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Chapter Eighteen

The sheriff went to Jefferson ^{had} as he promised and asked him if he would like to meet his visitors in the ^{dayroom} bullpen instead of ^{his} the cell. The sheriff explained ~~to him~~ that ~~if he did meet them in the bullpen that~~ he would be shackled hand and feet. ^{there} He also ^{told} ~~explained to~~ Jefferson that it was entirely up to him, and that his wishes would be carried out.

"If that's what they want," Jefferson said.

"No, not what they want; what you want," ~~the sheriff told him.~~

"If that's what they want," Jefferson repeated.

"Is it yes, then?" ~~the sheriff asked him.~~

"If that's what they want," Jefferson said. "I'm go^un die anyhow."

When Miss Emma and my aunt and Reverend Ambrose went to the courthouse, they were led to the ^{dayroom} bullpen by the young deputy, ~~Paul~~. The ~~bullpen was a large room with three picnic tables, in~~ it. The tables were made of steel, and ^{with} there were benches attached ~~to them~~ on either side, and ^{also} they too were made of steel. There were no other visitors in the ^{dayroom} bullpen, and Miss Emma selected the center table. ~~Paul~~ told them that he would

OK?
Paul now off & forever!

Leave a pulled Stet

OK?
Stet

OK?
Stet

off

be back ~~with~~ a few minutes. While he was gone, Miss Emma took out the food and placed it on the table. She set places for four, two on either side of the table. My aunt and Reverend Ambrose stood back, watching her. My aunt would say later that ~~Miss Emma~~ she went about setting the table the same way ~~that~~ she would have done at home, humming her ³ Termination song to herself.

leave or lead EJP *stet //* "This go^un be his place, and this goⁿ be my place," she said. My aunt said that Miss Emma, ~~was~~ still humming to herself, ~~she~~ passed her hand over the table to make sure there was no dust, no specks there ~~just~~ ^{as} like she would do at home. "That's your place there, Lou, and that's yours right there, Reverend Ambrose," she said. "Don't it look nice? Ain't this much better?"

~~Both~~ my aunt and Reverend Ambrose agreed that it looked nice and that it was much better than the cell.

Then they heard the chains. And a moment later, the door at the far end of the room opened and Jefferson came in, followed by the deputy. Jefferson had not been ~~in the~~ chains ^{ed} before, and he ~~tried to make~~ ^{took} steps ^{too} long ^{that} and it caused him to trip, my aunt said. He came ~~up~~ to the table like somebody half blind, and he didn't sit down until ~~Paul~~ ^{took} told him to do so. ~~Paul~~ ^{took} told him that he had to stay in that one place until he ~~came back~~ ^{was} to return ^{ed} him to his cell. *stet //*

leave EJP "He ain't goⁿ move," Miss Emma said. "I'm goⁿ see to that. I thank you kindly." *stet //*

EJP

OK? "You understand, don't you, Jefferson?" ^{Luke} Paul said. (stet)

"I yer you," Jefferson said.

stet // "He goⁱⁿ mind," Miss Emma said. "I'm goⁱⁿ see to that." (stet)

OK? "Y'all have a good dinner," ^{Luke} Paul said, and left. (stet)

"He come from good stock," Miss Emma said. "Y'all sit down. Well, Jefferson, how you feeling?"

He did not answer her. He sat ^{with} head bowed, his cuffed hands down between his knees under the table.

My aunt and Reverend Ambrose sat down. Miss Emma dished up the food. Mustard greens with pieces of pork fat mixed in it. There was stewed beef meat, rice, and biscuits. A little cake for dessert, my aunt said.

stet "You goⁱⁿ eat for me, Jefferson?" Miss Emma asked him.

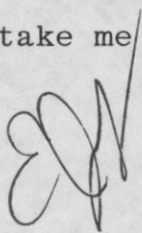
He kept his head bowed, his shackled hands under the table, ^{and} he did not answer her.

"You'll eat if I feed you?" she asked.

When he did not answer her, she dished up a small piece of meat ^{some} and mustard greens on the spoon and held it up to his mouth. He would not open his mouth. Miss Emma looked at my aunt, and my aunt, who had been trying to eat, could see all the hurt in her face.

→ When I came up there a couple ^{of} days later, the chief deputy told me ~~that~~ I could ~~either~~ ^{Jefferson} meet him in his cell or in the ^{dayroom} bullpen. I told him it didn't matter to me where we met. The chief deputy told me it didn't matter to him either, but he told ^{Luke} Paul to take me to the ^{dayroom} ~~bullpen~~. (stet)

OK?/OK?



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 "chains" is antecedent
 I sat at the center table, just as Miss Emma and my aunt and Reverend Ambrose had ~~done~~ ^{two} a couple days ~~earlier~~ ^{before}. And I heard the chains out along the cell block before I saw ~~them~~ ^{anyone}. Then they came in, Jefferson in front, shackled, walking with short steps, his head bowed and his shoulders ~~sloped~~ ^{STOOPEO}, too. ~~sloped~~ ^{like}, animal ~~sloped~~. They came up to the table, and Paul ~~told~~ ^{like} him to sit down. He sat ~~down~~ without looking at me, his ~~shoulders~~ hanging low and closer together than they should be.

ok?
 "I'll be back," ~~Paul~~ ^{like} said. (stet)

"Can we walk?" I asked him.

ok?
 "He had his exercise," ~~Paul~~ ^{like} said. "I'll have to ask Clark." (stet)

"No, that's all right," I said. "Maybe next time."

ok?
~~Paul~~ ^{like} left. (stet)

"How's it going?" I said.

"Aw right," Jefferson said, without raising his head.

"You want to eat something?"

"I ain't hongry," he said.

"Yes, you are," I said. "I know I am."

There was store-bought bread, fried pork chops, and baked sweet potatoes. I put some of it in front of him and some in front of me. I started eating.

"Come on, eat something," I said.

→ He raised his head slowly and studied me a while ~~before~~ ^{like} saying anything. He had ~~lost~~ some weight. What had been a round, smooth face when he first came here was ~~now~~ ^{like} beginning to