay?
Yeah, but you all
need to be careful.
Unless I miss my guess,
They were after you and Bullock,
not me.
I've got a bad feeling, man.
I'd kill myself if something
bad happened to Delana.
I mean, besides the bad stuff
I've done.
Eh, she seemed like a girl
who can take care of herself.
Look, we can chase
this Possum character tomorrow
If we get cracking
on these obits tonight.
Now, Walker says,
if we hand in three tonight,
We might have a crack
at employees of the month.
What?
It's a \$20 bonus.
- Whoa, look at this.
- What?
Possum, right here
in this clip.
Says he was tried
alongside Braeford Watson
For beating civil rights
marchers in Montgomery.
He and the other guy pleaded
guilty even before the trial.
Now we got a story.
Okay, a man

who later pleaded guilty
To civil rights charges
was seen at the site of...
Make it "spotted fleeing from. "
It's stronger.
We gotta find Possum.
Maybe we can track him through
the department of corrections.
We'll go to Montgomery
tomorrow.
Right now, there's someplace
I gotta be.
What about employees
of the month?
Congratulations, you won.
Matt...
Take this.
Yeah.
Delana?
Hey.
You scared me.
I... I told you not to come.
No, I know.
I'm, uh... I'm sorry.
I was worried.
You're just feeling guilty.
You're right.
But not about getting you
involved with Wallace Sampson.
I'm totally ashamed
That I ever gave you
a reason to doubt us.
I'm sorry.
It breaks my heart to know
that I hurt you.
I never want to hurt you again.
I hope you didn't
jeopardize the story
Just to come tell me that.
I love you more than any story,
More than anything.
So...
Where is Possum?
One more stop.

The prosecutor
was Max McCallum.
Maybe he knows where Possum is.
We have fresh
eyewitness testimony
That Possum was there
at the time of the shooting.
And we know Possum was convicted
of civil rights violations,
Along with Braeford Watson,
the guy who ran the store.
He was not convicted.
He pled guilty.
Same thing.
Actually, it's not.
Yeah, but whenever Possum
was around, bad things happened.
You could write that story,
and it would be accurate.
But it would be a mistake.
Facts are never a mistake.
Son, I've been
around a lot of courtrooms.
Facts and truth
are not the same thing.
The fact is,
Possum may have been present
At the site
of the Sampson killing.
But the truth is, when it comes
to advancing civil rights
In Alabama, Possum was a hero.
You willing to go
off the record?
- Sure.
- Yeah.
Billy Baker, Possum,
was an informer.
He was so high up in the Klan,
He was the best source
we ever had.
He'd tip us off,
Sometimes even get arrested
with everyone else.

Then he'd plead guilty.
That preserved his cover.
We'd make sure
he got a light sentence.
That's an even better story.
You can't write
that one either.
People are still in prison
because Possum put them there.
Why didn't he inform about
the Wallace Sampson killing?
Maybe he did,
and no one followed up.
Well, let us follow up on it.
Ask Possum
if we can interview him
About the killing
of Wallace Sampson.
Oh!
Got a weirdo with a rifle.
"I fell in a hole. "
"100 miles deep. "
"The one that took my daddy"
"And his daddy and his daddy"
"And his daddy. "
"Try as I might. "
"To live in the light. "
"This is all I've seen. "
"This is what I'm told. "
"This is what I know. "
"That the tears of my mama"
"And her mama and her mama. "
"They have flowed. "
One last question, Possum.
How did the feds flip you?
Well, they got pictures
of me and a black woman
And threatened to go public.
And there she is right now.
You live with a black woman?
No, I'm married to her.
Common law.
Why on earth
were you in the Klan?

