

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Jefferson's Diary

^{Wright}
 mr ~~grant~~ you say write somethin but i dont know what to write
 an you say i must be thinkin bout things i aint tellin nobody
 an i ought to put it on paper but i dont know what to put on
 no paper cause i aint never been able in all my life to i dont
 think i never no i never wrote a letter in all my life cause
 nanan used to get them other chilren to write her letter an
 read her letter for her not me so i cant think of no more to say
 right now maybe later

its evenin and i done eat my rice and beans and drunk my milk
 an the sun comin through the window cause i can see it splash on
 the flo an i can hear ned and them talkin and nothin more right
 now mr ^{Wright}~~grant~~

i cudnt sleep las night cause i kep dreamin it and i dont want
 dream it cause im just walkin to somewhere but i dont know where
 its at and fore i get to the door i wake up an i want to write in
 the tablet las night but you aint got no light in here but the moon
 so im writin this mornin soon is sunup but now i don't know what
 mo to say for now

nanan brought me some easter egg an i eat one an nanan eat one
an rebn mose and mis lou eat one an rebn mose ax me if i know
why the lord die and he say he die for me so i can meet him in
hebn an all he want me to do is say i want be up there wit him
an the angels an say if i mean it wit all my heart an sol ill
go to hebn an nanan start cryin agan an mis lou hug her an nanan
say all i need to do an make her life wors livin is ax the lord
for forgiv me in the pardn of my sin an her an rebn mose was on
they knee an mis lou was still in the cher huggin her an i was
glad when paul come and got me

i dont know what day it is but las night i cudn sleep and i cud
yer ned down the way snorin an i laid there and though bout samson
sayin if the lord love me how come he let my wife die and leave
me an them chilren an how come he dont come here an take way
people like them martin brothers on the st charles river stead
of messin wit po folks who aint never done nothin but try an do
the right thing

it look like the lord just work for them white folks cause ever
sense i wasn nothin but a little boy i been on my own haulin
water for the fiel on that ole water cart wit all them dime
buckets an that dipper an old dorthy just trottin and trottin
an me up there hittin her wit that rope an all them dime buckets
and that dipper just bangin and bangin gainst that bal of water

an old dorthy jus trottin and lopin so i can get the people they
food on time and boo sittin under that blood weed wit his white
beans an rice an goin where he at where he at where he at an how
come he dont give a man a little breeze if he so merciful an mis
rachel sayin jus keep it up keep it up an see if a clap of lightin
dont come there and jus keep it up an boo sayin let him i dont care
cause a ded nigger is better off an a live one any weekday an sady
gitin drunk an standin in the middle of the road hollin up in the
air sayin come on and get me come on an get me if you think im
scared of you come on an fallin down in the ditch an rollin out
in the road and rollin back in the ditch and cussin and sayin i
know you dont love nobody but the white folks cause you is they
god not mine an come on an hollin whoooo whoooo whoooo aint no
nigger got no god

church goin people didnt like boo but i like him cause he let you
hav a dime or a quarter if he had it

i jes cant sleep no mo cause evertime i shet my eyes i see im
goin toward that door but fore i reach it i wake up an i dont go
back to sleep cause i dont want walk to that door no mo cause i
dont know what back of there if its where they gon set that cher
or if it supos to mean def or the grave or hebn i dont know i
wonder if boo went to hebn cause i know he didn get religin first

mr ^{Wiggins} ~~grant~~ you say you like what i got here but you say you still
 cant give a a ^m yet jes a b cause you say i aint gone deep in me
 yet an you know i can if i try hard an when i ax you what you
 mean deep in me you say jes say whats on my mind so one day you
 can be save an you can save the children an i say i dont know
 what you mean an you say i do know what you mean an you look so
 tied sometime mr ^{Wiggins} ~~grant~~ i jes feel like tellin you i like you but
 i dont know how to say this cause i aint never say it before an
 nobody aint never say it to me

i know i care for nanan but i dont know if love is care cause
 cuttin wood and haulin water and things like that i dont know
 if thats love or jes work to do an you say thats love but you
 say you know i got mo an jes that to say an when i lay there at
 night and cant sleep i try an think what you mean i got mo cause i
 aint done this much thinkin and this much writin in all my life
 before and you ought to know mr ^{Wiggins} ~~grant~~ cause you ^{was} ~~been~~ my ~~teacher~~
 teacher

its mundy and i aint got but jes another few days lef an i hope
 i see nanan jes one mo time mis lou an rebn mose say she aint
 goin too good an cudn make it with them this time but the lord
 know mr ^{Wiggins} ~~grant~~ i hope i can see her one more time on this earth
 fore i go is that love mr ^{Wiggins} ~~grant~~ when you want see somebody bad bad

