

MA. Kill 'im?

TOM. I — dunno. I was nuts. Tried to.

MA. Was you saw?

TOM. I guess so. They had the lights on us.

MA. Tom, you got to go away.

TOM. I know, Ma.

MA. You gonna have a bad scar, Tom. An' your nose is all crooked.

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TOM. Maybe tha's a good thing. Nobody wouldn't know me, maybe. If my prints wasn't on record, I'd be glad.

MA. I want you should go a long ways off.

TOM. Hm-mn. Lookie, Ma. I been all night hidin' alone. I been thinkin' about Casy. He talked a lot. Use' ta bother me. But now I been thinkin' what he said, an' I can remember —all of it.

MA. He's a good man. *(A dog barks in the distance.)* Hush— listen.

TOM. On'y the wind, Ma. I know the wind. *(Ma sits next to Tom.)*

MA. Tom, what you aimin' to do?

TOM. What Casy done.

MA. But they killed him!

TOM. Yeah. He didn' duck quick enough. He wasn' doing nothin' against the law, Ma. I been thinkin' a hell of a lot, thinkin' about our people livin' like pigs, an' the good rich lan' layin' fallow, or maybe one fella with a million acres, while a hundred thousan' good farmers is starvin'. An' I been wonderin' if all our folks got together an' yelled, like them fellas yelled, only a few of 'em outside the gate —

MA. Tom, they'll drive you, an' cut you down.

TOM. They gonna drive me anyways. They drivin' all our people.

MA. How'm I gonna know 'bout you? They might kill ya an' I wouldn' know. They might hurt ya. How'm I gonna know?

TOM. Well, maybe like Casy says, a fella ain't got a soul of his own, but on'y a piece of a big one — an' then —

MA. Then what, Tom?

Prep
video

SB
LQ
112

TOM. Then it don' matter. Then I'll be all aroun' in the dark. I'll be ever'where — wherever you look. Wherever they's a fight so hungry people can eat, I'll be there. Wherever they's a cop beatin' up a guy, I'll be there. An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build — why, I'll be there. See? God, I'm talkin' like Casy.

MA. I don' un'erstan'. I don' really know.

TOM. Me neither. It's jus' stuff I been thinkin' about.

MA. Tom, later — when it's blowed over, you'll come back? You'll find us?

TOM. Sure. Now I better go.

MA. Good-by. *(Ma takes his head in her hands and kisses him on the brow. Tom stands up and turns to leave. Ma reaches for him but when Tom turns around she pulls her hands back suddenly.)*

TOM. Good-by. *(Tom ducks and crawls away. Ma's eyes are wet and burning, but she does not cry. Darkness engulfs her and then a dim circle of light reveals the fourth narrator, a man in overalls.)*

FOURTH NARRATOR. The boxcars, twelve of them, stood end to end on a little flat beside the stream. There were two rows of six each, the wheels removed. Up the big sliding doors slatted planks ran for cat-walks. They made good houses, water-tight and draftless, room for twenty-four families, one family in each end of each car. No windows, but the wide doors stood open. *(The rusted side of a boxcar is revealed. The trough of water is open. Pa is standing in the open doorway. Ma and Uncle John are seated nearby. The fourth narrator moves out of sight.)*

MA. It's nice. It's almost nicer than anything we had.

PA. We got nothin', now. Comin' a long time — no work, no crops. What we gonna do then? How we gonna git stuff to eat? An' I tell you Rosasharn ain't so far from due. Git so I hate to think. Go diggin' back to a ol' time to keep from thinkin'. Seems like our life's over an' done.

MA. *(Moving to Pa.)* No, it ain't. It ain't, Pa. An' that's a thing a woman knows. I noticed that. Man, he lives in a jerk — baby born an' a man dies, an' that's a jerk — gets a farm an' loses his farm, an' that's a jerk. Woman, it's all one flow, like a stream, little eddies, little waterfalls, but the river, it goes right on. Woman looks at it like that. We ain't gonna die out. People is goin' on — changin' a little, maybe, but goin' right on. *(Uncle John moves to Ma with an unlit lantern. Ma holds the lantern while John lights it.)*

UNCLE JOHN. How can you tell? What's to keep ever'thing from stoppin'; all the folks from jus' gittin' tired an' layin' down? *(Ma hands the lantern back to Uncle John, who hangs it upon the wall. Rose of Sharon, Winfield, and Ruthie are all asleep on a mattress.)*

