

Momma always said there's beauty in everything. I guess that's what she had to tell herself to cope with the trials and tribulations she lived through every day. Life wasn't unbearable, but it damn sho' wasn't a field of roses, either. Momma always compared hers to dandelions. She used to say, "Weeds ain't nothing but misunderstood flowers. Where people find a bother, I find a rich sea of yellow. Dandelions deserve to get gray hairs, too."

My parents didn't have much, but they had just enough to make ends meet. Daddy worked hard to take care of the six of us. Add him and momma to the equation, and that was eight mouths he had to feed. The fourth-grade education he had didn't leave him with much intelligence to work with, but daddy was damn good with his hands. He could fix anything just by taking a decent look at it. His mind worked good that way. It worked just like that until the day he died. Unfortunately, those gray hairs momma wanted for those dandelions never got a chance to grace daddy's wooly head.

It was a shock to us when the police showed up at our door. Momma didn't want to open up for them at first. Where we come from, the police can double as the enemy. They never came around these parts unless they were trying to unpack some bad news.

"There's been an accident," is the first thing that came out of the white cop's mouth when momma opened the door. No "Hi, how are you?", "Good Afternoon, Miss," or anything like that. No pleasantries whatsoever.

"Accident?" Momma repeated, still holding a wet plate and drying rag in her hands. The six of us found a random part on momma to grab and hold. We stood around her as if she could shield us from anything. Momma gave off that tough persona. I guess now that I think about it, she had to do that. Without her bravery and strength, we would have easily fell by the wayside.

"Yes. Is your husband's name Cletus Sherwood?"