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Leila Blanche Bass
Potts Creek, Virginia
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James Franklin Tingler
Life History

" I don't give a damn for anything, any more, and I don't care what people think about me and they can say what they please. I'll do as I please, too. What difference does it make what I do? It seems that everybody else 'round here does as they want to, and so will I. Nobody knows what I've went through in the last three years and before, but as long as I was dumb enough to believe what Kitty said, I was happy, and believed she was just what she ought to be. I'll tell you the truth, I didn't believe my own mother, when she told me that Kitty was not true to me when I was away at work. I thought mother was mistaken. She never did like Kitty and didn't want me to marry her. She told me then, I would live to see the day when I would wish I had never laid eyes on her. The day we was married, when I got ready to start, she followed me out, cryin' like her heart would bust, and beggin' me to let Kitty alone, but I was young, just twenty and I was crazy about that gal, and the devil his self couldn't s-stopped me. I just laughed and went on an' married my gal. I thought I knowed my own business better'n my own mother could and fer awhile we did git along fine. I had quit school when I was fourteen year old. Just because I was too mean to learn any

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thing. My dad and mother would start us youngins' out of a mornin' to go to school and I would fall behind the others and lay low 'til they was out o' sight, then I would play aroun' all day, huntin' or fishin' or just lyin' low 'til evenin' when the others would come back from school, then I would drap in with th them and go home. The other kids never told on me, fer sometimes one o' my brothers would stay out with me. I reckon I was always mean, but God knows mother and dad tried to teach me better, but I was headstrong and would'nt listen. I know now, it pays to pay attention to mother. I quit pretendin' to go to school when I was fourteen and stayed at home and helped dad to work on the farm. I liked to farm and still like it better'n anything else but I wanted more money, so when I was sixteen, I got a job on the C.&O Railroad with the section gang. I got two dollars and ninety six cents a day. I felt purty big and independent then. I could buy good clothes and dress up and go out among the gals as often as I wanted to. I give all my money to mother and dad except what I spent fer clothes and tobacco. I did'nt drink, then I had been workin' on the railroad four years when me an' Kitty was married. After that, I give my money to Kitty. I was working in West Virginia and Kitty was livin' in Alleghany county, in Virginia. I always come home on Friday night and went back on Sunday. We got along just fine fer awhile; then my people and the neighbors begun tellin' me when I come home, how Kitty had been doin', steppin' out on me. I did'nt believe a damned word

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they said, and told them so. I told 'em to 'tend to their own business and I would 'tend to mine. Kitty was purty and I knowed they was other fellers what would have give their lives to have got her, but they could'nt beat my time, so I just knowed them fellers was jealous and was just tryin' to stir up trouble with me an' Kitty. I never foun' nobody at my house when I went home an' Kitty was always gled to see me a-comin' so I never worrid about what people said. Some people just has to talk. We had been married two years when I begun to see a change in Kitty. I could'nt tell fer the life of me, what it was, but she was not lk like herself, an' my money did'nt seem to satisfy her, an' it run out too soon. She said she bought groceries with it, but I knowd she never spent all the money I give her to buy groceries with, and nobody there, but her. We never had any children. So I got to peyin' a little more attention to the way things looked at home an' I could see that she was not doin' anything at home; that is she had lost interest in keepin' a home fer me. It was all out o' order one day when I got home an' she was gone. I found out she had gone out with a Blankinship boy and had failed to vome bak before I got home. It was plain then. I could look back and see a lot o' things that I had not noticed before. I was told she had been goin' out regular, while I was away, but I was such a blind fool I could'nt see before. When Kitty come in, she told me she had to go to town for groceries and got out of it, that way.

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She pretended to be so glad I was home and fooled me agin' I was ready to fight any body that said a word about her by the time I had to go back to work. Kitty has a way o' gittin' around a feller an' makin' him believe her side of anything. Then one week-end when I went home with my pay check, expectin' to give it to Kitty to buy what ever she wanted, she was gone. I was mad as the devil, but I was hurt worser then I was mad. I did'nt want to give her up because I loved that hussy and I did'nt intend any other man to take her away from me. I stayed at home by myself. I was afraid if I went out huntin' her and found her with another man, I would go crazy and kill both of 'em, and I was ashamed to go anywhere and let people know that I was settin' at home waitin' fer Kitty to come back. I was so damned mad and so miserable I did'nt want to see nobody. My mother come to see if I was at home; she knowed where Kitty was and who she was with but I let on to her like I did'nt care where she was, but mother knowed better. She told me I had just as well give her up fer sh was no good and never would be. She told me who she went off with and how long she had been gone. But I could'nt believe it. I could'nt believe Kitty was that kind of woman. She did'nt come home that time, and I sneaked out and went back to my work with out seein' her. I heard then, that she had another man livin' in my house with her. I did'nt believe that either, but it was so. The next time I went home, she was gone again. I was home a week

