THE MIRACULOUS JOURNEY OF EDWARD TULANE

Kate DiCamillo lived in the South of the USA for much of her childhood and studied at the University of Florida. Her books for young readers include *The Tale of Despereaux*, *New York Times* Bestseller and winner of the Newbery Medal; *Because of Winn-Dixie*, a Newbery Honor book that is now also a heartwarming motion picture; *The Tiger Rising*, a US National Book Award Finalist; a series of books about “porcine wonder” Mercy Watson and *The Magician’s Elephant*, a *New York Times* Bestseller.

Of *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, Kate says, “One Christmas I received an elegantly dressed toy rabbit as a gift. I brought him home, placed him on a chair in my living room and promptly forgot about him. A few days later, I dreamt that the rabbit was face down on the ocean floor – lost, and waiting to be found. In telling *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, I was lost for a good long while too. And then finally, like Edward, I was found.” Kate lives in Minnesota in the USA.
ONCE, IN A HOUSE ON EGYPT STREET, there lived a rabbit who was made almost entirely of china. He had china arms and china legs, china paws and a china head, a china torso and a china nose. His arms and legs were jointed and joined by wire so that his china elbows and china knees could be bent, giving him much freedom of movement.

His ears were made of real rabbit fur, and beneath the fur, there were strong, bendable wires, which allowed the ears to be arranged into poses that reflected the rabbit’s mood — jaunty, tired, full of ennui. His tail, too, was made of real rabbit fur and was fluffy and soft and well shaped.
In Edward's festive costume, his rabbit ears peeked out from the fur of his tail, and a white apron of custom-made silk shone with the finest materials. The unique apron was composed of hand-woven silk, and Edward's whiskers danced with delight each morning after dressing up, ready for school. Ablaine dressed Edward in a dress suit of Pheasant, and Edward was dressed in a suit that matched. The dress suit was a suit of Pheasant, and Edward was dressed in a suit of Pheasant. Each morning after dressing up, Edward's whiskers danced with delight each morning as he prepared to go to school.

In Edward's classroom, he sat at his desk, Cahill, Ablaine, and Edward all sat at their desks. Edward's apron was made of hand-woven silk, and his whiskers danced with delight each morning. Ablaine's whiskers were also neat, and Cahill's whiskers were neatly trimmed. Edward's whiskers danced with delight each morning as he prepared to go to school.

In the classroom, Cahill, Ablaine, and Edward all sat at their desks. Edward's apron was made of hand-woven silk, and his whiskers danced with delight each morning. Ablaine's whiskers were also neat, and Cahill's whiskers were neatly trimmed. Edward's whiskers danced with delight each morning as he prepared to go to school.

In Edward's classroom, he sat at his desk, Cahill, Ablaine, and Edward all sat at their desks. Edward's apron was made of hand-woven silk, and his whiskers danced with delight each morning. Ablaine's whiskers were also neat, and Cahill's whiskers were neatly trimmed. Edward's whiskers danced with delight each morning as he prepared to go to school.

In Edward's classroom, he sat at his desk, Cahill, Ablaine, and Edward all sat at their desks. Edward's apron was made of hand-woven silk, and his whiskers danced with delight each morning. Ablaine's whiskers were also neat, and Cahill's whiskers were neatly trimmed. Edward's whiskers danced with delight each morning as he prepared to go to school.
I love you, Edward,” Abalone said, each night after
Abalone lay in the dark of the bedroom
And then she turned off the light, and Edward and
Abalone “Soon there will be a story,”

"Weren’t asked Abalone, "What a night.
"Not tonight, Abalone,” said Pellegrina
WILL you tell us a story, Pellegrina?”
Abalone asked

And it was Pellegrina who came each night to read
and it was Pellegrina who read
in her seventh birthday
Abalone into her bed and Edward into his
given him as a gift to Abalone on her seventh birthday.

"Tell Pellegrina’s parents found it charming."

Before it
that a phrase or story be repeated because Edward had not
considered Edward real, and the sometimes requested
Abalone’s parents found it charming."

take
The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
Chapter Two

Wed, 16th Dec

Edward and nothing. He said nothing because of something.

In return,

Abelene's large one. He stood up at the ceiling and listened to the sound of her breath even as her body groaned, knowing that soon she would be asleep. Because Edward's eyes were pinned on and he could not close them, he was awake.

Then the dawn, the stars all night until the dark finally gave way in a way that he could not quite understand. Often, he stared at the stars and then pirouetted higher and faster. He was afraid that if he did not do anything soon, his body might burst, and he was afraid that if he did not do anything soon, his body might burst. He was afraid that if he did not do anything soon, his body might burst.

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
And in this manner, Edward’s days passed, one into the other. Nothing remarkable happened. Oh, there was the occasional small, domestic drama. Once, while Abilene was at school, the neighbour’s dog, a male brindled boxer inexplicably named Rosie, came into the house uninvited and unannounced and lifted his leg on the dining-room table, spraying the white tablecloth with urine. He then trottet over and sniffed Edward, and before Edward even had time to consider the implications of being sniffed by a dog, he was in Rosie’s mouth and Rosie was shaking him back and forth vigorously, growling and drooling.
“Drop it!” she shouted to Rosie.

Hand on her hips, "I reckon you’re just like every other THUMP! she said. She stood back up. She put her hand on Edward’s chest, turned his head, and looked into his eyes.

The maid bent over him and looked into his eyes. She found it degrading in the extreme. Edward did not care at all for the word "bump."

"What’s this bump doing here?" she said out loud.

Edward, sitting on a chair in the dining room, did not even acknowledge the maid and the damage. The look on his face was one of anger and satisfaction. "I’m not going to let you hurt me again."

And then there was the time that a maid, new to the house, had suffered under the Jaws of Rosie. She was bitten by the dog when she was about to give her a gift. When she asked for the gift, the maid told her that Edward had suffered a severe head wound as a result. She was quite certain that Edward’s mother had told the maid to stay away. But it was true. Edward’s shock and fear was evident in the way she looked at the maid.

And Rosie, surprised into obedience, did as he was told.

"Drop it!" she shouted to Rosie.

Rosie looked at Edward’s suffering. Fortunately, Abigail’s mother walked past the dining room and witnessed Edward’s suffering.
"Sir Edward," he said, "your manner is most imposing."

The condition; it was returned to him by Abeline's father.

The pounds of the vacuum cleaner, draped, but still in work.

Edward's pocket watch was looked at, deep within.

delayed."

which affair was the new maid was dismissed immediate.

say or a reason. The only satisfaction to be had from the

and se calmerly an inconsequential. Then he had been handled by the

But it was not love! It was annoyance that he had been so

The ribbon, too, was experiencing a great emotion.

"I want you to be away from me," Edward said, "of all Edward.

"Edward," she said, "of all Edward. I love you, I never

Ah, most of her cheeks in the emotion.

close that Edward could feel her heart beating. Keeping

When Abeline found him, she held him close, so

sit and wait.

where he wasn't no way for him to answer her. He could only

There was no way of course, for him to let her know

Edward," she shouted, "Edward!"

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
CHAPTER THREE

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane

Table as the cake was being served, the ship was mentioned.

night of Abilene's seventh birthday when, at the dinner
those were the Great Dames of Edward's Life until the
The Rosie Affair and the Vacuum-Cleaner Incident
SHE IS CALLED THE QUEEN MARY,” SAID Abilene’s father, “and you and your mama and I shall sail on her all the way to London.”

“What about Pellegrina?” said Abilene.

“I will not go,” said Pellegrina. “I will stay.”

Edward, of course, was not listening. He found the talk around the dinner table excruciatingly dull; in fact, he made a point of not listening if he could help it. But then Abilene did something unusual, something that forced him to pay attention. As the talk about the ship continued, Abilene reached for Edward and took him from his chair and stood him in her lap.
“And what about Edward?” she said, her voice high and uncertain.

“What about him, darling?” said her mother.

“Will Edward be sailing on the Queen Mary with us?”

“Well, of course, if you wish, although you are getting a little old for such things as china rabbits.”

“Nonsense,” said Abilene’s father jovially. “Who would protect Abilene if Edward were not there?”

From the vantage point of Abilene’s lap, Edward could see the whole table spread out before him in a way that he never could when he was seated in his own chair. He looked upon the glittering array of silverware and glasses and plates. He saw the amused and condescending looks of Abilene’s parents. And then his eyes met Pellegrina’s.

She was looking at him in the way a hawk hanging lazily in the air might study a mouse on the ground. Perhaps the rabbit fur on Edward’s ears and tail, and the whiskers on his nose had some dim memory of being hunted, for a shiver went through him.

“Yes,” said Pellegrina without taking her eyes off

Edward, “who would watch over Abilene if the rabbit were not there?”

That night, when Abilene asked, as she did every night, if there would be a story, Pellegrina said, “Tonight, lady, there will be a story.”

Abilene sat up in bed. “I think that Edward needs to sit here with me,” she said, “so that he can hear the story too.”

“I think that is best,” said Pellegrina. “Yes, I think that the rabbit must hear the story.”

Abilene picked Edward up, sat him next to her in bed, and arranged the covers around him; then she said to Pellegrina, “We are ready now.”

“So,” said Pellegrina. She coughed. “And so. The story begins with a princess.”

“A beautiful princess?” Abilene asked.

“A very beautiful princess.”

“How beautiful?”

“You must listen,” said Pellegrina. “It is all in the story.”
ONCE THERE WAS A PRINCESS WHO was very beautiful. She shone as bright as the stars on a moonless night. But what difference did it make that she was beautiful? None. No difference."

"Why did it make no difference?" asked Abilene.

"Because," said Pellegrina, "she was a princess who loved no one and cared nothing for love, even though there were many who loved her."

At this point in her story, Pellegrina stopped and looked right at Edward. She stared deep into his painted-on eyes, and again, Edward felt a shiver go through him.