I was young, raised up stupid.
Liquor might have had something
to do with it too.
Max McCallum
said you'd be in danger
If we wrote
that you'd been an informant.
Probably.
But it's time.
Old cancer's
eating me up anyway.
Walker, we got it.
We're coming in.
Lucas Harper?
- Are you Matt?
- I am.
I'm Dr. Wright,
your father's oncologist.
- Hi.
- He talks a lot about you.
I'm sorry.
I need to tell you that nothing
we've tried has worked.
Uh, what about
experimental therapies?
Interferon or something?
I'm sorry, Matt.
Maybe if we caught it earlier.
Hospice
is your best choice now.
Hospice? How long does he have?
We have... we have things
we need to talk about.
Don't wait.
- Hey.
- What brings you here?
Sorry, I couldn't stop it.
Picture's not bad.
I thought
you'd be upset.
I haven't read the whole thing,
But the headline
certainly looks overblown.
Actually, it's accurate,

But it applies to everybody
on the planet.
We're all nearing death.
Therefore,
not a very good headline.
How's your story?
We got it.
We're going to write
for the weekend.
Thanks for the obit idea.
It worked.
Good job.
Proud of you.
Dad, how come it took so long?
How come you never
helped me before?
Your brother.
What has he
got to do with this?
Luke was...
Luke was gonna be
the next great journalist.
He had the name and the talent.
Lucas Harper the third,
new and improved version.
His death was hard on us all.
Your mother never
recovered from it.
Why didn't you want for me
What you wanted for him?
I didn't want
to screw you up too.
At Luke's funeral,
the reporter came and said
He needed to write the story.
You said, "go ahead. "
Write the truth as best
as you could determine it.
Dad, I thought
Luke's death was an accident,
He was in the garden
killing gophers,
And the gun misfired.
Is that what the story said?

The story said
it could have been an accident.
It also said the police
found evidence
That it might not have been
accidental.
Evidence?
A note in his diary.
It said, "sometimes
I worry that I will be
The first Lucas Harper
not to be famous. "
I couldn't let that happen
to you, Matty.
I love you, son.
- Hey.
- Hey.
Hey, Matt. Have a seat.
- Take a look.
- How's your dad?
Bad.
We need to finish the story.
Walker sent an artist
down to Amos
To do a diagram
of the crime scene.
Photo's taking fresh pictures.
And national's
gonna give up some space.
Partners, the lawyers
are gonna peck at this
Like chickens with a pan
of stale cornbread.
Let's be sure we got it right.
"Baby you can talk about it. "
"You can shout it
in the streets. "
"Yeah you can paint it
on your eyelids. "
"So you don't forget about it
while you sleep. "
"But baby,"
"Mm you better find out
what it is. "

What do you think?
Mary Pell waited
a long time for this.
"Baby you can sit on it. "
"You can hold it down. "
"Get out
your hammer and nails. "
"Put it in a time capsule. "
"Bury it in Memphis"
"Only to be discovered
centuries later,"
"In some alien galaxy. "
"My baby,"
"You better find out yeah"
"What it is. "
"A picture. "
"Put it in a frame. "
"Hang it in the room
to great acclaim. "
"See it in the mirror
when you walk away. "
"Will you forget
what you see today?"
"Oh babe. "
"My baby. "
"Yeah. "
No, great. Thank you.
Appreciate the call.
Max McCallum's impaneling
a grand jury
To consider murder charges.
Matthew.
You and me, buddy.
We're gonna be famous.
Matt.
- Walker, he's gone.
- Sorry, Matt.
Considerate of him to go out
before deadline.
Yeah, he probably planned it
that way.
He was a good man, Matt.
I always told him he was
a fool for the truth.

He thought of that
as his highest compliment.
Make sure it's in the obit,
will you?
You wanna write that one
yourself, partner?
You've gotten pretty good
at it.
Life's funny, man.
I... A week ago, I was...
praying I'd never
have to write another obit.
Now it's an honor.
Thank you, man.
I appreciate it.
Your dad must have been
so proud of you.
And you of him.
You know, Matt,
in the long run,
Truth doesn't need any help.
But in the short run,
it uses people
Like you and your dad
to speed itself along.
There's a "justice
for Wallace Sampson" march
In Amos next week.
I hope you'll be there.
I'll be there.
We'll both be there.
- Hey!
- Hey.
Are you marching?
No, can't.
Journalistic objectivity
and all that.
Reporters aren't supposed
To take sides on a story
they're covering.
Hey, what's with the cross?
Church has a plaster problem.
Cross needs to come down
for a few weeks