^{was}
 mr ~~grant~~ thank for sayin im doin b+ work an you know the a aint
 too far off

the sheriff an mr pichot an mr morgan come in the cell an mr pichot
 ax me how im feelin an i tell him im all right and he say yes he
 see im all right an he ax me if he can do somethin for me an i
 tell him nosir im all right an he ax if i want a brand new pencil
 wit a ~~nickel~~ ^{Penny} eraser an i tol him i wud take the pencil but i dont
 need the eraser cause you tol me to jes put down anything come in
 my ~~mind~~ ^{hand} and if it aint right jes scratch over it an go on an he
 say yes he can see that an he ax me if i want him to sharpen the
 pencil for me an i say yesir an he sharpen the pencil on a teeny
~~pearl~~ ^{Real} hanle knife an i look at the knife and i seen mr pichot
 look up at the sheriff an mr morgan an the sheriff look back at
 him but mr morgan never stop lookin at me like he was tryin to
 figger me an mr pichot ax me if i want the little knife an i tell
 him yesir i didn mind an he unhook the little gold chain from his
 belt loop and hand me the knife an the chain an he say it was all
 mine and i say just for a few days an you can hav it back an i
 held the little knife in my han an the chain in my other han
 an just look at it an i yer him say well an i yer mr morgan say
 it aint friday yet an mr pichot say you want double it you want
 add that mare an mr morgan say no but it still aint friday yet

 ole clark been comin round too an tryin to act like a youman but
 i can see in his face what he is an i dont even look at him when

he ax me how im feelin an can he get me somethin an not a minute fore that he was there cussin ned and them i aint studin bout him an i dont care if he do see what i got down here cause ill be dead an gone an in the groun fore he know it

an paul tryin to be hard when he aint like he dont want get too close to me no mo an all the time he is the only one round yer know how to talk like a youman bein to people i know you i know you paul an i know old clark and i know you sheriff guidry and mr pichot an mr morgan an all the rest of yall i jes never say none of this before but i know yall ever last one of yall

lord have mercy sweet ^{Wiggin}jesus mr ~~grant~~ where all them folks come from when you ax me if some children can come up here and speak to me i didn know you meant all them children in your class an jes sittin there on the flo all quiet in they clean clothes lookin at me an i cud see some of them was scared of me but mos of them was brave an spoke and my little cousin estelle ~~the~~ even kiss me on the jaw an i cudn hol it back mr ~~grant~~ ^{Wiggin}

then after the children here come the old folks look like everbody from the quarter was here mis julia then joe an mis haret an aunt agnes an mr norman an miss sara an mis lelia an mr harry an mis lena an god knows ^{who all} an mr ofal an mis ofelia wit them beeds ^{an} an all the people sayin how good i look an lord have mercy ^{Wiggin}jesus mr ~~grant~~ how you got bok yer in that suit that suit look like it half bok size cause i member mis selina got him that suit

way back ten leben yers ago an bok babbin there like he know me an mis selina sayin he want say he glad to see me an he want give me a aggi an im jes lookin at bok shakin my head an shakin my head an i can stop sayin old bok old bok old bok you want give *me* one of your aggis all right give me one of your aggis but ole bok wudn turn it loose till mis selina had to tell him let go bok couple times and still bok wudn till miss selina pri it from him and han it to me an bok start to babbin till miss selina reach out her han for me to giv it back to her and tol bok he cud hav this one but he had to give me one of them other he had in his pocket an i say to her nome thats all right mis selina but she say she know bok want give me somethin cause his face jes lit up when he seen me an she say to him bok bok bok aint you gon give jefferson somethin you brought all the way from home an ole bok was lookin way over yonder an rattlin his marbles in his pocket and lookin way over yonder till he found the litle peswee he had in his pocket an give me that

this was the first time i cry when they lok that door behind me the very first time an i jes set on my bunk crying but not let them see or yer me cause i didn't want them think wrong but i was cryin cause of bok an the marble he give me and cause of the people an cause they hadn never done me this fore now

i dont want sleep at night no mo just catnap in the day while they got light and they got noise cause i dont want dream bout that door