"And so," said Pellegrina, still staring at Edward.
“What happened to the princess?” said Abilene.

“And so,” said Pellegrina, turning back to Abilene, “the king, her father, said that the princess must marry; and soon after this, a prince came from a neighbouring kingdom and he saw the princess, and immediately he loved her. He gave her a ring of pure gold. He placed it on her finger. He said these words to her: ‘I love you.’ But do you know what the princess did?”

Abilene shook her head.

“She swallowed the ring. She took it from her finger and swallowed it. She said, ‘That is what I think of love.’ And she ran from the prince. She left the castle and went deep into the woods. And so.”

“And so what?” said Abilene. “What happened then?”

“And so, the princess became lost in the woods. She wandered for many days. Finally, she came to a little hut, and she knocked on the door. She said, ‘Let me in; I am cold.’

“There was no answer.

“She knocked again. She said, ‘Let me in; I am hungry.’

“Because,” said Pellegrina, “she was a princess who loved no one and cared nothing for love, even though there were many who loved her.”
“A terrible voice answered her. The voice said, ‘Enter if you must.’

“The beautiful princess entered, and she saw a witch sitting at a table counting pieces of gold.

“‘Three thousand, six hundred and twenty-two,’ said the witch.

“‘I am lost,’ said the beautiful princess.

“‘What of it?’ said the witch. ‘Three thousand, six hundred and twenty-three.’

“‘I am hungry,’ said the princess.

“‘Not my concern,’ said the witch. ‘Three thousand, six hundred and twenty-four.’

“‘But I am a beautiful princess,’ said the princess.

“‘Three thousand, six hundred and twenty-five,’ replied the witch.

“‘My father,’ said the princess, ‘is a powerful king. You must help me or there will be consequences.’

“‘Consequences?’ said the witch. She looked up from her gold. She stared at the princess. ‘You dare to talk to me of consequences? Very well, then, we will speak of consequences: tell me the name of the one you love.’

“‘Love!’ said the princess. She stamped her foot. ‘Why must everyone always speak of love?’

“‘Whom do you love?’ said the witch. ‘You must tell me the name.’

“‘I love no one,’ said the princess proudly.

“‘You disappoint me,’ said the witch. She raised her hand and said one word: ‘Farthfigery.’

“And the beautiful princess was changed into a warthog.

“‘What have you done to me?’ squealed the princess.

“‘Talk to me of consequences now, will you?’ said the witch, and she went back to counting her pieces of gold. ‘Three thousand, six hundred and twenty-six,’ said the witch as the warthog princess ran from the hut and out again into the forest.

“The king’s men were in the forest too. And what were they looking for? A beautiful princess. And so when they came upon an ugly warthog, they shot it immediately. Pow!”

“No,” said Abilene.

“Yes,” said Pellegrina. “The men took the warthog
back to the castle and the cook slit open its belly and inside it she found a ring of pure gold. There were many hungry people in the castle that night and all of them were waiting to be fed. So the cook put the ring on her finger and finished butchering the warthog. And the ring that the beautiful princess had swallowed shone on the cook’s hand as she did her work. The end."

“The end?” said Abilene indignantly.

“Yes,” said Pellegrina, “the end.”

“But it can’t be.”

“Why can’t it be?”

“Because it came too quickly. Because no one is living happily ever after, that’s why.”

“Ah, and so.” Pellegrina nodded. She was quiet for a moment. “But answer me this: how can a story end happily if there is no love? But. Well. It is late. And you must go to sleep.”

Pellegrina took Edward from Abilene. She put him in his bed and pulled the sheet up to his whiskers. She leaned close to him. She whispered, “You disappoint me.”

After the old lady left, Edward lay in his small bed and stared up at the ceiling. The story, he thought, had been pointless. But then most stories were. He thought of the princess and how she had become a warthog. How gruesome! How grotesque! What a terrible fate!

“Edward,” said Abilene, “I love you. I don’t care how old I get, I will always love you.”

Yes, yes, thought Edward.

He continued to stare up at the ceiling. He was agitated for some reason that he could not name. He wished that Pellegrina had put him on his side so that he might look at the stars.

And then he remembered Pellegrina’s description of the beautiful princess. She shone as bright as the stars on a moonless night. For some reason, Edward found comfort in these words and he repeated them to himself — *as bright as the stars on a moonless night, as bright as the stars on a moonless night* — over and over until, at last, the first light of dawn appeared.
Chapter Five
The house on Egypt Street became frantic with activity as the Tulane family prepared for their voyage to England. Edward possessed a small trunk, and Abilene packed it for him, filling it with his finest suits and several of his best hats and three pairs of shoes, all so that he might cut a fine figure in London. Before she placed each outfit in the trunk, she displayed it to him.

"Do you like this shirt with this suit?" she asked him.

Or "Would you like to wear your black bowler hat? You look very handsome in it. Shall we pack it?"

And then, finally, on a bright Saturday morning in May, Edward and Abilene and Mr and Mrs Tulane were
all on board the ship, standing at the railing. Pellegrina was at the dock. On her head, she wore a floppy hat strung around with flowers. She stared straight at Edward. Her dark eyes glowed.

"Goodbye," Abilene shouted to her grandmother. "I love you."

The ship pulled away from the dock. Pellegrina waved to Abilene.

"Goodbye, lady," she called, "goodbye."

Edward felt something damp in his ears. Abilene’s tears, he supposed. He wished that she would not hold him so tight. To be clutched so fiercely often resulted in wrinkled clothing. Finally, all the people on land, including Pellegrina, disappeared. Edward, for one, was relieved to see the last of her.

As was to be expected, Edward Tulane exacted much attention on board the ship.

"What a singular rabbit," said an elderly lady with three strings of pearls wrapped around her neck. She bent down to look more closely at Edward.

"Thank you," said Abilene. Several little girls on board gave Edward deep glances full of longing. They asked Abilene if they might hold him. "No," said Abilene, "I’m afraid that he’s not the kind of rabbit who likes to be held by strangers."

Two young boys, brothers named Martin and Amos, took a particular interest in Edward.

"What does he do?" Martin asked Abilene on their second day at sea. He pointed at Edward, who was sitting on a deckchair with his long legs stretched in front of him. "He doesn’t do anything," said Abilene. "Does he wind up somewhere?" asked Amos. "No," said Abilene, "he does not wind up."

"What’s the point of him then?" asked Martin. "The point is that he is Edward," said Abilene. "That’s not much of a point," said Amos. "It’s not," agreed Martin. And then, after a long thoughtful pause, he said, "I wouldn’t let anybody dress me like that."

"Me neither," said Amos.
“Do his clothes come off?” asked Martin.

“Of course they do,” said Abilene. “He has many different outfits. And he has his own pyjamas too. They are made of silk.”

Edward, as usual, was disregarding the conversation. A breeze was blowing in off the sea, and the silk scarf wrapped around his neck billowed out behind him. On his head, he wore a straw boater. The rabbit was thinking that he must look quite dashing.

It came as a total surprise to him when he was grabbed off the deckchair and first his scarf, and then his jacket and trousers, were ripped from his body. Edward saw his pocket watch hit the deck of the ship and roll merrily towards Abilene’s feet.

“Look at him,” said Martin. “He’s even got underwear.” He held Edward aloft so that Amos could see.

“Take it off,” shouted Amos.

“NO!!!” screamed Abilene.

Martin removed Edward’s underwear.

Edward was paying attention now. He was mortified. He was completely naked except for the hat on his head, and the other passengers were looking at him, directing curious and embarrassed glances his way.

“Give him to me,” screamed Abilene. “He’s mine.”

“No,” said Amos to Martin, “give him to me.” He clapped his hands together and then held them open.

“Throw him,” he said.

“Please,” cried Abilene. “Don’t. He’s made of china. He’ll break.”

Martin threw Edward.

And Edward sailed naked through the air. Only a moment ago, the rabbit had thought that being naked in front of a shipload of strangers was the worst thing that could happen to him. But he was wrong. It was much worse being tossed, in the same naked state, from the hands of one grubby, laughing boy to another.

Amos caught Edward and held him up, displaying him triumphantly.

“Throw him back,” called Martin.

Amos raised his arm, but just as he was getting ready to throw Edward, Abilene tackled him, shoving her head into his stomach, and upsetting the boy’s aim.
So it was that Edward did not go flying back into the dirty hands of Martin.
Instead, Edward Tulane went overboard.
HOW DOES A CHINA RABBIT DIE?

Can a china rabbit drown?
Is my hat still on my head?

These were the questions that Edward asked himself as he went sailing out over the blue sea. The sun was high in the sky, and from what seemed to be a very long way away, Edward heard Abilene call his name.

“Edwaarrrd,” she shouted, “come back.”

Come back? Of all the ridiculous things to shout, thought Edward.

As he tumbled, ears over tail through the air, he managed to catch one last glimpse of Abilene. She was standing
Far above him, the ocean liner, with Abalone aboard

now.

If I am going to drown, certainly I would have done so by
Edward went down and down. He said to himself,

watched as it finally became as black as night.

water running to green and then to blue again. They
he had no choice. His painted-on eyes witnessed the blue
the whole time. No, because he was brave, but because
He sank and sank and sank. He kept his eyes open.

And then he began to sink.

watched the hair dance away on the wind.

That answers that question, thought Edward as he

blew off his head.

And then Abalone disappeared from view and the

My pocket watch, he thought, I need that.

was reflecting the light of the sun.

Abalone held in her hand. She was holding it up high, and it
Here: no, Edward realized, it was his gold pocket watch that

on the deck of the ship, holding on to the railing with one

THE MIRACULOUS JOURNEY OF EDWARD TULANE
Edward Tulane was afraid.

emotion.

in the mud, he experienced his first genuine and true
on the ocean floor, face down, and there, with his head
it saltd brily one and the china teblir landed, firmly.

