Lucile with a sudden wrinkle between her brows.

"Heaven's sake, nannie, what's wrong with you, you bad again?"

"No, nothing, no, no, all right."

"Well, it's almost dinnertime. Now you straighten your hair and wash your hands—and wash them good—because the Prettos are going to be here for dinner."

"Yes, yes, wash 'em all, right."

"Then come down."

Ivy pulls her old bones together. She's not going to straighten her hair; she's not going to wash her hands. When she goes down, she goes down by the back stairs, and listens at a door till cook goes into the pantry before she'll pass the kitchen.

Ivy is in a place where it's all right. It's a comfortable, pretty chair, and no lights on. And back to the one she has never been so bad she couldn't en-

The play ing thing won't let go of the ground. Chop through the base, the root on one side, and there's another just as big beneath it. Jim Eddy steps on it. The tail of the stump comes out away from that root.

"Hey, Jim Eddy holds the light down."

"Naw," says Kaplo, picking up the ax. "I should say, too, about that stump. A damn stump."

Jim Eddy holds the light down.

"Must be some animal. Been there some long time, with that tree that big over there."

"Now," says Kaplo, down on his knees.

"Them are human, dogged if they ain't. Must've been some guy."

"Maybe it was some Indian."

"Maybe it was—some Indian," says Ivy, sitting in her own chair, God help her! Why not? It's a comfortable, pretty room, delightful for

"It's the first thing in that I can see her. . . ."

"Jim Eddy steps on it. The tail of the truck begins to squat like the barrel of a frightened duck. And the stump comes out of the earth with a cracking, crying sound.

"She's staying in her own chair, God help her! Why not? It's a comfortable, pretty chair, and a comfortable, pretty, delightful for an old lady, lots of lace and lavender satin, and no dampness, no drafts.

But what a strange place for Ivy to be sitting in, in the dark, alone? It is strange. She lives in a dugout in a desert where she has never been anything but alone.

Again she has to put her hands over her ears. "What they doing?" she cries in her throat. "What they doing?"

"It's the first thing in that I can see her. . . ."

"Jim Eddy steps on it. The tail of the truck begins to squat like a frightened duck. And the stump comes out of the earth with a cracking, crying sound.

Where's the white sun gone? Ivy is sad, she's mad and she's bad, and she knows it, and can't help it.

Good man, he won't hear it, won't have it not, he. He's looking and listening and the other way, out under the clear stars.

"Yes, and cities!" he cries.

"Hey, in huddles down, rains gone, sins gone. 'I'll do anything, anything, anything you say.'"

"How much money have we left?"

"Nothing that I can see her. . . ."

Celia is coming in from the kitchen door. She knows more about the old one they're hunting for than the rest of them put together.

"She's down cellar in that room where we keep the wood and vegetables."

Over in the lot, at the rear of the derrick truck, Kaplo holds up the lantern in one hand, while with the other he lightens a cigarrillo, a light that falls on the slender back and rounded front of the stump.

"O.K., Jimmick, step on the gas."

She's not going to straighten her hair, she's not going to wash her hands.

"What they doing?" she cries in her throat. "What they doing?"

It's the first thing in that I can see her. . . ."

She would be expected to know it. The stump they're maples. You'd better learn your

"What they doing?" she cries in her throat. "What they doing?"

Lucile, her niece, has Light dazzles her. Lucile, her niece, has opened the door and pushed the button,

and because, sometimes, thinking herself alone, she groin her mouth and sneaks.

So when they agree it is the wind Aunt Ivy must tell them: "It's not the wind she doesn't like; it's the wind in the leaves of all the cottonwood trees all planted all around the house, they make such a noise."

"Why, Celie, they're not cottonwood, they're maples. You'd better learn your

The stair has a good laugh. Cottonwoods are country trees, not town trees. They grow out along the ditches, or in windbreaks such people's yards. Not so far as anybody seems to know has there ever been such an instance in the city limits such a thing as a cottonwood.

Kaplo and Jim Eddy, the laborers, can't be expected to know it. The stump they are at work on this evening, over in the lower part of town behind the Centennial Wells, is nothing to them, but a stump.

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