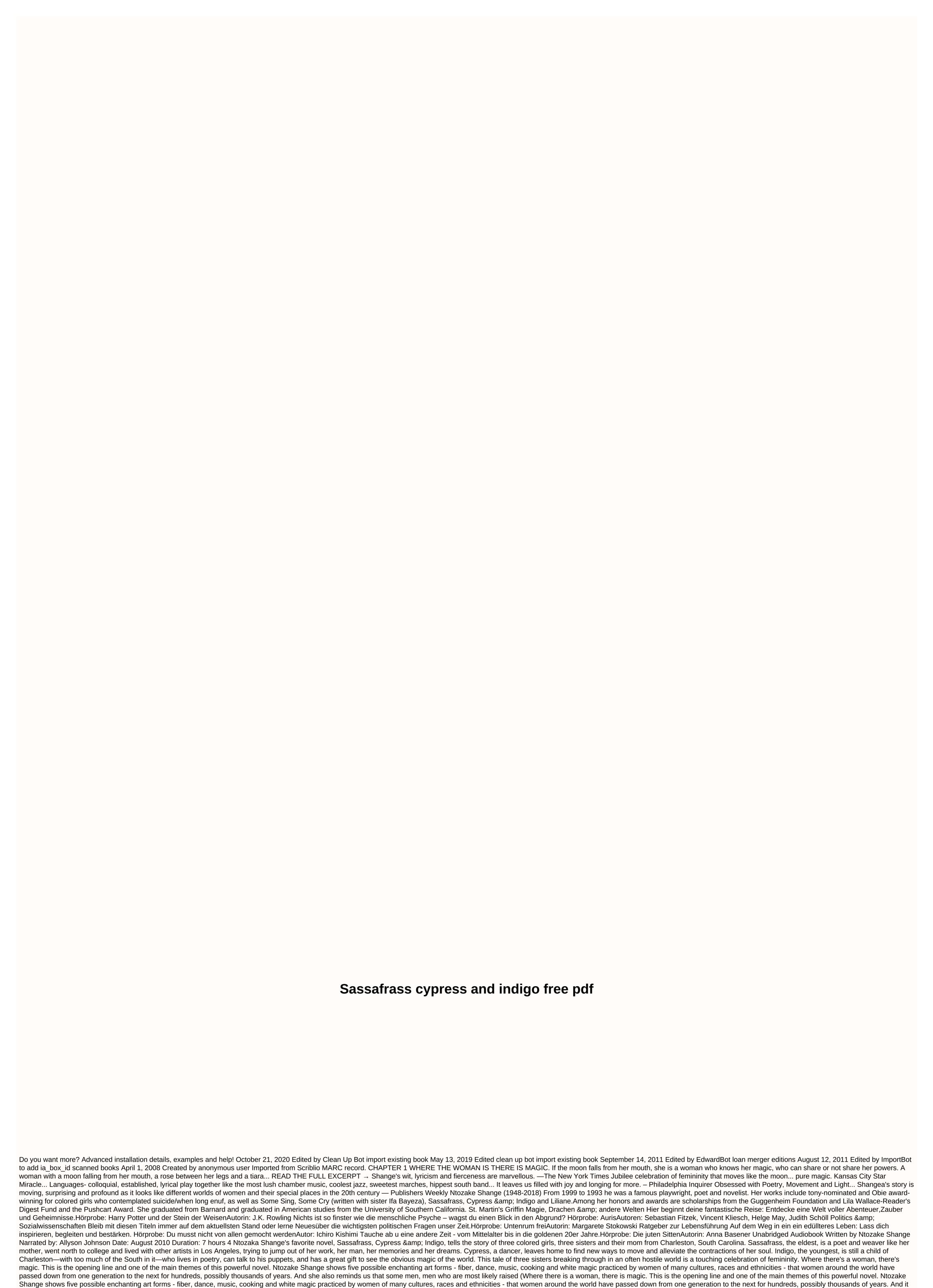
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also reminds that some men, men most likely raised (almost) exclusively by women, are also gifted with one or more of these arts. I read for colored girls who thought about suicide / when there was a long enuf when I was in college and was strongly moved. Sassafras, Cypress & amp; Indigo touched my heart, soul and mind equally, but in different ways. I found it in a thrift shop one morning, came home, read it with a pot of coffee and finished it that evening because I couldn't get away from Mrs. Shanga's beautiful and complex story and her posh intertwining of words.