LQ
112

SB
Lantern-
115 FRQ
SQ
VQ

LQ
112.5
hat

LQ
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SQ
N. 5
cut wind

RQ
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car
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79

19a

MA. Hard to say. Ever'thing we do — seems to me is aimed right at goin' on. Seems that way to me. Even gettin' hungry— even bein' sick; some die, but the rest is tougher. Jus' try to live the day, jus' the day. *(Pa looks out.)*

PA. They might be a good year ^{next} flex year, back home. *(Distant thunder rolls. Al comes in through the curtain separating the two halves of the car.)*

AL. Hullo. I thought you'd be sleepin' by now.

MA. Al, we're a talkin'. Come set here.

AL. Sure — OK I wanta talk too. I'll hafta be goin' away pretty soon now.

MA. You can't. We need you here. Why you got to go away?

AL. Well, me an' Aggie Wainwright, we figgers to get married, an' I'm gonna git a job in a garage, an' we'll have a rent' house for a while, an' — *(They stare at him.)* Well, we are, an' they ain't nobody can stop us! *(Rain begins to fall.)*

MA. Al, we're glad! We're awful glad.

AL. You are?

MA. Why, 'course we are, you're a growed man. You need a wife. Just don' go right now.

AL. I promised Aggie. We got to go. We can't stan' this no more.

MA. Jus' stay till spring. Jus' till spring. Won't you stay till spring?

AL. Well — *(Mrs. Wainwright appears from behind the curtain.)*

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. You heard yet?

MA. Yeah! Jus' heard, Mrs. Wainwright, jus' heard.

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. Oh, my! I wisht — I wisht we had a cake. I wisht we had — a cake or somepin'.

MA. I'll set on some coffee an' make up some pancakes. We got sirup.

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. Oh, my! Why — well. Look, I'll bring some sugar. We'll put sugar in them pancakes. *(She goes behind the curtain. Rose of Sharon sits up and steadies herself)*

ROSE OF SHARON. What's a matter?

MA. Why, it's news! We're gonna have a little party 'count a Al an' Aggie Wainwright is gonna get married. *(Rose of Sharon sits perfectly still. She looks at Al. Mrs. Wainwright calls from the other end of the car.)*

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. I'm putting' a fresh dress on Aggie. I'll be right over. *(Rose of Sharon turns away slowly. A crack of thunder. Lightning flashes. Pa and Uncle John step out of the car into the rain and ran down to the churning stream. Al brings Mr. Wainwright out of the boxcar and down to Pa.)*

PA. How's it look to you, John?

UNCLE JOHN. Seems to me if that crick keeps comin', she'll flood us.

PA. If we was all to get our shovels an' throw up a bank, I bet we could keep her out.

UNCLE JOHN. Yeah. Might. Dunno if them other fellas'd wanta. They'd maybe ruther move somewheres else.

PA. But these here cars is dry. Couldn' find no dry place as good as this.

UNCLE JOHN. Comin' up fast. I think we oughta go talk to the other fellas. See if they'll help ditch up. Got to git outa here if they won't. *(The men and ran off Thunder lightning rip the air. Rose of Sharon suddenly lets out a quick sharp cry from the corner of the car. The cry is cut off. Ma whirls and goes to her. The girl is holding her breath; her eyes are filled with terror.)*

MA. What is it? *(Rose of Sharon lets out her breath and catches it again. Ma puts her hand under the covers.)* Mis' Wainwright. Oh, Mis' Wainwright! *(Mrs. Wainwright appears.)*

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. Want me?

MA. Look! It's come. It's early. *(Mrs. Wainwright bends over the girl.)*

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. Did it kinda grab you all over quick? Open up an' answer me. *(Thunder and lightning. Rose of Sharon nods weakly. Mrs. Wainwright turns to Ma.)* Yep. It's come. Early, ya say?

MA. Maybe the fever brang it.

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. Well, she oughta be up on her feet. Oughta be walkin' aroun'.

MA. She can't. She ain't got the strength.

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. Well, she oughta. I he'ped with lots. I'll git our lantern, too. *(She calls across the curtain.)* Aggie! You take care of these here little fellas.

MA. Tha's right. Ruthie! You an' Winfiel' go down with Aggie. Go on now. *(Aggie appears and holds the curtain for the children. Winfield runs to Aggie. Ruthie approaches Ma.)*

RUTHIE. Why?