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
He told himself that certainly Abilene would come and find him. This, Edward thought, is much like waiting for Abilene to come home from school. I will pretend that I am in the dining room of the house on Egypt Street, waiting for the little hand to move to the three and the big hand to land on the twelve. If only I had my watch, then I would know for sure. But it doesn’t matter; she will be here soon, very soon.

Hours passed. And then days. And weeks. And months.

Abilene did not come. Edward, for lack of anything better to do, began to
think. He thought about the stars. He remembered what they looked like from his bedroom window.

What made them shine so brightly, he wondered, and were they still shining somewhere even though he could not see them? Never in my life, he thought, have I been further away from the stars than I am now.

He considered, too, the fate of the beautiful princess who had become a warthog. Why had she become a warthog? Because the ugly witch had turned her into one — that was why.

And then the rabbit thought about Pellegrina. He felt, in some way that he could not explain to himself, that she was responsible for what had happened to him. It was almost as if it was she, and not the boys, who had thrown Edward overboard.

She was like the witch in the story. No, she was the witch in the story. True, she did not turn him into a warthog, but just the same she was punishing him, although for what he could not say.

On the two hundred and ninety-seventh day of Edward’s ordeal, a storm came. The storm was so powerful that it lifted Edward off the ocean floor and led him in a crazy, wild and spinning dance. The water pummelled him and lifted him up and shoved him back down.

• Help! thought Edward.

The storm, in its ferocity, actually flung him all the way out of the sea; and the rabbit glimpsed, for a moment, the light of an angry and bruised sky; the wind rushed through his ears. It sounded to him like Pellegrina laughing. But before he had time to appreciate being above water, he was tossed back down into the depths. Up and down, back and forth he went until the storm wore itself out, and Edward saw that he was beginning, again, his slow descent to the ocean floor.

Oh, help me, he thought. I can’t go back there. Help me.

But still, down he went. Down, down, down.

And then, suddenly, the great, wide net of a fisherman reached out and grabbed the rabbit. The net lifted him higher and higher until there was an almost unbearable explosion of light and Edward was back in the world, lying on the deck of a ship, surrounded by fish.
"There you go," said the old man.

The old man placed Edward carefully on a crate.

"I'll take it home to Nellie. Let her fix it up and set it to rights. Give it to some child.

"You can see a rabbit toy," said the young man, and

"L-looks like some toy," said the grizzled old man.

Look at her rabbit. The old man said, "Looks like a rabbit ears. And rabbit ears. Of the shape of rabbit ears.

"I reckon it's gone from pawn's, considering him. A rabbit I reckon. It's gone. He bent and picked Edward up and held him by his ear. He then picked Edward up and held him by his ear. He then raised and Edward realized that he was looking up at the bright, shining things that were here for Edward. "Who's that there," said another voice. "That's for sure."

"Do what's this," said a voice.

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
ON LAND, THE OLD FISHERMAN stopped to light a pipe, and then, with the pipe clenched between his teeth, he walked home, carrying Edward atop his left shoulder as if he were a conquering hero. The fisherman balanced him there, placing a calloused hand at Edward’s back. He talked to him in a soft, low voice as they walked.

“You’ll like Nellie, you will,” said the old man. “She’s had her sadness, but she’s an all-right girl.”

Edward looked at the small town blanketed in dusk: a jumble of buildings huddled together, the ocean stretching out in front of it all; and he thought that he would like
anything and anybody that was not at the bottom of the sea.

"Hello, Lawrence," called a woman from the front of a shop. "What have you got?"

"Fresh catch," said the fisherman, "fresh rabbit from the sea." He lifted his cap to the lady and kept walking.

"There you are, now," said the fisherman. He took the pipe out of his mouth and pointed with the stem of it at a star in the purpling sky. "There's your North Star right there. Don't never have to be lost when you know where that fellow is."

Edward considered the brightness of the small star. Do they all have names? he wondered.

"Listen at me," said the fisherman, "talking to a toy. Oh, well. Here we are, then." And with Edward still on his shoulder, the fisherman walked up a stone-lined path and into a little green house.

"Look here, Nellie," he said. "I've brought you something from the sea."

"I don't want nothing from the sea," came a voice.

"Aw, now, don't be like that, Nell. Come and see, then."

An old woman stepped out of the kitchen, wiping her hands on an apron. When she saw Edward, she dropped the apron and clapped her hands together and said, "Oh, Lawrence, you brung me a rabbit."

"Direct from the sea," said Lawrence. He took Edward off his shoulder and stood him up on the floor and held on to his hands and made him take a deep bow in the direction of Nellie.

"Oh," said Nellie, "here." She clapped her hands together again and Lawrence passed Edward to her.

Nellie held the rabbit out in front of her and looked him over from tip to toe. She smiled. "Have you ever in your life seen anything so fine?" she said.

Edward felt immediately that Nellie was a very discerning woman.

"She's beautiful," breathed Nellie.

For a moment, Edward was confused. Was there some other object of beauty in the room?
"What will I call her?"
"Susanna?" said Lawrence.
"Just right," said Nellie. "Susanna." She looked deep into Edward's eyes. "First off, Susanna will need some clothes, won't she?"

"She's beautiful," breathed Nellie.
And so Edward Tulane became Susanna. Nellie sewed several outfits for him: a pink dress with ruffles for special occasions, a simple shift fashioned out of a flower-covered cloth for everyday use, and a long white gown made of cotton for Edward to sleep in. In addition, she remade his ears, stripping them of the few pieces of fur that remained and designing him a new pair.

“Oh,” she told him when she was done, “you look lovely.”

He was horrified at first. He was, after all, a boy rabbit. He did not want to be dressed as a girl. And the outfits, even the special-occasion dress, were so simple, so
plain. They lacked the elegance and artistry of his real
clothes. But then Edward remembered lying on the ocean
floor, the muck in his face, the stars so far away, and he
said to himself, What difference does it make really?
Wearing a dress won’t hurt me.

Besides, life in the little green house with the fisher-
man and his wife was sweet. Nellie loved to bake, and so
she spent her day in the kitchen. She put Edward on the
counter and leaned him up against the flour canister and
arranged his dress around his knees. She bent his ears so
that he could hear well.

And then she set to work, kneading dough for bread
and rolling out dough for cookies and pies. The kitchen
soon filled with the smell of baking bread and with the
sweet smells of cinnamon and sugar and cloves. The win-
dows steamed up. And while Nellie worked, she talked.

She told Edward about her children: her daughter,
Lolly, who was a secretary; and her boys: Ralph, who was
in the army; and Raymond, who had died of pneumonia
when he was only five years old.

“He drowned inside of himself,” said Nellie. “It is a
horrible, terrible thing, the worst thing, to watch somebody
you love die right in front of you and not be able to do
nothing about it. I dream about him most nights.”

Nellie wiped at her tears with the back of her hands.
She smiled at Edward.

“I suppose you think I’m daft, talking to a toy. But it
seems to me that you are listening, Susanna.”

And Edward was surprised to discover that he was
listening. Before, when Abilene talked to him, everything
had seemed so boring, so pointless. But now, the stories
Nellie told struck him as the most important thing in the
world and he listened as if his life depended on what she
said. It made him wonder if some of the muck from the
ocean floor had got inside his china head and damaged him
somehow.

In the evening, Lawrence came home from the sea
and there was dinner and Edward sat at the table with the
fisherman and his wife. He sat in an old wooden high
chair; and while at first he was mortified (a high chair, after
all, was a chair designed for babies, not for elegant rabbits),
he soon became used to it. He liked being up high, looking
out over the table instead of staring at the tablecloth as he had at the Tulane household. He liked feeling like a part of things.

Every night after dinner, Lawrence said that he thought he would go out and get some fresh air and that maybe Susanna would like to come with him. He placed Edward on his shoulder as he had that first night when he walked him through town, bringing him home to Nellie.

They went outside and Lawrence lit his pipe and held Edward there on his shoulder; and if the night was clear, Lawrence said the names of the constellations one at a time, Andromeda, Pegasus, pointing at them with the stem of his pipe. Edward loved looking up at the stars, and he loved the sounds of the constellation names. They were sweet in his ears.

Sometimes, though, staring up at the night sky, Edward remembered Pellegrina, saw again her dark and glowing eyes, and a chill would go through him.

Warthogs, he would think. Witches.

But Nellie, before she put him to bed each night, sang Edward a lullaby, a song about a mockingbird that did not
Lolly was a lumpy woman who spoke too loudly and who wore too much lipstick. She entered the house and immediately spotted Edward sitting on the living-room couch.

“What’s this?” she said. She put down her suitcase and picked Edward up by one foot. She held him upside down.

“That’s Susanna,” said Nellie.

“Susanna!” shouted Lolly. She gave Edward a shake. His dress was up over his head and he could see nothing. Already, he had formed a deep and abiding hatred for Lolly.

“Your father found her,” said Nellie. “She came up
in a net and she didn’t have no clothes on her, so I made her some dresses.”

“Have you gone mad?” shouted Lolly. “Rabbits don’t need clothes.”

“Well,” said Nellie. Her voice shook. “This one seemed to.”

Lolly tossed Edward back on the couch. He landed face down with his arms over his head and his dress still over his face, and he stayed that way through dinner.

“Why have you got out that old high chair?” shouted Lolly.

“Oh, don’t pay it no mind,” said Nellie. “Your father was just gluing on a missing piece, wasn’t you, Lawrence?”

“That’s right,” said Lawrence, without looking up from his plate.

Of course, after dinner Edward did not go outside and stand beneath the stars to have a smoke with Lawrence. And Nellie, for the first time since Edward had been with her, did not sing him a lullaby. In fact, Edward was ignored and forgotten about until the next morning, when Lolly picked him up again and pulled his dress down away from his face and stared him in the eye.