when they brought me in the room an i seen nanan at the table i seen how old she look and how tired she look and i tol her i love her and i tol her i was strong an she jes look old and tired an pull me to her an kiss me an it was the firs time she had done that an it felt good an i let her hol me long is she want cause it was good for her an i tol her i was strong an she didnt need to come back no more cause i was strong an she jes set there wit her eyes mos shet like she want go to sleep lookin at me all the time till rebn mose an mis lou hav to hep her up an take her back home

unhappy
 mr ~~g~~ when i see your girlfren i see how pretty she is an im sorry ~~for~~ *how* the way i talk that day when i was mad at you an say them nasty things bout her cause she is so pretty an smile in a pretty way when she look at people an you can see she aint puttin on airs an its jes a quality in her an she talk so nice to people an all the time i want look at her but scared cause she so pretty an im so ugly an my clothes dont smell good an i aint had a bath sens las sady but i still want look at her an she say she think i was lookin good an strong an when she put her han on my shoulder i start tremblin an she lean close an kiss me an i felt hot an i cud smell her powder her cent an i felt good an scared an hot cause that was the firs time a lady that pretty ever tech me and nobody that pretty never kiss me an when she *and y'all together* left i ~~want~~ *want* to the door an i look at her all the time i cud an i cud smell her cent an i cud still feel her mof

im sorry i cry ^{Wright} mr ~~grant~~ im sorry i cry when you say you ain't
 comin back tomorow im strong an rebn mose gon be yer an mr
 harry gon be yer but i cry cause you been so good to me mr ^{Wright} ~~grant~~
 nobody aint never been that good to me an make me think im somethin

sheriff asx me what i want for supper an i tol him i want nanan
 to cook me some okra an rice and some pok chops an a conbread
 an some clabber an he say he gon see what he can do an say what
 i want for desrt an i tol him jes a litl bit of ice cream in a
 cup an a moon pie

they took me and let me stan under the shower wit a new bar of
 soap an they give me a big white clean tower an brought me back
 an i put on som clean clothes and set down cause my food was yer
 an i eat ever bit of it an it was the bes meal i ever had ^{man}
^{nanan was cooki}

sun goin down an i know this the las one im gon see but im gon
 see one mo sunrise cause i aint gon sleep tonight

im gon sleep a long time after tomor^o~~now~~

sheriff come by after i eat an ax me how im feelin an i say im
 feelin all right an he ax me he say i aint never pick up your
 tablet an look in it an he ax me what all i been writin an i
 tol him just things an he say aint he done treat me right an i

tol him yesir an he say aint his deptis done treat me fair an i
tol him yesir an he say aint he done let people visit me anytime
they want come an see me an i say yesir an he say didn he let
the children an all the people from the quarter come an visit me
jes two days ago an i say yesir an he say is you gon put that
in your tablet and i say yesir an ~~and~~ he say good put that down in
your tablet i treat you good all the time you been here an he say
he had to go home cause he hadn eat his supper yet but for me to
call a depty if i need somethin an he ax me if i want the light
to stay on all night in case i want write some mo an i tol him
yesir an he say all right i cud hav all the light i want

my light on but they aint no mo light on in the place an the
place is quiet quiet but you can tell nobody sleepin

they got a moon ^{out} there an i can see the leaves ~~through~~ the
window but i aint gon see no mo leaves after tonight an tomoro

i dont know if they got a hebn cause samson say they cant be an
boo say they aint none for no nigger but rebn mose say they is
one for all men an bok dont know

i been shakin and shakin but im gon stay strong

i never ought to gone there wit buddy an bear cause they aint
no good an im gon be meetin them soon

its quiet quiet an i can ~~hear~~^{yer} my teefs an i can ~~hear~~^{yer} my heart

when i was a litl boy i was a waterboy but now i got to be a man

dont know if you can read this mr ~~grant~~^{Wagner} cause my han shakin too
much an i can yer my heart

i can yer randy but i aint listnin to him no mo

its late an i don't know what time it is but i know its late an
i jes went to the toilet an i jes wash my face

day breakin

sun comin up

they got a bird in the tree sound like a blue bird

sky blue blue mr ~~grant~~^{Wagner}

good by mr ~~grant~~^{Wagner} tell them im strong tell them im a man good by
mr ~~grant~~^{Wagner} im gon ax paul if he can bring ~~this to you~~ ^{you} ~~this~~

Sincerely
Jefferson