**Title : Notes From the Other Side of Suicide and Other Children Stories,**

**by Randall Fizer Vaughn**

**From : Notes from the Other Side of Suicide (Prologue : Me & Mrs. Jones)**

**By Randell Fizer Vaughn**

It was a time before hip hop; before Black multimillionaire basketball and football stars. It was a complex time of change. A new era of modernity was about to give rise to another America. It was the beginning of the sixties, the age of—Camelot. A beautiful couple of elegant grace were now America’s parents and charged wth the task of bringing her through her pubertal years; they were bright, wealthy, and sophisticated; and had a new sophomoric philosophy for parenting a nation. But just like in times past; some of America’s southern daughters—had a more visceral reaction to this new idea of “aggregated wealth and technical prosperity for all,” America’s true schizophrenic nature would be exposed for all to see the tyranny of her power. In black and white.

*A drastic change was about to take place in America’s social structure. And not since the eighteen sixties, would it require so much blood. Parenthetically speaking though dearest reader, thrown into this quagmire of primordial soup by a disappointed God, we find our hero, looking for his place in it all.*

In these times, the segment of society you’re about to read about, didn't even dream about being millionaires. They just wanted a good job, a house, and an old beat-up Chevy in their yard at the end of the day. It was the beginning of the sixties, the early days of Sputnik, of GM and Ford and Vietnam. America was about to have her skirt lifted. Arguments were being raised by the consciences of a generation long thought impossible. It was for all intents and purports, a revolution for a classless people long denied their Second amendment rights. So, you see dear reader, one could say that “it was the best of times and the worst of times.” The stage was set when curtain called for all the characters in a harmless act of a school essay gave way to its long ago hidden secrets.

For our hero’s story has its beginnings with an essay his schoolteacher asked his sixth grade class to write on what their Fathers did for a living. It was a harmless enough exercise in writing, but for our hero it was a day of reckoning with destiny.He had, until that moment, thought what he had was a normal life. His Daddy was his daddy and his father’s wife Erelene, was his mother or the mother he knew best.

But as our hero’s cousin so poignantly pointed that day in a whispered opinionated voice --”you’re bastard child.” The only child of a secret his family had kept hidden from him and a difference he hadn’t really noticed until that untimely moment. For all of his previous days, he lived in two house holds because both his parents worked. One ran by his father the ‘man of God,’ in the winter school months so that he could be taught things of God his father the Reverend felt were important to his education and in the summer months, when school was out, to kept him safe, he spent with his father’s sister Nanny, the matriarch of the clan, as she was affectionately called by all. With his five cousins whose mother had passed away and were now being raised by their aunt Nanny, in her five bedroom house on Roman street with her and her husband, Lawrence. Both had no kids of their own. Because it was during these who months his father traveled a lot doing the Lord’s bidding. So off he went each summers break. An experience he welcomed. Because he didn’t get his butt kicked as much over there, there was other butts to be had; and believe you me reader, our hero’s Nanny would no sooner kicked your butt than look at you. She was a particularly nervous woman; filled with old school rules. There was chores and more chores and naps each day. Church on Sundays, Black Sunday’s our hero called it all day.--keeping a nine-room house ; upstairs and down with three baths clean that was filled with six kids, two dogs, and two adults, clean was a lot of work. Meals were an event, especially Sunday’s. They would all gather around the table, eat their fulls and laugh at the week past efforts. Nanny was a great cook.

*Later that same summer over the phone, his cousin, Paulette, a girl of course what else would you, dearest reader, expect; gave our hero the sordid details. It appeared that his birth was an unfortunate error in judgment on the behalf on both parties—neither could well afford the truth be told. Our hero’s father a minister in very prominent negro church and the heroine, a married woman, with two children whose husband was in the service at the time this pregnancy occurred? Couldn't afford that the true be told; for both had skin in the game. He was a bastard no doubt about that. ‘Face with the metaphysical whys she had left him without ever returning to see him? ‘No birthdays, no holidays. No nothings? Just a faded fragmented memory that he tucked away in his subconsciousness of her standing with her back to them as he and his older sister were made to kneel on some old newspaper sheets that had crushed bricks under them, with their lungs full of sobs and eyes full of tears, for something they both had done, and that was it.’ These two had some explaining to do. Hippocrates. Purveyors of deceit. “The truth would set these two free—at last. ‘*

To our hero it did not matter that she worked as a maid, that she cleaned houses, that she washed and ironed clothes; it did not matter that she had three other mouths to feed and that one of them blindly handicapped. What did mattered to our hero were the stories that she read most nights instead of watching TV, which they never had; about a people, a place, and a things few Negros even knew. Wise, pragmatic and decisive , she was for hero a goddess . Delicately beautiful and tragically flawed, she home schooled them when it wasn't even fashionable. Each night after long hours on her feet. If she were words she'd be a poem about beauty, about knowledge, written in the eloquent prose of Langston Hughes. A Shirley Chisel, a determined Rosa Parks, her beauty would know few equals. His summer nights were dominated by thoughts of meeting her. He cling to every word of that his cousin Paulette shared with him over the phones that summer; as he unfolded that gray memory with her back to he and his sister as they knelled on the on those news papers with crushed bricks under them for an infraction long since forgotten.

So finally, our young hero, confronted The Reverend, his father about the rumors and the differences in surnames. The Reverend reluctantly, that summer, agreed to bring him to see this Mrs Jones. The bastard knew where she lived. They must have been in contact with each other all along.. *What a pair, these two, he thought? So come along reader, let us peer deeper into this conundrum of nuances this story offer us. The days hadn't passed fast enough.* Finally the big moment arrived; some twenty-four days after a very swollen behind—mind you dearest reader. It came. He, our hero, his father the Reverend, boarded the Studebaker and headed out. *Soon the scenery took an ominous turn . Gone were the manicured lawns and freshly washed cars in the driveways of neatly groomed homes. Now a scene of dead cars, liters of thrash, and what smelled like stale beer that someone must have just vomited and no one had cared enough to have cleaned it up. Empty grocery carts also dotted the sidewalks every block or so.*

*Finally the car approached a curb where a slender chocolate young woman stood, with arms folded at the breast. His mother, no doubt, his heart race as the car slowed just in front of her; she leaned in though his window and touche*d his hand and said :

“*It me. Your Mom...”*

***The end of the introduction...***