My grandmother, the only kind adult in my life as a child and adolescent, gave me gifts of creating art, creating the art of fiber, cooking alchemy and opening my mind to explore paganism (one of White Magic), so I feel a very deep connection to this book. And as one of the characters, I too often retreat into the fantasy world to protect myself from memory and cacophony out of my head. The family Ms. Shange writes about lived in Charleston, South Carolina. Mother (mom and still in Charleston) is a hard-working fabric weaver, seamstress and seamstress, who has Create your exquisite fashion for rich white and mostly mixed ancestors (read: bright skins) of the island's black family. Moms of three daughters were named after the botanical species of the South: Sassafras and Cypress are trees, strong and long lively; Indigo is a plant, less permanent, although it is a perennial, but has historically left its mark when used as a color and even medicinal. In fact, cypress and sassafras trees were also used in medicinal preparations. Yet in almost every other way the three daughters are quite different from each other, at least on the surface. Sassafras is the oldest, poet and weaver, and cooks amazing dishes, like her mother. She moved north to attend college, then LA and is currently living with a shiftless boyfriend who is completely undemanding to all her incredible qualities and talents. Sassafras doesn't have the money to buy what she really dreams of and it has a terrible effect on her soul. Cypress is a dancer who goes to find new workouts, new ways of expressing herself and a new place to do it. She surrounds herself with people, and yet she's alone. She also cooks, practices the magic/religion of the area of the South from which she is either from the territory of Africa (I draw a void in which) and has another secret that she reveals to someone close to her. Indigo is a puzzle. He lives in a fantastic, magical world that only shares minutes of portions with others, because he must protect his world from those who would take it away. Mom wants her to start growing up, neighbors want her to adapt, even her gamemates misunderstand her. Just amazing dolls made by another person, a person who lives with magic in his own mind and maybe a tiara of Spanish moss, understand Indigo. If a certain aunt was still in the picture, she'd probably get it, but it looks like auntie's gone. Most of the book focuses on Indigo, as if her color permeates the whole novel, but she is a lovely wild creature, a girl at the height of gentle adolescence, then femininity, which could be filled with wonders or madness, or most likely both. This book introduces so many ideas and concepts and focuses a keen eye on the roles that women, play in the family, in society, with each other, with men, in art, in commerce, when touched by possible mental illness, even if only briefly, and themselves. Much can be personally reflected, as part of the canon of black women's literature as it relates to American society, and learned by many, many women and men, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, etc.(I am making an educated hit on the date I finished reading this book.) As a side note, I earned a degree in women's studies and a literature minor, after two rounds, one in the 2000s, and not a single book. Ntozake Shange was included in any mandatory or proposed reading list for any of my classes. And I've attended so many lectures on women's literature, writings, poetry, diaries and memoirs, I find it regrettable that her writing, like the writing like humans, ... More Where there's a woman there's magic, If the moon falls from her mouth, she is a woman who knows her magic, who can share or not share her powers. A woman with a moon falling from her mouth, roses between her legs and tiaras of Spanish moss, this woman is a cons mate of ghosts. Indigo rarely spoke. He had a moon in his mouth. The moon in her mouth made her laugh. Whenever her mother tried to take the moss off her head, or cut roses around her thighs, Indigo laughed. Mom, if you take them off, they'll just grow back. That's my blood. I have earthly blood, filled with Geechees who are long gone, and by sea. Sitting among her dolls, Indigo looked pretty crazy. As a small child, stuffed socks with red beans, raw rice, sawdust or palm leaves. Tied ribbons made necks, so they can have heads and torsos. Then eyes from carefully selected buttons or threads, yarn hair specially dyed by her sisters and her mom, dresses of the finest silk patches, linen shoes and cotton singlets, satin gloves embroidered with the delight of a child's hand. These creatures were still her companions, keeping up with her changes, her moods and dreams, as no one else could. Indigo heard them talking to her in their sleep. Sometimes when someone else spoke, Indigo apologized—her dolls called out to her. There was so much to do. Black people needed so many things. That's why Indigo didn't tell her mom what she was talking to her friends about. It had nothing to do with Jesus. Nothing. Even her mom knew that, and she'd shake her head like people when they heard bad news, murmured, something was holding my baby, I swear. There's too much south in it. The south in it, the earth and the salty winds, moved her through Charleston through the streets as if she were a mobile bride, with the gait of a beloved colored woman whose lover was the horizon. Indigo imagined solid metiling branches growing from her braids, deep green leaves rustling all over her ears, doves and macaws flirting above nests they made in