While repairs are being made.
- Too bad.
- Yeah, well.
We'll do just fine.
Go back to Africa!
Nigger lovers!
Damn Alabama.
Well, you're as bad
as those rednecks, Harper.
Don't stereotype Alabama.
Trey, Mary Pell,
reverend young.
They're Alabama too.
I'm marching.
You're not supposed
to choose sides.
Truth doesn't have two sides.
Hey,
someone will call somebody,
And you'll lose your job.
I don't care what they think.
I care what I think.
You're a fool, buddy.
Maybe I am a fool.
A fool for the truth.
Fool for the truth.
I'm so proud of you.
I love you, Matt.
I love you.
I owe you everything.
Matt, we've been summoned
to Baxter's office.
What's up?
I don't know, but he's sure
got a burr under his saddle.
Gentlemen, we have a problem.
The New York Times wants to do
a story about Wallace Sampson.
Yeah, The Washington Post
called too.
Well, I'm disinclined
to cooperate.
Um, wh-What's the problem?
I'll not be the black cat

in this thing.
I can see where this is going.
Courageous reporters defy
publisher and solve murder.
Justice prevails.
Well, I don't... I don't think
that's the story at all.
Well, how would
you put it then?
That The Nashville Times
is the kind of newspaper
Where this sort of journalism
can still happen.
Do you think maybe I could be
the one quoted saying that?
I think you're
just the right person.
What a hypocrite.
Can't believe you let him
get away with that.
Partner, when you're
holding all the cards,
You don't want anyone
to leave the table.
I went in there
thinking somebody's head
Was about to roll.
Instead, we got the publisher
begging to be quoted
In the national media supporting
investigative journalism.
McCallum was smart to transfer
Possum over here tonight.
I'm betting there will be
a whole boatload
Of angry people
at tomorrow's hearing.
Safer not to make old' Possum
run that gauntlet.
Mr. McCallum, we're arriving
At the courthouse
with the package.
Roger that.
They're pulling up

to the courthouse.
Looks like a good night
for Possum-Hunting.
There's somebody else
out there.
They're gonna kill him!
Dang, Matt.
Well, you just made
Richard petty right proud.
Hoo!
All rise.
The court is now in session.
The honorable
R. Horace Williams presiding.
You may be seated.
Now counselors,
this is not a trial.
This is only a hearing
on the defense request
For the release
of the defendant on bond.
As such,
there are only two questions
That concern the court today.
One, is he a flight risk?
And two, does he pose a risk
of harm to the community?
Your honor,
despite judge Buchanan's ties
To the community, we consider
him a high flight risk.
Why is that, counselor?
Because the state will be
seeking the death penalty.
What is
your aggravating circumstance?
Premeditation.
We will offer the testimony
of William A. Baker.
I do.
On the night of the killing
of Wallace Sampson,
Were you with judge Buchanan?
Yes, sir.

Was anyone else with you?
Yes, sir.
Chief Peringer.
Three of us was in town hall,
Standing guard
against the blacks.
Someone had throwed
a firebomb at the store.
The judge was pretty upset
about it.
He said he'd already
been losing money
'Cause the blacks were scaring
away the white fellas,
Who'd come around
for the girls,
And now, they'd caused ol'
Braeford Watson's heart attack.
What else did judge Buchanan
say about the firebomb?
He said a firebomb that, uh...
that don't go off
Must have been made by a black.
Is that exactly what he said?
No, not exactly.
Mr. Baker, tell the court
Exactly what
judge Buchanan said.
He said, "a firebomb
that don't go off"
Must have been made
by a nigger. "
Please.
Did judge Buchanan
offer an opinion
About what should be done?
He said, uh, "them niggers
need to be put in their place. "
Did judge Buchanan say
how that should be done?
He said,
"there needs to be a killing. "
Did judge Buchanan say
who needed to be killed?

