Smoke

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mammy began tuh shivah. Den, all was quiet, der was nuthin', not even a crackle fum de fire. Suddenly, mammy's head jerked up fum mah chest an' peeked ovah mah shoul-dah. De white doctah stood der, not sayin' a word, one hand in his pocket, de udder one holdin' de curtain. Den, jes quiet as hell, he began tuh nod his head up an' down, up an' down, wid both eyes starin' at de floe.

Mah mammy watched him silently, till his head stopped. Den she followed his eyes tuh de floe.

"Help me up, Jesse," she sighed, "Ah wanna see yo' pappy." She got up an' walked stiff-like to de curtain. Ah followed close behind—ah wanted to see him too.

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**Smoke**

*—John Pehrson*

Gray wisps
Rising slowly
From just-lit cigarettes
Intertwine against dark windows
In dynamic Rorschach smoke-blots,
And clashing, break quickly
Leaving cool, gray
Ashes.