secret, protected nichs high in her hairstyle. When she wore this Carolingian costume, she knew that the cobbled streets were really polished oyster shells, covered in pine needles and cotton flowers. She made herself, her world, out of everything that came. She looked around her in the dock. If there was no one there but the white people, she made them. People, and okra, she made them disappear and put the products on the vegetable wagons that went to Kolor. It wasn't enough for the Indigo in the world she was born to do, so she did what she needed to do. What she thought black people needed. Access to the moon. The power to heal. Daily visits with ghosts. MOON JOURNEYS cartography indigo Find an oval stone that is very smooth. Wash it in the rose garden, 2 times. Lay it to dry in the night air where no one goes. When it is dry, hold the stone firmly in your left hand, do the whole face. Repeat the same action with a stone in your left hand. Without stopping the movement, schedule your left hand with the right side filled with stone. A walk to the tree that houses a ghost-friend. Sit under a tree facing the direction of your mother's birthplace. Keep your hands between your chest, tight. Take five guick breaths and three spores. Close your eyes. You're on your way. ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO TRAVEL THE MOON (Winter Travel/Bad Weather) In a thoroughly cleaned bathroom with an open window burns incense magnolias, preferably, but cinnamon will do it. In a handkerchief processed by another woman in your family (the further back the better), put chamomile, undistuleged birth certificate and Our Lady's Fern. You're tying this up with a ribbon from your own hair. Kiss the bag three times. Gently toss it in a tust of warm water that will cover your entire body. Place two white lit candles at both ends of the bathtub. Float one completely open flower in the water. Enter the bathtub while tickle the water in a circle with flower petals. Lie in the bathtub, with a flower over your heart. Close your eyes. You're on your way. Not all black people wanted to go to the moon. But some did. Aunt Haydee went to the moon a lot. She told Indigo about the amazing parties in places where white people put flags and jumped unpredictably up and down. They never learned to dance. They've been round negroes all these years and still don't make enough sense to stay on the beat. But there they walked on the moon, as if nothing had happened there. It's like women didn't cling to the moonlight every month. Like a sea mensses could be held back by a rocket launcher. It's like the can disappear with the light of the moon. We're not going anywhere, are we? Indigo sat some dolls on the inside of her thigh. Her favorites were on her lap. Indigo made every kind of friend she wanted. African dolls filled with cotton root bark, so they would no longer have slave children. Jamaican dolls in red turbans, bodies formed with comfortable leaves because they had to work on Caribbean and American plantations and their bodies must hurt and be painful. Then there were the mammy dolls Indigo had been doing for months. They nearly four metres tall, with large gold earrings made of dry sunflowers and neo-clean cotton sissies. They smelled of fennel, peach leaves, wild ginger, wild potatoes. She still crawled into their arms when she was inevitably lonely, worried that no living black man would talk to her the way her dolls and Aunt Haydee did. Everyone said she was too out of place to have a decent conversation. But that wasn't true. The truth is, Indigo always had to fight Cypress and Sassafrass just to listen to them. They thought that's how they grew up. So filled with the ways of white people. They wouldn't hear about the things Aunt Haydee knew. Indigo watched her mother over huge barrels of paint, carrying a newly inscreed yarn from pots to lines and back. Sassafrass, throwing shuttles back and forth and back and forth. Cypress peeled off the fabric, carrying the fabric to the stairwell where it began with the apps the family was known for. There was too much back and forth going on for anyone to engage a little Indigo in conversations about haints and. If the rhythm had been broken, Sassafrass would have just been staring at the loom. Cypress would look at her work and not know where to start or what her stitches were. Mom would burn herself with some unusually tinted boiling water. Everyone would be angry and wouldn't work, so Indigo was sent to talk to the dolls. All the dolls in the house have become hers. And the worlds of sassafrass wandered into her weaving, and those Cypresses evoked through her body, were lost indigo, who had triple conversations with her fabric companions with her own. A baby girl with her dolls is unlikely to attract attention anywhere, the same as boys with soccer balls or davy Crockett hats. So Indigo would sneak in from where they put her (the hallway around the back porch) and take her friends out for a visit. The old women loved indigo and the society passing through. They'd give her homemade butter cookies or gingerbread. They offered teas and chocolates, as well as Scripture and legends of their lives. Indigo only had color dolls and only visited colored ladies. She didn't like Miz Fitzhugh, who was lying over Cypress and Sassafrass as if they were 'whitest. No, Mrs. Yancey with a low, secret voice and \$17 million in braids was a friend of Indigo's. And Sister Mary Louise who kept the garden of rose bushes and herbs was Indigo's cut-out friend, right down to the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. Streets