“Got the old folks bewitched, don’t you?” said Lolly. “I heard the talk in town. That they’ve been treating you like a rabbit child.”

Edward stared back at Lolly. Her lipstick was a bright and bloody red. He felt a cold breeze blow through the room.

Was a door open somewhere?

“Well, you don’t fool me,” she said. She gave him a shake. “We’ll be taking a trip together, you and me.”

Holding Edward by the ears, Lolly marched into the kitchen and shoved him face down in the rubbish bin.

“Ma!” Lolly shouted, “I’m taking the truck. I’m going to head out and do some errands.”

“Oh,” came Nellie’s tremulous voice, “that’s wonderful, dear. Goodbye, then.”

Goodbye, thought Edward as Lolly hauled the rubbish bin out to the truck.

“Goodbye,” Nellie called again, louder this time.

Edward felt a sharp pain somewhere deep inside his china chest.
For the first time, his heart called out to him. It said two words: Nellie Lawrence.
Edward ended up at the dump. He lay on top of orange peel, coffee grounds, rancid bacon and rubber tires. The first night, he was at the top of the rubbish heap and so he was able to look up at the stars and find comfort in their light.

In the morning, a short man came climbing through the rubbish. He stopped when he was standing on top of the highest pile. He put his hands under his armpits and flapped his elbows.

The man crowed loudly. He shouted, "Who am I?"

"I'm Ernest, Ernest who is king of the world. How can I be king of the world? Because I am king of rubbish. And..."
rubbish is what the world is made of. Ha. Ha, ha! Therefore, I am Ernest, Ernest who is king of the world.”
He crowed again.

Edward was inclined to agree with Ernest’s assessment of the world being made of rubbish, especially after his second day at the dump, when a load of rubbish was deposited directly on top of him. He lay there, buried alive. He could not see the sky. He could not see the stars. He could see nothing.

What kept Edward going, what gave him hope, was thinking of how he would find Lolly and exact his revenge. He would pick her up by the ears! He would bury her under a mountain of rubbish!

But after almost forty days and nights had passed, the weight and the smell of the rubbish above and below him clouded Edward’s thoughts, and soon he gave up thinking about revenge and gave in to despair. It was worse, much worse, than being buried at sea. It was worse because Edward was a different rabbit now. He couldn’t say how he was different; he just knew that he was. He remembered, again, Pellegrina’s story about the princess who had loved nobody. The witch turned her into a warthog because she loved nobody. He understood that now.

He heard Pellegrina say: “You disappoint me.”
Why? he asked her. Why do I disappoint you?

But he knew the answer to that question too. It was because he had not loved Abilene enough. And now she was gone from him. And he would never be able to make it right. And Nellie and Lawrence were gone too. He missed them terribly. He wanted to be with them.

The rabbit wondered if that was love.

Day after day passed, and Edward was aware of time passing only because every morning he could hear Ernest performing his dawn ritual, cackling and crowing about being king of the world.

On his one hundred and eightieth day at the dump, salvation arrived for Edward in a most unusual form. The rubbish around him shifted, and the rabbit heard the sniffing and panting of a dog. Then came the frenzied sound of digging. The rubbish shifted again, and suddenly, miraculously, the beautiful, buttery light of late afternoon shone on Edward’s face.
CHAPTER TWELVE

[Image of two dogs]


Edward did not have much time to savour the light, for the dog suddenly appeared above him, dark and shaggy, blocking his view. Edward was pulled out of the rubbish by his ears, dropped, and then picked up again, this time around the middle, and shaken back and forth with a great deal of ferocity.

The little dog growled deep in its throat and then dropped Edward again and looked him in the eye. Edward stared back.

"Hey, get out of here, you dog!" It was Ernest, king of rubbish and therefore king of the world.
The dog grabbed Edward by his pink dress and took off, running.

“That’s mine, that’s mine, all rubbish is mine!” Ernest shouted. “You come back here!”

But the little dog did not stop.

The sun was shining and Edward felt exhilarated. Who, having known him before, would have thought that he could be so happy now, crusted over with rubbish, wearing a dress, held in the slobbery mouth of a dog and being chased by a madman?

But he was happy.

The dog ran and ran until they reached a railway. They crossed over the track, and there, underneath a scraggly tree, in a circle of bushes, Edward was dropped in front of a large pair of feet.

The dog began to bark.

Edward looked up and saw that the feet were attached to an enormous man with a long, dark beard.

“What’s this, Lucy?” said the man.

He bent and picked up Edward. He held him firmly around the middle. “Lucy,” said the man, “I know how much you enjoy rabbit pie.”

Lucy barked.

“Yes, yes, I know. Rabbit pie is a true delight, one of the pleasures of our existence.”

Lucy let out a hopeful yip.

“And what we have here, what you have so graciously delivered to me, is definitely a rabbit, but the best chef in the world would be hard-pressed to make him into a pie.”

Lucy growled.

“This rabbit is made of china, girl.” The man held Edward closer to him. They looked each other in the eye. “You’re made of china, aren’t you, Malone?” He gave Edward a playful shake. “You’re some child’s toy, am I right? And you have been separated, somehow, from the child who loves you.”

Edward felt, again, the sharp pain in his chest. He thought of Abilene. He saw the path leading up to the house on Egypt Street. He saw the dusk descending and Abilene running towards him.
Yes, Abielle had loved him.

"So, Malone," said the man. He cleared his throat.

"You are lost. That is my guess. Lucy and I are lost too."

"Perhaps," said the man, "you would like to be lost with us. I have found it much more agreeable to be lost in the company of others. My name is Bull. Lucy, as you may have surmised, is my dog. Would you care to join us?"

Bull waited a moment, staring at Edward; and then with his hands firmly around Edward's waist, the man reached one enormous finger up and touched Edward's head from behind. He pushed it so it looked as if Edward were nodding his head in agreement.

"Look, Lucy. He is saying yes," said Bull. "Malone has agreed to travel with us. Isn't that swell?"

Lucy danced around Bull's feet, wagging her tail and barking.

And so it was that Edward took to the road with a tramp and his dog.
THEY TRAVELLED ON FOOT. THEY travelled in empty freight cars. They were always on the move.

“But in truth,” said Bull, “we are going nowhere. That, my friend, is the irony of our constant movement.”

Edward rode in Bull’s backpack, slung over Bull’s shoulders with only his head and ears sticking out. Bull was always careful to position the rabbit so that he was not looking down or up, but was, instead, forever looking behind him, at the road they had just travelled.

At night, they slept on the ground, under the stars. Lucy, after her initial disappointment about Edward being
unfit for consumption, took a liking to him and slept curled up beside him; sometimes she even rested her muzzle on his china stomach, and then the noises she made in her sleep, whimpering and growling and chuffing, resonated inside Edward’s body. To his surprise, he began to feel a deep tenderness for the dog.

During the night, while Bull and Lucy slept, Edward, with his ever-open eyes, stared up at the constellations. He said their names, and then he said the names of the people who loved him. He started with Abilene and then went on to Nellie and Lawrence and from there to Bull and Lucy, and then he ended again with Abilene: Abilene, Nellie, Lawrence, Bull, Lucy, Abilene.

See? Edward told Pellegrina. I am not like the princess. I know about love.

There were times, too, when Bull and Lucy gathered around a campfire with other tramps. Bull was a good storyteller and an even better singer.

“Sing for us, Bull,” the men shouted.

Bull sat with Lucy leaning against his leg and Edward balanced on his right knee and he sang from somewhere
deep inside himself. Just as Edward could feel Lucy's whimpers and growls resonate through his body, at night, he could also feel the deep, sad sound of Bull's songs move through him. Edward loved it when Bull sang.

And he was grateful to Bull too, for sensing that a dress was not the right kind of clothing for Edward. He was grateful to Bull on another level too, for offering to lend Edward his own clothes. And, again, with no wish to offend you, the dress has seen better days. Nellie's dress had not fared well at the dump or in its subsequent rambles with Bull and Lucy. It was so torn and dirty and full of holes that it barely resembled a dress any more.

"That's a solution," said Bull, "and I hope that it meets with your approval." He took his own knitted stocking cap and cut a big hole in the top of it and two small holes in either side of it and then he took off Edward's dress.

"Look away, Lucy," he said to the dog, "let's not embarrass Malone by staring at his nakedness." Bull slid the hat over Edward's head and pulled it down and poked his arms through the smaller holes. "There you go," he said to Edward, "now you just need some trousers.

These Bull made himself, cutting up several red handkerchiefs and sewing them together so that they formed a makeshift covering for Edward's long legs. "Now you have the proper outlaw look," said Bull, standing back to admire his work. "Now you look like a rabbit on the run."

"The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane\"
At first, the others thought that Edward was a great good joke.

“A rabbit,” the men said, laughing. “Let’s chop him up and put him in the stewpot.”

Or when Bull sat with Edward carefully balanced on his knee, one of them would call out, “Got yourself a little dolly, Bull?”

Edward, of course, felt a surge of anger at being referred to as a dolly. But Bull never got angry. He simply sat with Edward on his knee and said nothing. Soon the men became accustomed to Edward, and word of his existence spread. So it was that when Bull and Lucy arrived at a
campfire in another town, another state, another place entirely, the men knew Edward and were glad to see him.

“Malone!” they shouted in unison.

And Edward felt a warm rush of pleasure at being recognized, at being known.

Whatever it was that had begun in Nellie’s kitchen, Edward’s new and strange ability to sit very still and concentrate the whole of his being on the stories of another became invaluable around the campfire.

“Look at Malone,” said a man named Jack one evening. “He’s listening to every darn word.”

“Certainly,” said Bull, “of course he is.”

Later that night, Jack came and sat next to Bull and asked if he could borrow the rabbit. Bull handed Edward over, and Jack sat with Edward upon his knee. He whispered in Edward’s ear.

