**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Narrator**: It’s eleven o’clock at night on a dark street.

*A boy runs up behind an older woman attempting to steal her purse. But as he tugs on the strap of her purse, he loses his balance and falls to the ground. The woman kicks the boy for his stupidity and lifts him up by his collar.*

**Woman**: Pick up my pocketbook, boy, and give it here.

*The woman holds the boy tightly by the collar of his shirt.*

**Woman:** Now ain’t you ashamed of yourself?

**Boy**: Yes’m.

**Woman**: What did you want to do that for?

**Boy**: I didn’t aim to.

**Woman**: You a lie!

**Woman**: If I turn you lose, will you run?

**Boy**: Yes’m

**Woman**: Then I won’t turn you lose.

*The woman does not let go of the boy’s collar.*

**Boy**: Lady, I’m sorry.

**Woman**: Um-hum! Your face is dirty. I got a great mind to wash your face for you. Ain’t you got nobody home to tell you to wash your face?

**Boy**: No’m.

**Woman**: Then it will get washed this evening.

*The woman drags the boy behind her.*

**Woman**: You ought to be my son. I would teach you right from wrong. Least I can do right now is to wash your face. Are you hungry?

**Boy**: No’m. I just want you to turn me loose.

**Woman**: Was I bothering you when I turned that corner?

**Boy**: No’m.

**Woman**: But you put yourself in contact with me. If you think that that contact is not going to last awhile, you got another thing coming. When I get through with you, sir, you are going to remember Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones.

*Mrs. Jones pulls the boy from around his neck down the street and into her home.*

**Narrator**: Mrs. Jones and the unidentified boy stand in a room in her home.

**Mrs. Jones**: What is your name?

**Boy**: Roger.

**Mrs. Jones**: Then, Roger, you go to that sink and wash your face.

*Mrs. Jones lets go of Roger. Roger looks at the door, then he looks at the woman. Then he goes to the sink.*

**Mrs. Jones**: Let the water run until it gets warm. Here’s a clean towel.

**Roger**: You gonna take me to jail?

**Mrs. Jones**: not with that face, I would not take you anywhere. Here I am trying to get home to cook me a bite to eat, and you snatch my pocketbook! Maybe you ain’t been to supper either, late as it be. Have you?

**Roger**: There’s nobody home at my house.

**Mrs. Jones**: Then we’ll eat. I believe you’re hungry — or been hungry — to try to snatch my pocketbook.

**Roger**: I want a pair of blue suede shoes.

**Mrs. Jones**: Well, you didn’t have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes. You could’ve asked me.

**Roger**: M’am?

**Narrator**: The door is open. Roger thinks he could make a dash for it and run, but –

**Mrs. Jones**: I were young once and I wanted things I could not get. (pause) Um-hum! You though I was going to say “but”, didn’t you? You thought I was going to say, “but I didn’t snatch people’s pocketbooks.” Well, I wasn’t going to say that. I have done things, too, which I would not tell you, son — neither tell God, if He didn’t already know. Everybody’s got something in common. So you set down while I fix us something to eat. You might run that comb through your hair so you will look presentable.

**Narrator:** As Mrs. Jones walks away with her purse in plain sight, Roger thinks she still has an eye on him. He does not trust the woman not to trust him. And he did not want to be mistrusted now.

**Roger**: Do you need somebody to go to the store, maybe to get some milk or something?

**Mrs. Jones**: Don’t believe I do. Unless you just want sweet milk yourself. I was going to make cocoa out of this canned milk I got here.

**Roger**: That will be fine.

*Mrs. Jones and Roger sit down to eat at the table.*

**Narrator**: As Roger and Mrs. Jones eat, she doesn’t ask him any questions about him. Instead she talks about herself –

**Mrs. Jones**: I work in a hotel beauty shop. All kinds of women come in. Blondes, redheads...Spanish women. Eat some more, son.

**Narrator**: When they were finished eating, she got up –

*Mrs. Jones gets up.*

**Mrs. Jones**: Now here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes. And next time, do not make the mistake of latching onto my pocketbook nor nobody else’s—because shoes got by devilish ways will burn your feet. I got to get my rest now. But from here on in, son, I hope you will behave yourself.

**Narrator**: She led him down the hall to the front door and opened it.

**Mrs. Jones**: Good night! Behave yourself, boy!

*The boys move down the steps and onto the street.*

**Narrator**: The boy wanted to say something. He wanted to say more than “Thank you, ma’am.” But his lips wouldn’t move.

*The boy turns and looks up at the woman in the door. She shuts the door.*