MA 'Cause you got to. Rosasharn gonna have her baby.

RUTHIE. I wanna watch, Ma. Please let me.

MA Ruthie! You git now. You git quick. *(Ruthie follows Aggie to the other side of the car. Rose of Sharon looks up from the mattress.)*

ROSE OF SHARON. Is it a-comin'?

MA. Sure. Gonna have a nice baby. You jus' got to help us. Feel like you could get up an' walk?

ROSE OF SHARON. I can try.

MA. That's a good girl. *(Pa runs on and up into the boxcar for a shovel. A group of men with shovels and lanterns gather near the stream. To Pa.)* Her time's come.

PA. Then — then we couldn' go 'f we wanted to.

MA. No.

PA. Then we got to get that bank built

MA. You got to. *(Pa grabs a shovel and moves back out to the stream.)*

PA. *(To the men.)* We got to get the bank built. My girl got her pains.

FIRST MAN. Baby?

PA. Yeah. We can't go now.

SECOND MAN. It ain't our baby. We kin go. *(Rose of Sharon lets out a terrible scream.)*

PA. Sure. You can go. Go on. What the hell's stoppin' you? *(Thunder cracks. The women work over Rose of Sharon, and the rain drums down. Pa jumps in the water and drives his shovel into the mud. The other men do the same.)* Higher! We got to git her higher! *(Some men appear with flashlights and sandbags. Pa watches Uncle John plunge on.)* John, take it easy. You'll kill yaself. *(Rose of Sharon screams over the thunder. The men begin to pile sandbags along the bank of the stream.)*

UNCLE JOHN. I can't he'p it. I can't stan' that yellin'. It's like — it's like when —

PA. I know. But jus' take it easy.

UNCLE JOHN. I'll run away. By God, I got to work or I'll run away.

PA. How's she stan'?

FIRST MAN. Comin' up.

PA. She'll come up slower now. Got to flood purty far on the other side.

SECOND MAN. She's comin' up, though. *(Rose of Sharon screams repeatedly. The men work. The rain streams down. Then the screaming stops. Pa listens.)*

PA. *(To Uncle John.)* Ma'd call me if it was bore. *(A terrific crack and a flash of lightning. A ripping crash tears the air. It is the sound of a great cottonwood toppling. The men stop to look out, their mouths open. They watch the great tree split and thunder into the boiling stream.)*

UNCLE JOHN. Cottonwood.

THIRD MAN. Mighty big one.

PA. Look at 'er sink.

SECOND MAN. There goes the bank. *(The men freeze, then break and run. Uncle John slips into the water. The current swirls about his chest.)*

PA. *(Calling.)* Hey, John! What's the matter? *(He pulls Uncle John up out of the current.)*

UNCLE JOHN. Legs give out. Jus' give out.

PA. Think ya can make it awright?

UNCLE JOHN. I'll be awright. Jus' go on. *(Pa and Mr. Wainwright move up to the boxcar. Mr. Wainwright slips behind the curtain. Pa stands in the open door. Al and the other men disappear.)*

PA. How is she? *(Ma does not look up.)*

MA. Awright, I think. Sleepin'. *(Mrs. Wainwright moves to Pa. She pulls him by the elbow to the corner of the car, picks up a lantern and holds it over an apple box. Distant thunder. Curled on a newspaper is a blue shriveled little mummy. Uncle John moves up into the boxcar.)*

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. *(Softly.)* Never breathed. Never was alive. *(Uncle John turns and sits down. The rain swishes softly. Uncle John sniffles in the dark.)*

PA. We — done — what we could.

MA. *(Still not looking up.)* I know.

PA. We worked all night. An' a tree cut out the bank.

MA. I know. I heard it.

PA. Think she's gonna be all right?

MA. I dunno.

PA. Well — couldn't we — of did nothin'? *(Ma's lips are stiff and white.)*

MA. No. They was on'y one thing to do — ever — an' we done it. *(Al runs into the car soaking wet.)*

AL. I went to the truck. No use. The motor was full a water. Bat'ry foul by now. *(Ruthie comes out from behind the curtain, looks blindly at the lamp for a moment and then turns to Ma.)*

RUTHIE. Is it bore? Is the baby out? Where's the baby? *(Mrs. Wainwright picks up a sack and spreads it over the apple box in the corner. Ma moves to Ruthie kneels and embraces her.)*

MA. They ain't no baby. They never was no baby. We was wrong.