“Helen,” Jack said, “and Jack Junior and Taffy—she’s the baby. Those are my kids’ names. They are all in North Carolina. You ever been to North Carolina? It’s a pretty state. That’s where they are. Helen. Jack Junior. Taffy. You remember their names, OK, Malone?”


Edward knew what it was like to say over and over again the names of those you had left behind. He knew what it was like to miss someone. And so he listened. And in his listening, his heart opened wide and then wider still.

The rabbit stayed lost with Lucy and Bull for a long time. Almost seven years passed, and in that time, Edward became an excellent tramp: happy to be on the road, restless when he was still. The sound of the wheels on the train tracks became a music that soothed him. He could have ridden the railways for ever. But one night, in a railway yard in Memphis, as Bull and Lucy slept in an empty freight car and Edward kept watch, trouble arrived.

A man entered the freight car and shone a torch in Bull’s face and then kicked him awake.

“You bum,” he said, “you dirty bum. I’m sick of you guys sleeping everywhere. This ain’t no hotel.”

Bull sat up slowly. Lucy started to bark.
"Shut up," said the man. He delivered a swift kick to Lucy’s side that made her yelp in surprise.

All his life, Edward had known what he was: a rabbit made of china, a rabbit with bendable arms and legs and ears. He was bendable, though, only if he was in the hands of another. He could not move himself. And he had never regretted this more deeply than he did that night when he and Bull and Lucy were discovered in the empty carriage. Edward wanted to be able to defend Lucy. But he could do nothing. He could only lie there and wait.

"Say something," said the man to Bull.

Bull put his hands up in the air. He said, "We are lost."

"Lost, ha. You bet you’re lost." And then the man said, "What’s this?" and he shone the light on Edward.

"That’s Malone," said Bull.

"What the heck?" said the man. He poked at Edward with the toe of his boot. "Things are out of control. Things are out of hand. Not on my watch. No, sir. Not when I’m in charge."

The train suddenly lurched into motion.

"No, sir," said the man again. He looked down at Edward, "No free rides for rabbits." He turned and flung open the door of the carriage, and then he turned back and with one swift kick sent Edward sailing out into the darkness.

The rabbit flew through the late spring air.

From far behind him, he heard Lucy’s anguish.

Arrooooooo, abbbbbrrrrrrooo, she cried.

Edward landed with a most alarming thump, and then he tumbled and tumbled and tumbled down a long dirty hill. When he finally stopped moving, he was on his back, staring up at the night sky. The world was silent. He could not hear Lucy. He could not hear the train.

Edward looked up at the stars. He started to say the names of the constellations, but then he stopped.

Bull, his heart said. Lucy.

How many times, Edward wondered, would he have to leave without getting the chance to say goodbye?
A lone cricket started up a song.
Edward listened.
Something deep inside him ached.
He wished that he could cry.

Chapter Fifteen
IN THE MORNING, THE SUN ROSE AND

the cricket song gave way to birdsong and an old woman
came walking down the dirt road and tripped right over
Edward.

"Humph," she said. She pushed at Edward with her
fishing rod.

"Looks like a rabbit," she said. She put down her
basket and bent and stared at Edward. "Only he ain't real."

She stood back up. "Humph," she said again. She
rubbed her back. "What I say is, there's a use for everything
and everything has its use. That's what I say."

Edward didn't care what she said. The terrible ache
he had felt the night before had gone away and had been replaced with a different feeling, one of hollowness and despair.

Pick me up or don’t pick me up, the rabbit thought. It makes no difference to me.

The old lady picked him up.

She bent him double and put him in her basket, which smelled of weeds and fish, and then she kept walking, swinging the basket and singing, “Nobody knows the troubles I seen.”

Edward, in spite of himself, listened.

I’ve seen troubles too, he thought. You bet I have. And apparently they aren’t over yet.

Edward was right. His troubles were not over.

The old woman found a use for him.

She hung him from a post in her vegetable garden. She nailed his ears to the wooden post and spread his arms out as if he were flying and attached his paws to the post by wrapping pieces of wire around them. In addition to Edward, pie tins hung from the post. They clinked and clanked and shone in the morning sun.

“Ain’t a doubt in my mind that you can scare them off,” the old lady said.


Birds, he soon discovered.

Crows. They came flying at him, cawing and screeching, wheeling over his head, diving at his ears.

“Go on, Clyde,” said the woman. She clapped her hands. “You got to act ferocious.”

Clyde? Edward felt a weariness so intense wash over him that he thought he might actually be able to sigh aloud. Would the world never tire of calling him by the wrong name?

The old woman clapped her hands again. “Get to work, Clyde,” she said. “Scare them birds off.” And then she walked away from him, out of the garden and towards her small house.

The birds were insistent. They flew around his head. They tugged at the loose threads in his sweater. One large crow in particular would not leave the rabbit alone. He perched on the post and screamed a dark message in Edward’s left ear — *Caw, caw, caw* — without ceasing. As
the sun rose higher and shone meander and brighter, Edward became somewhat dazed. He mistook the large crow for Pellegrina.

Go ahead, he thought. Turn me into a warthog if you want. I don’t care. I am done with caring.

Caw, caw, said the Pellegrina crow.

Finally, the sun set and the birds flew away. Edward hung by his ears and looked up at the night sky. He saw the stars. But for the first time in his life, he looked at them and felt no comfort. Instead, he felt mocked.

You are down there alone, the stars seemed to say to him. And we are up here, in our constellations, together.

I have been loved, Edward told the stars.

So? said the stars. What difference does that make when you are all alone now?

Edward could think of no answer to that question.

Eventually, the sky lightened and the stars disappeared one by one. The birds returned and the old woman came back to the garden.

She brought a boy with her.
Bryce," said the old woman, "git away from that rabbit. I ain't paying you to stand and stare."

"Yes, ma'am," said Bryce. He wiped his nose with the back of his hand and continued to look up at Edward. The boy's eyes were brown with flecks of gold shining in them.

"Hey," he whispered to Edward.

A crow settled on Edward's head, and the boy flapped his arms and shouted, "Go on, git!" and the bird spread its wings and flew away.

"Bryce!" shouted the old woman.

"Ma'am?" said Bryce.
“Git away from that rabbit. Do your work. I ain’t gonna say it again.”

“Yes’m,” said Bryce. He wiped his hand across his nose. “I’ll be back to get you,” he said to Edward.

The rabbit spent the day hanging by his ears, baking in the hot sun, watching the old woman and Bryce weed and hoe the garden. Whenever the woman wasn’t looking, Bryce raised his hand and waved.

The birds circled over Edward’s head, laughing at him.

What was it like to have wings? Edward wondered. If he had had wings when he was tossed overboard, he would not have sunk to the bottom of the sea. Instead, he would have flown in the opposite direction, up, into the deep, bright blue sky. And when Lolly took him to the dump, he would have flown out of the rubbish and followed her and landed on her head, holding on with his sharp claws. And on the train, when the man kicked him, Edward would not have fallen to the ground; instead he would have risen up and sat on top of the train and laughed at the man: Caw, caw, caw.

In the late afternoon, Bryce and the old lady left the garden. Bryce winked at Edward as he walked past him. One of the crows lighted on Edward’s shoulder and tapped with its beak at Edward’s china face, reminding the rabbit with each tap that he had no wings; that not only could he not fly, he could not move on his own at all, in any way.

Dusk descended over the garden, and then came true dark. A whippoorwill sang out over and over again. *Whip poor Will. Whip poor Will.* It was the saddest sound Edward had ever heard. And then came another song, the hum of a harmonica.

Bryce stepped out of the shadows.

“Hey,” he said to Edward. He wiped his nose with the back of his hand and then played another bit of song on the harmonica. “I bet you didn’t think I’d come back. But here I am. I come to save you.”

Too late, thought Edward as Bryce climbed the post and worked at the wires that were tied around his wrists. I am nothing but a hollow rabbit.

Too late, thought Edward as Bryce pulled the nails out of his ears. I am only a doll made of china.
But when the last nail was out and he fell forward into Bryce’s arms, the rabbit felt a rush of relief, and the feeling of relief was followed by one of joy.

Perhaps, he thought, it is not too late, after all, for me to be saved.
Bryce slung Edward over his shoulder. He started to walk.

"I come to get you for Sarah Ruth," Bryce said. "You don't know Sarah Ruth. She's my sister. She's sick. She had a baby doll made out of china. She loved that baby doll. But he broke it.

"He broke it. He was drunk and stepped on that baby's head and smashed it into a hundred million pieces. Them pieces was so small, I couldn't make them go back together. I couldn't. I tried and tried."

At this point in his story, Bryce stopped walking and
shook his head and wiped at his nose with the back of his hand.

"Sarah Ruth ain't had nothing to play with since. He won't buy her nothing. He says she don't need nothing. He says she don't need nothing because she ain't gonna live. But he don't know."

Bryce started to walk again. "He don't know," he said.

Who "he" was was not clear to Edward. What was clear was that he was being taken to a child to make up for the loss of a doll. A doll. How Edward loathed dolls. And to be thought of as a likely replacement for a doll offended him. But still, it was, he had to admit, a highly preferable alternative to hanging by his ears from a post.

The house in which Bryce and Sarah Ruth lived was so small and crooked that Edward did not believe, at first, that it was a house. He mistook it, instead, for a chicken coop. Inside, there were two beds and an oil lamp and not much else. Bryce laid Edward at the foot of one of the beds and then lit the lamp.

"Sarah," Bryce whispered, "Sarah Ruth. You got to wake up now, honey. I brung you something." He took the harmonica out of his pocket and played the beginning of a simple melody.

The little girl sat up in her bed and immediately started to cough. Bryce put his hand on her back. "That's all right," he told her. "That's OK."