in Charleston melee the way old lady's fingers crochet as they reveal memories of their girlhood. One thing about a Charleston female is her way with the little things. A delicacy of her behavior. The power of ritual in everyday endeavours. So what's most extraordinary is extraordinary. What's hard seems simple. Indigo listened to their stories, short and long, Um to make a doll whose story it was, or that could have helped. When her father died, Indigo decided that the spirit of things mattered. People come and go. Aunt Haydee said ghosts can't disappear, or the planet will fall apart. South in it. Rumor has it Mrs. Yancey was with the whites. They couldn't deny her anything. That's what people said... that she has to get to them; At least once, smile a lot. It was the only way the beautiful things she had in her house could be accounted for. Mrs. Yancey couldn't buy that lace or that silver tea service. Imagine a colored woman drinking afternoon tea and crumpling up with all that silver. Indigo always wore her doll-friend Miranda to Mrs. Yancey's. Miranda was always clean, too, in a red Paisley pinafore and little black sandals. Indigo let Miranda use her umbrella to protect her from the sun. What real young woman would come to visit a bride and sweat? Only some of the Indigo approached Mrs. Yancey's trio, pulled her a mistake and fused with her hair sticking out of her braids. She rinsed her hands, but she was doing her hair again for a short chat, and it seemed to be too much of a date. Besides, Miranda was really dotted. Indigo adorned her dandelion hat and sprayed her mom's perfume with her hands and behind her knees. When she was ready, Indigo rang and waited. Of course, Mrs. Yancey came to the door. She was wearing heels that had come down and sounded like Bill Boyingles when he was doing a soft shoe. Opening the bright white door as she pulled a scone around her neck, Mrs Yancey besiethed to kiss Indigo on the cheek. Don't you look mighty fresh today, Indigo? And Miranda has to go socializing, all on deck, huh? No, M'am. We thought you might want some company. I talked to Miranda and she told me you think hard about us. Y'all to come and make your own simplicity in the salon. Miranda needs another sense. He always knows when I want to see my girls. Mrs. Yancey's house smelled like shrimp and corn bread, even when she was frying rocks and doing red dip. Indigo pushed Miranda. Can you smell that? Mrs. Yancey's house smells good, doesn't it? And her house was good. There were so many soft places to sit and smell other things. Mrs. Yancey loved doing pillows. Oval cushions, square cushions, rectums, triangles, shapes that didn't have names, but were fragrant, soft pillows that could be hugged. These cushions were covered in satin and silk, embroidered with linguisted crimson and gold, and went with bindings, bars and cables. Mrs. Yancev said, that she's made pillows now because she's lived between a rock and a hard place her whole life. Even though she didn't need it anymore, something called her to keep sewing her comfort. Miranda asked Ms. Yancey questions that Indigo found too advanced. Once Miranda and Indigo had a little pineapple cake with their tea, and Ms. Yancey talked about how white people drove down, drove Colored for drinks and evil ways, drove decent young girls into lives of sin, chased them up and down the back stairwells from Allendale to Hilton Head, Miranda blurted out: Well, how come white people give you so many things? If they're so hard-hearted and low-down, why smile until 'em? Indigo disgraced himself and gave Miranda a good punch in the face. She didn't mean it, M'am. Yes, it is, Indigo. She is, and it's not true to be slapping on no free someone. Keep your hands to yourself and listen to what I have to say. Indigo settled back into the love seat, almost disappearing into all the toasts. Miranda finally relaxed and lay next to her, listening. People in these parts have such a low idea of women in the race. They can't imagine how I came up with what I came to 'less they weigh my reputation down with them dirty, dirty minds. Oh, no M'am, nobody said you did it! Indigo fired his pillow, dragging Miranda with him into Ms. Yancey's lap. That's not what I think, baby. Those are cracking words. I suggested that whoever announces that I'm grinning in these people's faces is distraught. All I do is go around the house I clean, wax, wipe, iron, clean... my regular jobs. And if I come 'cross something I have to yen for, I say to the lady., 'I sho' do like that.' Then I stared at her, but with my eyes lil goes a little bit down and in the wrong direction. I look at what I want. Next thing I know a white lady can't remember there's no reason why she should have whatever it is. And she turned around and asked me not to, and of course I wanted to because I put all my soul into it. And I have to have my soul to get back here to my house. Indigo and Miranda reflected on what Ms. Yancey had said for days, but not nearly as much as Ms. Yancey and Mr. Henderson, also known as Uncle John, the junk man. Most of the time he looked bad. Indigo realized that before she was born, Uncle John would have been called a nice man. Yet every time Uncle John came by his horse and car with things everyone didn't want, Mrs Yancey would tremble, as the uglies of what he was driving had overwhelmed her. She'd purse her lips, put Hands on your hips, whisper that swearing whispers Indigo told Miranda about, or she'll throw open her screen door and and

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