Mr. Simmons

Sarah Jane

Gil’s father was as mean as a stepped-on snake, especially when he been drinking. Don’t mind Mr. Simmons, Sarah Jane, May Dee used to say. He’s just talk. But I did mind him. How he leaned up against the doorjamb in the room where Gil and me was playing cards and watched us like a hunter in a stand. He said things like Gil, are you running your mouth again, Boy? You know what I’d like to do one day? Cut that tongue clear out of your head. Make you quiet as sleep. Then he laughed, shook his head and said, I’m just joshing, Sarah Jane. Don’t look at me like that. I looked at Gil instead, his skin blue-tinged like something living underwater. I never knew how he got any air in them days.