She was young, maybe four years old, and she had white-blonde hair, and even in the poor light of the lamp, Edward could see that her eyes were the same gold-flecked brown as Bryce's.

"That's right," said Bryce. "You go on ahead and cough."

Sarah Ruth obliged him. She coughed and coughed and coughed. On the wall of the cabin, the oil light cast her trembling shadow, hunched over and small. The coughing was the saddest sound that Edward had ever heard, sadder even than the mournful call of the whippoorwill. Finally, Sarah Ruth stopped.

Bryce said, "You want to see what I brung you?"
Sarah Ruth nodded.

"You got to close your eyes."
The girl closed her eyes.
Bryce picked up Edward and held him so that he was standing straight, like a soldier, at the end of the bed. “All right now, you can open them.”

Sarah Ruth opened her eyes, and Bryce moved Edward’s china legs and china arms so it looked as if he were dancing.

Sarah Ruth laughed and clapped her hands. “Rabbit,” she said.

“He’s for you, honey,” said Bryce.

Sarah Ruth looked first at Edward and then at Bryce and then back at Edward again, her eyes wide and disbelieving.

“He’s yours.”

“Mine?”

Sarah Ruth, Edward was soon to discover, rarely said more than one word at a time. Words, at least several of them strung together, made her cough. She limited herself. She said only what needed to be said.

“Yours,” said Bryce. “I got him special for you.”

This knowledge provoked another fit of coughing in Sarah Ruth, and she hunched over again. When the fit was done, she uncurled herself and held out her arms.

“That’s right,” said Bryce. He handed Edward to her.

“Baby,” said Sarah Ruth.

She rocked Edward back and forth and stared down at him and smiled.

Never in his life had Edward been cradled like a baby. Abilene had not done it. Nor had Nellie. And most certainly Bull had not. It was a singular sensation to be held so gently and yet so fiercely, to be stared down at with so much love. Edward felt the whole of his china body flood with warmth.

“You going to give him a name, honey?” Bryce asked.

“Jangles,” said Sarah Ruth without taking her eyes off Edward.

“Jangles, huh? That’s a good name. I like that name.” Bryce patted Sarah Ruth on the head. She continued to stare down at Edward.

“Hush,” she said to Edward as she rocked him back and forth.
“From the minute I first seen him,” said Bryce, “I knew he belonged to you. I said to myself, ‘That rabbit is for Sarah Ruth, for sure.’”

“Jangles,” murmured Sarah Ruth.

Outside the cabin, thunder cracked and then came the sound of rain falling on the tin roof. Sarah Ruth rocked Edward back and forth, back and forth, and Bryce took out his harmonica and started to play, making his song keep rhythm with the rain.
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN
Bryce and Sarah Ruth had a father.

Early the next morning, when the light was grey and uncertain, Sarah Ruth was sitting up in bed, coughing, and the father came home. He picked Edward up by one of his ears and said, "I ain't never."

"It's a baby doll," said Bryce.

"Don't look like no baby doll to me."

Edward, hanging by one ear, was frightened. This, he was certain, was the man who crushed the heads of china dolls.

"Jangles," said Sarah Ruth between coughs. She held out her arms.
“He’s hers,” said Bryce. “He belongs to her.”

The father dropped Edward on the bed, and Bryce picked up the rabbit and handed him to Sarah Ruth.

“It don’t matter anyway,” said the father. “It don’t make no difference. None of it.”

“It does so matter,” said Bryce.

“Don’t you sass me,” said the father. He raised his hand and slapped Bryce across his mouth and then he turned and left the house.

“You ain’t got to worry about him,” said Bryce to Edward. “He ain’t nothing but a bully. And besides, he don’t hardly ever come home.”

Fortunately, the father did not come back that day. Bryce went out to work and Sarah Ruth spent the day in bed, holding Edward in her lap and playing with a box filled with buttons.

“Pretty,” she said to Edward as she lined up the buttons on the bed and arranged them into different patterns.

Sometimes, when a coughing fit was particularly bad, she squeezed Edward so tight that he was afraid he would crack in two. Also, in between coughing fits, she took to sucking on one or the other of Edward’s ears. Normally, Edward would have found intrusive, clingy behaviour of this sort very annoying, but there was something about Sarah-Ruth. He wanted to take care of her. He wanted to protect her. He wanted to do more for her.

At the end of the day, Bryce returned with a biscuit for Sarah Ruth and a ball of twine for Edward.

Sarah Ruth held the biscuit in both hands and took small, tentative bites.

“You eat that all up, honey. Let me hold Jangles,” said Bryce. “Him and me got a surprise for you.”

Bryce took Edward off to a corner of the room, and with his pocket knife, he cut off lengths of twine and tied them to Edward’s arms and feet and then tied the twine to sticks of wood.

“See, all day I been thinking about it,” Bryce said, “what we’re going to do is make you dance. Sarah Ruth loves dancing. Mama used to hold on to her and dance her around the room.”

“You eating that biscuit?” Bryce called out to Sarah Ruth.
“Uh-huh,” said Sarah Ruth.

“You hold on, honey. We got a surprise for you.” Bryce stood up. “Close your eyes,” he told her. He took Edward over to the bed and said, “OK, you can open them now.”

Sarah Ruth opened her eyes.

“Dance, Jangles,” said Bryce. And then, moving the strings with the sticks with his one hand, Bryce made Edward dance and drop and sway. And the whole while, at the same time, with his other hand, he held on to the harmonica and played a bright and lively tune.

Sarah Ruth laughed. She laughed until she started to cough, and then Bryce laid Edward down and took Sarah Ruth in his lap and rocked her and rubbed her back.

“You want some fresh air?” he asked her. “Let’s get you out of this nasty old air, huh?”

Bryce carried his sister outside. He left Edward lying on the bed; and the rabbit, staring up at the smoke-stained ceiling, thought again about having wings. If he had them, he thought, he would fly high above the world, to where the air was clear and sweet, and he would take Sarah Ruth with him. He would carry her in his arms. Surely, so high above the world, she would be able to breathe without coughing.

After a minute, Bryce came back inside, still carrying Sarah Ruth.

“She wants you too,” he said.

“Jangles,” said Sarah Ruth. She held out her arms.

So Bryce held Sarah Ruth and Sarah Ruth held Edward and the three of them stood outside.

Bryce said, “You got to look for falling stars. Them are the ones with magic.”

They were quiet for a long time, all three of them looking up at the sky. Sarah Ruth stopped coughing. Edward thought that maybe she had fallen asleep.

“There,” she said. And she pointed to a star streaking through the night sky.

“Make a wish, honey,” Bryce said, his voice high and tight. “That’s your star. You make a wish for anything you want.”

And even though it was Sarah Ruth’s star, Edward wished on it too.
THE DAYS PASSED. THE SUN ROSE AND
set and rose and set again and again. Sometimes the father
came home and sometimes he did not. Edward's ears
became soggy and he did not care. His sweater had almost
completely unravelled and it didn't bother him. He was
hugged half to death and it felt good. In the evenings, at
the hands of Bryce, at the ends of the twine, Edward
danced and danced.

One month passed and then two and then three.
Sarah Ruth got worse. In the fifth month, she refused to
eat. And in the sixth month, she began to cough up blood.
Her breathing became ragged and uncertain, as if she was
trying to remember, in between breaths, what to do, what breathing was.

"Breathe, honey," Bryce stood over her and said.
Breathe, thought Edward from deep inside the well of her arms. Please, please breathe.

Bryce stopped leaving the house. He sat at home all day and held Sarah Ruth in his lap and rocked her back and forth and sang to her; on a bright morning in September, Sarah Ruth stopped breathing.

"Oh no," said Bryce. "Oh, honey, take a little breath. Please."

Edward had fallen out of Sarah Ruth’s arms the night before and she had not asked for him again. So, face down on the floor, arms over his head, Edward listened as Bryce wept. He listened as the father came home and shouted at Bryce. He listened as the father wept.

"You can’t cry!" Bryce shouted. "You got no right to cry. You never even loved her. You don’t know nothing about love."

"I loved her," said the father. "I loved her."
I loved her too, thought Edward. I loved her and now
she is gone. How could this be, he wondered. How could he bear to live in a world without Sarah Ruth?

The yelling between the father and son continued, and then there was a terrible moment when the father insisted that Sarah Ruth belonged to him, that she was his girl, his baby, and that he was taking her to be buried.

“She ain’t yours!” Bryce screamed. “You can’t take her. She ain’t yours.”

But the father was bigger and stronger, and he prevailed. He wrapped Sarah Ruth in a blanket and carried her away. The small house became very quiet. Edward could hear Bryce moving around, muttering to himself. And then, finally, the boy picked Edward up.

“Come on, Jangles,” Bryce said. “We’re leaving. We’re going to Memphis.”
HOW MANY DANCING RABBITS HAVE you seen in your life?” Bryce said to Edward. “I can tell you how many I seen. One. You. That’s how you and me are going to make some money. I seen it the last time I was in Memphis. Folks put on any kind of show right there on the street corner and people pay ’em for it. I seen it.”

The walk to town took all night. Bryce walked without stopping, carrying Edward under one arm and talking to him the whole time. Edward tried to listen, but the terrible scarecrow feeling had come back, the feeling he had when he was hanging by his ears in the old lady’s garden, the feeling that nothing mattered, and that nothing would ever matter again.
And not only did Edward feel hollow; he ached. Every part of his china body hurt. He ached for Sarah Ruth. He wanted her to hold him. He wanted to dance for her.

And he did dance, but it was not for Sarah Ruth. Edward danced for strangers on a dirty street corner in Memphis. Bryce played his harmonica and moved Edward’s strings, and Edward bowed and shuffled and swayed and people stopped to stare and point and laugh. On the ground in front of them was Sarah Ruth’s button box. The lid was open to encourage people to drop change inside it.