RUTHIE. Shucks! I wisht it had a been a baby. *(Uncle John and Ma help Ruthie back into the other side of the boxcar.)*

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. *(Pointing to the apple box.)* We ain't gonna git out soon. That ain't doin' no good. Jus' cause trouble an' sorra. Couldn' you fellas kinda — take it out an' bury it?

PA. Guess you're right. Jus' cause sorra. 'Gainst the law to bury it.

MRS. WAINWRIGHT. They's lots a things 'gainst the law that we can't he'p doin'. *(Mrs. Wainwright offers the box to Pa.)*

PA. Yeah. *(He turns to Uncle John.)* John, will you take an' bury it?

UNCLE JOHN. Sure. I'll do it. Sure, I will. Come on, give it to me. Come on! Give it to me! *(Mrs. Wainwright brings Uncle John the apple box.)*

PA. Shovel's standin' right behin' you. (Uncle John takes the shovel and slips out the door. *Thunder. He comes down to the trough of water and puts his shovel down. Holding the box in front of him, he edges into the swift stream. Thunder. For a time he stands watching the water swirl by', leaving its yellow foam among the willow stems. He holds the apple box against his chest. And then he leans over and sets the box in the stream and steadies it with his hand.)*

UNCLE JOHN. *(Fiercely.)* Go down an' tell 'em. Go down in the street an' rot an' tell 'em that way. That's the way you can talk. Don' even know if you was a boy or a girl. Ain't gonna find out. Go on down now, an' lay in the street. Maybe they'll know then. *(He guides the box gently out into the current and lets it go, then grabs the shovel and returns to the boxcar. The rain is now a gentle drizzle. Al pushes the curtain aside and moves into the Joad's section of the boxcar holding a dim lantern light. Ma and Rose of Sharon, soaking wet huddle together. Pa and Uncle John, also drenched and raw, are squatting nearby. Rose of Sharon reaches up and whispers in Ma's ear. Ma nods her head.)*

SB
LQ 123.5
123.5
SQ Y

LQ
123
John

LQ
123.5

SQ
Y

SQ
Y.5
out of
Boxcar

SB
LQ
124

LQ
124
x into
car

MA. Yes. It's time for it. We're a-gettin' outa here. Gettin' to higher groun'. *(To Pa.)* An' you're comin' or you ain't comin', but I'm takin' Rosasharn an' the little fellas outa here.

PA. We can't!

MA. We're a-goin'.

PA. Awright, we'll go.

AL. Ma, I ain't goin'.

MA. Why not?

AL. Well — Aggie — why, her an' me — *(Ma smiles. Ruthie and Winfield appear from behind the curtain. They too are drenched.)*

MA. 'Course. You stay here, Al. Take care of the stuff. When the water goes down — why, we'll come back. Come quick, 'fore it rains harder. Come on, Rosasharn. We're goin' to a dry place.

ROSE OF SHARON. *(Weakly.)* I can walk. *(Pa and Ma help Rose of Sharon out the door. Uncle John carries Ruthie. Winfield huddles at Ma's side. Al and Aggie stand in the open door and watch the Joads move out into the rain.)*

MA. Winfiel', hang on. Al — we'll come back soon's the water's down. Al — if — if Tom comes — tell him we'll be back. Tell him to be careful. Grab on to me now, Winfiel'! *(Rain blows in billowing sheets over the trough of water Uncle John, Ruthie, Winfield, Ma, Rose of Sharon and Pa move down to the edge of the stream and stare ahead through the curtains of rain. Al, Aggie and the boxcar are gone.)* We got to git along. Rosasharn, you feel like you could walk?

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ROSE OF SHARON. Kinda dizzy. Feel like I been beat.

PA. Now we're a-goin', where' we goin'?

MA. I dunno. Come on, give your han' to Rosasharn. *(Thunder. Rose of Sharon slips. Pa and Ma pull her up.)* Pa, can you carry her? *(Pa picks up Rose of Sharon. It grows darker and the rain blows. The Joads turn slowly around. In the distance is an expanse of wooden wall.)*

PA. You ain't said where-at we're a-hurryin' to. *(Ma searches the land and flooded fields. She spots the wall far off.)*

MA. Look! Look there! I bet it's dry in that barn. Le's go there till the rain stops.