He said, "we should kill
the next nigger"
That walks past the store. "
Please.
And how were you going
to decide who would kill
The next black person
that walked past the store?
We played poker.
That way, we could decide
who would be lookouts
And who would be the shooter.
And the loser
would do the shooting?
No, the winner.
Who won the hand?
Judge Buchanan.
What happened next?
Judge went and got his rifle
from his car.
Chief said he wanted
to go home.
He said he thought
the judge had been bluffing.
The judge said
it was fine by him,
As long as he kept
his mouth shut.
After the chief left, I tried
To talk the judge out of it.
I told him he didn't actually
need to shoot anybody.
He could just scare 'em.
Judge said
it wasn't a bad idea.
I just hid in the bushes.
Then I saw someone walking.
I could tell it was a black.
Then I heard the shot from where
the judge was standing.
The black fell, and I took off.
I didn't even know it was a kid
Until the judge told me
the next day.

What else did
judge Buchanan say?
He said that was
just one more nigger kid
We didn't have to worry
about growing up.
Your honor,
I have one more witness.
Mary Pell Sampson.
Do you swear and affirm
that the statements
That you make are the truth,
the whole truth,
And nothing but the truth?
Yes, your honor.
Mrs. Sampson, judge Buchanan
Is accused of killing your son.
Would you be fearful
if he were free on bond?
I fear no man.
Only God.
You're a trusting woman.
What would your son's father
say about this question?
I don't know.
Where is he?
I'd rather not say.
Ma'am, you are sworn
to tell the truth here.
So I'll ask you,
who is Wallace's father?
Judge Buchanan!
Go on, please, ma'am.
Judge Buchanan raped me.
Please.
He and Mr. Hall had been...
shooting birds and...
and drinking.
Mr. Hall fell asleep.
The judge...
Came into the kitchen
where I was working
And said...
"Why pay for brown sugar

when I can get it for free?"
I never told anyone,
Not even when I found
I was pregnant.
It made no matter.
I loved Wallace.
He was my only son.
Judge Buchanan raped me,
But God gave me Wallace.
Judge, care to comment?
Yeah, too bad
chief Peringer ain't here
To tell his side of this.
Might be the point.
Perfect match.
The gun that killed
Wallace Sampson
Was the gun that killed
chief Peringer.
Chief Peringer and Possum
were the only other people
Who knew what Buchanan
had done.
So when Trey starts stirring
things up,
Buchanan kills the chief
the same way he shot Wallace.
The chief would still be alive
If I hadn't started
asking questions.
- No, baby.
- Well, hey.
The chief might not have
pulled the trigger,
But he did cover up
Wallace's murder
For almost 20 years.
You did what you believed in,
And I was so wrong
to try to stop you.
Hello?
Daddy?
Buchanan's dead.
Hung himself in jail.

And there's a fire
at the church,
And all hell is breaking loose.
Praise god.
You know, in 19 years,
I've learned a thing or two
about making firebombs.
"Seems so long. "
"You been carrying that cross
all by yourself,"
"And you don't see
how you can take it"
"Truth be told. "
"We each live
in a house of cards. "
"Yeah and it don't take much,"
"To shake it. "
I'm sorry.
It's okay, Emma Jean.
It's not your fault.
"To be redeemed. "
"Oh to be redeemed. "
"To be redeemed. "
"Redeemed. "
"From the grip of the mighty. "
"From the jaws of the lion. "
"To be redeemed. "
"This side of Zion. "
"I heard tell of a city"
"Where no one cries. "
"We've only ever known
the suburb. "
"Built on lies. "
"Where the lowborn suffer,"
"And the wicked win. "
"They get paid to sin. "
"While the weary wait
at heaven's door"
"Hoping someone lets them in. "
"To be redeemed. "
"To find that all we dreamed"
"Is what it seems. "
"From the grip of the mighty. "
"From the jaws of the lion. "

"This side of Zion. "
"Oh oh oh. "
"Oh. "
"100 miles an hour"
"Coming at you fast. "
"Shot like a bullet. "
"That's showing up at last. "
"There's a dead line coming. "
"Nowhere to hide oh no. "
"There's a dead line coming. "
"Written a long time ago. "
"Across the county line. "
"Screaming as it comes. "
"Killing off the future. "
"Blocking out the sun. "
"There's a dead line coming. "
"Going across the land. "
"There's a dead line coming. "
"Be ready if you can. "
"Yeah. "
"Be ready. "