“Mama,” said a small child, “look at that bunny. I want to touch him.” He reached out his hand for Edward.

“No,” said the mother, “dirty.” She pulled the child back, away from Edward. “Nasty,” she said.

A man wearing a hat stopped and stared at Edward and Bryce.

“It’s a sin to dance,” he said. And then after a long pause, he said, “It’s a particular sin for rabbits to dance.”

The man took off his hat and held it over his heart.

He stood and watched the boy and the rabbit for a long time. Finally, he put his hat back on his head and walked away.

• The shadows lengthened. The sun became an orange dusty ball low in the sky. Bryce started to cry. Edward saw his tears land on the pavement. But the boy did not stop playing his harmonica. He did not make Edward stop dancing.

An old woman leaning on a cane stepped up close to them. She stared at Edward with deep, dark eyes.

Pellegrina? thought the dancing rabbit.

She nodded at him.

Look at me, he said to her. His arms and legs jerked. Look at me. You got your wish. I have learned how to love. And it’s a terrible thing. I’m broken. My heart is broken. Help me.

The old woman turned and hobbled away.

Come back, thought Edward. Fix me.

Bryce cried harder. He made Edward dance faster.

Finally, when the sun was gone and the streets were dark, Bryce stopped playing his harmonica.
“I’m done now,” he said.
He let Edward fall to the pavement. “I ain’t gonna cry any more.” Bryce wiped his nose and his eyes with the back of his hand; he picked up the button box and looked inside it. “We got us enough money to get something to eat,” he said. “Come on, Jangles.”
The diner was called Neal's. The word was written in big, red neon letters that flashed on and off. Inside, it was warm and bright and smelled like fried chicken and toast and coffee.

Bryce sat at the counter and put Edward on a stool next to him. He leaned the rabbit's forehead up against the counter so that he would not fall.

“What you gonna have, sugar?” the waitress said to Bryce.

“Give me some pancakes,” said Bryce, “and some eggs, and I want steak too. I want a big old steak. And some toast. And some coffee.”
picked it up and looked at it and then shook his head.

“I ain’t got enough,” he said to Edward.

“Ma’am,” he said to Marlene when she came back and filled up his coffee cup, “I ain’t got enough.”

“What, sugar?”

“I ain’t got enough money.”

She stopped pouring the coffee and looked at him.

“You’re going to have to talk to Neal about that.”

Neal, it turned out, was both the owner and the cook.

He was a large, red-haired, red-faced man who came out of the kitchen holding a spatula in one hand.

“You came in here hungry, right?” he said to Bryce.

“Yes, sir,” said Bryce. He wiped his nose with the back of his hand.

“And you ordered some food and I cooked it and Marlene brought it to you. Right?”

“I reckon,” said Bryce.

“You reckon?” said Neal. He brought the spatula down on the counter with a thwack.

Bryce jumped. “Yes, sir. I mean, no sir.”

“Yes, sir,” said Bryce. He picked Edward up off the stool and held him close. Everyone in the diner had stopped eating. They were all staring at the boy and the rabbit and Neal. Only Marlene looked away.


Bryce cleared his throat. “You ever seen a rabbit dance?” he said.

“How’s that?” said Neal.

“You ever before in your life seen a rabbit dance?” Bryce set Edward on the floor and started pulling the strings attached to his feet, making him do a slow shuffle. He put his harmonica in his mouth and played a sad song that went along with the dance.

Somebody laughed.

Bryce took the harmonica out of his mouth and said, “He could dance some more if you want him to. He could dance to pay for what I ate.”

Neal stared at Bryce. And then without warning, he reached down and grabbed hold of Edward.
It was dusk. And Edward was walking along a pavement. He was walking on his own, putting one foot in front of the other without any assistance from anyone else. He was wearing a fine suit made of red silk.

He walked along the pavement, and then he turned onto a path that led up to a house with lighted windows. I know this house, thought Edward. This is Abilene’s house. I am on Egypt Street.

Lucy came running out of the front door of the house, barking and jumping and wagging her tail. “Down, girl,” said a deep, gruff voice.
Edward looked up and there was Bull, standing at the door.

"Hello, Malone," said Bull. "Hello, good old rabbit pie. We've been waiting for you." Bull swung the door wide and Edward walked inside.

Abilene was there, and Nellie and Lawrence and Bryce.

"Susanna," called Nellie.

"Jangles," said Bryce.

"Edward," said Abilene. She held out her arms to him.

But Edward stood still. He looked around the room.

"You searching for Sarah Ruth?" Bryce asked.

Edward nodded.

"You got to go outside if you want to see Sarah Ruth," said Bryce.

So they all went outside, Lucy and Bull and Nellie and Lawrence and Bryce and Abilene and Edward.

"Right there," said Bryce. He pointed up at the stars.

"Yep," said Lawrence, "that is the Sarah Ruth constellation." He picked Edward up and put him on his shoulder. "You can see it right there."

Edward felt a pang of sorrow, deep and sweet and familiar. Why did she have to be so far away?

If only I had wings, he thought, I could fly to her.

Out of the corner of his eye, the rabbit saw something flutter. Edward looked over his shoulder and there they were, the most magnificent wings he had ever seen, orange and red and blue and yellow. And they were on his back. They belonged to him. They were his wings.

What a wonderful night this was! He was walking on his own. He had an elegant new suit. And now he had wings. He could fly anywhere, do anything. Why had he never realized it before?

His heart soared inside of him. He spread his wings and flew off Lawrence's shoulders, out of his hands and up into the night time sky, towards the stars, towards Sarah Ruth.

"No!" shouted Abilene.

"Catch him," said Bryce.

Edward flew higher.

Lucy barked.
“Malone!” shouted Bull. And with a terrific lunge, he grabbed hold of Edward’s feet and pulled him out of the sky and wrestled him to the earth. “You can’t go yet,” said Bull.

“Stay with us,” said Abilene.
Edward beat his wings, but it was no use. Bull held him firmly to the ground.

“Stay with us,” repeated Abilene.
Edward started to cry.
“I couldn’t stand to lose him again,” said Nellie.
“Neither could I,” said Abilene. “It would break my heart.”

Lucy bent her face to Edward’s.
She licked his tears away.
Exceedingly well made,” said the man who was running a warm cloth over Edward’s face, “a work of art, I would say – a surpassingly, unbelievably dirty work of art, but art nonetheless. And dirt can be dealt with. Just as your broken head has been dealt with.”

Edward looked into the eyes of the man.

“Ah, there you are,” the man said. “I can see that you are listening now. Your head was broken. I fixed it. I brought you back from the world of the dead.”

My heart, thought Edward, my heart is broken.

“No, no. No need to thank me,” the man said. “It’s
my job, quite literally. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Lucius Clarke, doll mender. Your head … may I tell you? Will it upset you? Well, I always say the truth must be met head-on, no pun intended. Your head, young sir, was in twenty-one pieces.”

Twenty-one pieces? Edward repeated mindlessly.

Lucius Clarke nodded. “Twenty-one,” he said. “All modesty aside, I must admit that a lesser doll mender, a doll mender without my skills, might not have been able to rescue you. But let’s not speak of what might have been. Let us speak instead of what is. You are whole. You have been pulled back from the brink of oblivion by your humble servant, Lucius Clarke.” And here, Lucius Clarke put his hand on his chest and bowed deeply over Edward.

This was quite a speech to wake up to, and Edward lay on his back trying to absorb it. He was on a wooden table. He was in a room with sunshine pouring in from high windows. His head, apparently, had been in twenty-one pieces and now was put back together into one. He was not wearing a red suit. In fact, he had no clothes on at all. He was naked again. And he did not have wings.

And then he remembered: Bryce, the diner, Neal swinging him through the air.

Bryce.

“You are wondering, perhaps, about your young friend,” said Lucius, “the one with the continually running nose. Yes. He brought you here, weeping, begging for my assistance. ‘Put him together again,’ he said. ‘Put him back together.’

“I told him, I said, ‘Young sir, I am a businessman. I can put your rabbit back together again. For a price. The question is, can you pay this price?’ He could not. Of course, he could not. He said that he could not.

“I told him then that he had two options. Only two. The first option being that he seek assistance elsewhere. Option two was that I would fix you to the very best of my considerable abilities and then you would become mine – his no longer, but mine.”

Here Lucius fell silent. He nodded, agreeing with himself. “Two options only,” he said. “And your friend chose option two. He gave you up so that you could be healed. Extraordinary, really.”
Bryce, thought Edward.

Lucius Clarke clapped his hands together. “But no worries, my friend. No worries. I fully intend to keep my side of the bargain. I will restore you to what I perceive to be your former glory. You shall have rabbit-fur ears and a rabbit-fur tail. Your whiskers will be repaired and replaced, your eyes repainted to a bright and stunning blue. You will be clothed in the finest of suits.

“And then, some day, I will reap the return on my investment in you. All in good time. All in good time. In the doll business, we have a saying: there is real time and there is doll time. You, my fine friend, have entered doll time.”
AND SO EDWARD TULANE WAS MENDED, put together again, cleaned and polished, dressed in an elegant suit and placed on a high shelf for display. From this shelf, Edward could see the whole shop: Lucius Clarke’s workbench and the windows to the outside world and the door that the customers used to enter and leave. From this shelf, Edward saw Bryce open the door one day and stand on the threshold, the silver harmonica in his left hand flashing brilliantly in the sunlight flooding in through the windows.

“Young sir,” said Lucius, “I am afraid that we made a deal.”
“Can’t I see him?” asked Bryce. He wiped his hand across his nose and the gesture filled Edward with a terrible feeling of love and loss. “I just want to look at him.”

Lucius Clarke sighed. “You may look,” he said. “You may look and then you must go and not come back. I cannot have you in my shop every day mooning over what you have lost.”