PA. Prob'ly get run out by the fella owns it. *(The Joads move up into the shadows toward the wooden wall.)*

SB
LQ 125
RQ box
out

LQ
125
out of
car
RQ
box car
out

SB
LQ 125.5
128
SQ 2-3.4
RQ Barn
V. out

MA. Hurry up. They's a big rain a'comin. Come on, now! Bear on, Rosasharn. *(Thunder.)* Maybe they's hay inside. *(In the dark thunder rumbles again and dies away. The rain subsides. A long vertical crack of light splits the wall of darkness and as the great barn doors open, the Joads turn facing front. Ma and Uncle John have pushed open the doors. The family stands in silhouette against the cold grey sky. Gradually, feeble shafts of light stream into the huge empty barn. A rafter is hung above with a long fringe of hay. The Joads move in slowly. Pa sets Rose of Sharon gently down near the door. Uncle John keeps the children close. Ma moves to Rose of Sharon.)* They is hay. Come on in, you. Lay down, Rosasharn. Lay down an' res'. I'll try to figger some way to dry you off.

WINFIELD. Ma! Ma!

MA. What is it? What you want?

WINFIELD. *(Pointing.)* Look! Over there. *(Ma looks. There are two figures in the gloom. A man sprawled on a blanket and a boy, his son, sitting beside him. The boy gets up slowly and turns to the Joads.)*

BOY. You own this here?

MA. No. Jus' come in outa the wet. We got a sick girl. You got a dry blanket we could use an' get her wet clothes off? *(The boy picks up a dirty comfort and holds it out to Ma.)* Thank ya. What's the matter'th that fella?

BOY. Fust he was sick — but now he's starvin'.

MA. What?

BOY. Starvin'. Got sick in the cotton. He ain't et for six days. *(Ma looks down at the man.)*

MA. Your pa?

BOY. Yeah. Says he wasn't hungry, or he jus' et. Give me the food. Now he's too weak. Can't hardly move. *(The man moves his lips. Ma kneels beside him and puts her ear close. His lips move again.)*

MA. Sure. You jus' be easy. He'll be awright. You jus' wait'll I get them wet clo'es off'n my girl. Now slip 'em off. *(Ma moves to Rose of Sharon and holds up the comfort. The girl undresses.)*

BOY. I didn' know. He said he et, or he wasn't hungry. Las' night I went an' bust a winda an' stoled some bread. Made 'im chew 'er down. But he puked it all up, an' then he was weaker. Got to have soup or milk. You folks got money to git milk?

MA. Hush. Don' worry. We'll figger somepin' out.

BOY. He's dyin', I tell you! He's starvin' to death, I tell you.



MA. Hush. (*Ma looks at Pa and Uncle John. She turns to Rose of Sharon now wrapped in the comfort. The two women look deep into each other. The girl's eyes widen.*)

SB
LQ
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ROSE OF SHARON. Yes.

MA. I knowed you would. I knowed!

ROSE OF SHARON. (*Whispering.*) Will — will you all go out? (*Ma brushes the hair from her daughter's eyes and kisses her on the forehead.*)

MA. Come on, you fellas. You come out in the shed. (*The boy opens his mouth to speak.*)
Hush. Hush and git. (*Ma helps the boy up and leads him to the open door. Uncle John, Pa and the children leave. The boy looks back after his father and then goes out. Ma stands in the door for a few moments, looking back at Rose of Sharon, and then goes. Rose of Sharon stands still in the whispering barn. Then she draws the comfort about her and moves slowly to the man and stands looking down at the wasted face, into the wide frightened eyes. She slowly kneels down beside him, loosens one side of the blanket and bares her breast. He shakes his head feebly from side to side.*)

LQ
129

ROSE OF SHARON. You got to. (*She bends low. Her hand moves behind his head and pulls him up gently.*) There. (*Her eyes gleam.*) There. (*A violin plays in the distance. As the lights fade slowly, Rose of Sharon looks up and across the barn. Her lips come together and smile mysteriously.*)

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ALL.

Mortals joint he mighty chorus
Which the morning stars began
Love divine is reigning o'er us
Binding all within its span
Ever singing, march we onward
Victors in the midst of strife
Joyful music lifts us sunward
In the triumph song of LIFE ☐

SB
LQ 130
BOC in

LQ
130

RQ
BOC in

LQ
131

RQ
BOC out

LQ
132
curtain 1/2

RQ
BOC in

LQ
133
curtain 1/2