“Yes sir,” said Bryce.

Lucius sighed again. He got up from his workbench and went to Edward’s shelf and picked him up and held him so that Bryce could see him.

“Hey, Jangles,” said Bryce. “You look good. The last time I seen you, you looked terrible, your head was busted in and—”

“He is put together again,” said Lucius, “as I promised you he would be.”

Bryce nodded. He wiped his hand across his nose.

“Can I hold him?” he asked.

“No,” said Lucius.

Bryce nodded again.

“Tell him goodbye,” said Lucius Clarke. “He is
repaired. He has been saved. Now you must tell him goodbye.”

“Goodbye,” said Bryce.

Don’t go, thought Edward. I won’t be able to bear it if you go.

“And now you must leave,” said Lucius Clarke.

“Yes, sir,” said Bryce. But he stood without moving, looking at Edward.

“Go,” said Lucius Clarke, “go.”

Please, thought Edward, don’t.

Bryce turned. He walked through the door of the doll mender’s shop. The door closed. The bell tinkled.

And Edward was alone.
Technically, of course, he was not alone. Lucius Clarke’s shop was filled with dolls—lady dolls and baby dolls, dolls with eyes that opened and closed, and dolls with painted-on eyes, dolls dressed as queens, and dolls wearing sailor suits.

Edward had never cared for dolls. He found them annoying and self-centred, twittery and vain. This opinion was immediately reinforced by his first shelf-mate, a china doll with green glass eyes and red lips and dark brown hair. She was wearing a green satin dress that fell to her knees.

“What are you?” she said in a high-pitched voice when Edward was placed on the shelf next to her.
“I am a rabbit,” said Edward. The doll let out a small squeak. “You’re in the wrong place,” she said. “This is a shop for dolls. Not rabbits.” Edward said nothing. “Shoo,” said the doll. “I would love to shoo,” said Edward, “but it is obvious that I cannot.” After a long silence, the doll said, “I hope you don’t think that anyone is going to buy you.” Again, Edward said nothing. “The people who come in here want dolls, not rabbits. They want baby dolls or elegant dolls such as myself, dolls with pretty dresses, dolls with eyes that open and close.” “I have no interest in being purchased,” said Edward. The doll gasped. “You don’t want somebody to buy you?” she said. “You don’t want to be owned by a little girl who loves you?” Sarah Ruth! Abilene! Their names went through Edward’s head like the notes of a sad, sweet song. “I have already been loved,” said Edward. “I have been loved by a girl named Abilene. I have been loved by a fisherman and his wife and a tramp and his dog. I have been loved by a boy who played the harmonica and by a girl who died. Don’t talk to me about love,” he said. “I have known love.” This impassioned speech shut up Edward’s shelfmate for a considerable amount of time. “Well,” she said at last, “still. My point is that no one is going to buy you.” They did not speak to each other again. The doll was sold two weeks later to a grandmother who was purchasing her for a grandchild. “Yes,” she said to Lucius Clarke, “that one right there, the one with the green dress. She is quite lovely.” “Yes,” said Lucius, “she is, isn’t she?” And he plucked the doll from the shelf. Goodbye and good riddance, thought Edward. The spot next to the rabbit stayed vacant for some time. Day after day, the door to the shop opened and closed, letting in early morning sun or late afternoon light, lifting the hearts of the dolls inside, all of them thinking
when the door swung wide that this time, this time, the person entering the shop would be the one who wanted them.

Edward was the lone contrarian. He prided himself on not hoping, on not allowing his heart to lift inside of him. He prided himself on keeping his heart silent, immobile, closed tight.

I am done with hope, thought Edward Tulane.

And then one day at dusk, right before he closed the shop, Lucius Clarke placed another doll on the shelf next to Edward.
THERE YOU ARE, MILADY. MEET THE rabbit doll,” said Lucius.

The doll mender walked away, turning out the lights one by one.

In the gloom of the shop, Edward could see that the doll’s head, like his, had been broken and repaired. Her face was, in fact, a web of cracks. She was wearing a baby bonnet.

“How do you do?” she said in a high, thin voice. “I am pleased to make your acquaintance.”

“Hello,” said Edward.

“Have you been here long?” she asked.
“Months and months,” said Edward. “But I don’t care. One place is the same as another to me.”

“Oh, not for me,” said the doll. “I have lived one hundred years. And in that time, I have been in places that were heavenly and others that were horrid. After a time, you learn that each place is different. And you become a different doll in each place too. Quite different.”

“One hundred years?” said Edward.

“I am old. The doll mender confirmed this. He said as he was mending me that I am at least that. At least one hundred. At least one hundred years old.”

Edward thought about everything that had happened to him in his short life. What kind of adventures would you have if you were in the world for a century?

The old doll said, “I wonder who will come for me this time. Someone will come. Someone always comes. Who will it be?”

“I don’t care if anyone comes for me,” said Edward.

“But that’s dreadful,” said the old doll. “There’s no point in going on if you feel that way. No point at all. You must be filled with expectancy. You must be awash in hope.

You must wonder who will love you, whom you will love next.”

“I am done with being loved,” Edward told her. “I’m done with loving. It’s too painful.”

“Pish,” said the old doll. “Where is your courage?”

“Somewhere else, I guess,” said Edward.

“You disappoint me,” she said. “You disappoint me greatly. If you have no intention of loving or being loved, then the whole journey is pointless. You might as well leap from this shelf right now and let yourself shatter into a million pieces. Get it over with. Get it all over with now.”

“I would leap if I were able,” said Edward.

“Shall I push you?” said the old doll.

“No, thank you,” Edward said to her. “Not that you could,” he muttered to himself.

“What’s that?”

“Nothing,” said Edward.

The dark in the doll shop was now complete. The old doll and Edward sat on their shelf and stared straight ahead.

“You disappoint me,” said the old doll.

Her words made Edward think of Pellegrina: of
warthogs and princesses, of listening and love, of spells and
curses. What if there was somebody waiting to love him?
What if there was somebody whom he would love again?
Was it possible?

Edward felt his heart stir.

No, he told his heart. Not possible. Not possible.

In the morning, Lucius Clarke came and unlocked the
shop, “Good morning, my darlings,” he called out to them.
“Good morning, my lovelies.” He pulled up the shades on
the windows. He turned on the light over his tools. He
switched the sign on the door to OPEN.

The first customer was a little girl with her father.

“Are you looking for something special?” Lucius
Clarke said to them.

“Yes,” said the girl, “I am looking for a friend.”

Her father put her on his shoulders and they walked
slowly around the shop. The girl studied each doll care-
fully. She looked Edward right in the eye. She nodded at
him.

“Have you decided, Natalie?” her father asked.

“Yes,” she said, “I want the one in the baby bonnet.”

“Oh,” said Lucius Clarke, “you know that she is very
old. She is an antique.”

“She needs me,” said Natalie firmly.

Next to Edward, the old doll let out a sigh. She
seemed to sit up straighter. Lucius came and took her off
the shelf and handed her to Natalie. And when they left,
when the girl’s father opened the door for his daughter and
the old doll, a bright shaft of early morning light came
floodling in, and Edward heard quite clearly, as if she were
still sitting next to him, the old doll’s voice.

“Open your heart,” she said gently. “Someone will
come. Someone will come for you. But first you must open
your heart.”

The door closed. The sunlight disappeared.

Someone will come.

Edward’s heart stirred. He thought, for the first time
in a long time, of the house on Egypt Street and of Abilene
winding his watch and then bending toward him and plac-
ing it on his left leg, saying: “I will come home to you.”

No, no, he told himself. Don’t believe it. Don’t let
yourself believe it.
But it was too late.
Someone will come for you.
The china rabbit’s heart had begun, again, to open.
SEASONS PASSED, AUTUMN AND WINTER
and spring and summer. Leaves blew in through the open
door of Lucius Clarke’s shop, and rain, and the green
outrageous hopeful light of spring. People came and went,
grandmothers and doll collectors and little girls with their
mothers.

Edward Tulane waited.
The seasons turned into years.
Edward Tulane waited.
He repeated the old doll’s words over and over until
they wore a smooth groove of hope in his brain: Someone will
come. Someone will come for you.
And the old doll was right.
Someone did come.
It was springtime. It was raining. There were dogwood blossoms on the floor of Lucius Clarke’s shop.
She was a small girl, maybe five years old, and while her mother struggled to close a blue umbrella, the little girl walked around the shop, stopping and staring solemnly at each doll and then moving on.
When she came to Edward, she stood in front of him for what seemed like a long time. She looked at him and he looked back at her.
Someone will come, Edward said. Someone will come for me.
The girl smiled and then she stood on her tiptoes and took Edward off the shelf. She cradled him in her arms. She held him in the same ferocious, tender way Sarah Ruth had held him.
Oh, thought Edward, I remember this.
“Madam,” said Lucius Clarke, “could you please attend to your daughter. She is holding a very fragile, very precious, quite expensive doll.”
“Maggie,” said the woman. She looked up from the still-open umbrella. “What have you got?”
“A rabbit,” said Maggie.
“A what?” said the mother.
“A rabbit,” said Maggie again. “I want him.”
“Remember, we’re not buying anything today. We’re looking only,” said the woman.
“Madam,” said Lucius Clarke, “please.”
The woman came and stood over Maggie. She looked down at Edward.
The rabbit felt dizzy.
He wondered, for a minute, if his head had cracked open again, if he was dreaming.
“Look, Mama,” said Maggie, “look at him.”
“I see him,” said the woman.
She dropped the umbrella. She put her hand on the locket that hung around her neck. And Edward saw then that it was not a locket at all. It was a watch, a pocket watch.
It was his watch.
“Edward?” said Abilene.
Yes, said Edward.
"Edward," she said again, certain this time.

Yes, said Edward, yes, yes.

It's me.