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and she never showed her face. I found out she was staying at Blenkinships. After she had been there awhile, she come back when I was at home, and cryed and begged me to let her come home said she was tired of living like that and wanted to settle down and live right, with me. I was mad when she first come and thought I would run her off, but when she cryed and clung to me I took pity on her and took her right back into my home. She said she would never, never go away again. I was crazier about her than I had ever been before, and worked and felt happy. I was workin' to make a better home and better livin' for her. I put a so much confidence in her that I believed she would be happy and content. We was happy fer a year, or a little better. I never had no reason to doubt Kitty and she worked and seemed to like bein' at home. She was nice about the house and even my mother, give her credit fer doin' all right. But all at once, with no earthly reason at all, she up and started to goin' out again when I was gone. She quit goin' with Blankinship, but started to goin' with a cousin o' mine and got so damned mean and brazen that she brought him to my own house. He stsyed there while I was away. He was afraid I would come homesome day when he was not lookin' fer me, and kill the two o' 'em, and he bought him a new shot gun so he would be ready fer me. I was ready fer 'em too. Sometimes, I layed awake at night thinkin' up some way I could kill Ben. I did'nt want to kill Kitty, only when I got so

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mad, then I would o' killed 'em if I had come up with 'em any where. But when I was at myself, I only wanted to kill the onery cusses that had spoilt my home. When Kitty left with Ben she stayed away. It was'nt long 'til she was ridin' around in any man's car, that would ask her to go with him. She got worsser and worsser and now every body knows what she is, and I know what a fool she made of me, but she won't never have another chance at me. She told me she did'nt want no children because she wanted to have her good time and if she had a pack o' youngins' to her heels she would never have no time to herself. I reckon it is a God's blessin' that there was'nt any, for I don't know what would o'come of 'em. I would have liked to have a nice home and nice kids around; don't seem like a real home to me without kids and hollerin' and playthings a-layin' round. I grieved a long about Kitty fer a long time. I think the way she done hurt me worse'n if she had died, but everybody kep' a-tellin' me to let up thinkin' about her, just go out and find your self a gal, they said. I never paid no heed to 'em fer a long time, but after I kinder got used to Kitty bein' gone, I started steppin' out my self. I was awful lonesome and I had to do somethin' or go cray people said I did'nt have fer to go nohow. It was then I got to drinkin' jus' a little at a time, to kinder drown the thoughts of Kitty and to make me feel a little gay. But them drinks do get a feller to feelin' reckless like and it was'nt long 'til

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I was goin' the wrong way as fast as Kitty went, but I never would if she had been true to me. I know that's no excuse for me, but I'm jus'tellin' you what happened."

Frank is a large muscular man, six feet two, and weighs one hundred and eighty pounds. He is straight and walks with an easy swing. His height and carriage give him a striking air and with brown hair very blue eyes and an almost, too large nose he attracts attention, even when dressed in blue overalls and gray work shirt and heavy shoes. He has the appearance of a man who would have been a good husband and provider for a wife and family. Instead, he is a wanderer. He has no real home. He does not feel satisfied to stay in his father's house or with any of his people. He works for the farmers here and there, but is restless and discontented. The threads of his life have been tangled and broken until the whole pattern has been ruined. His wife is a pretty young woman of twenty six. A striking brunette. Black hair, very dark blue eyes and dark complexion. Her features are very good except the weak mouth, overdone with brilliant lipstick. She laughs too much to be sincere and there is usually a cigaret between her lips. She is rather tall but the one hundred and forty pounds of weight set off a good form and altogether Kitty presents an attractive appearance, barring a certain coarseness, hard to define. Her real name is Shirley Mae. Kitty is a pet name. Kitty has tried to get a divorce, but it has not been granted, owing to the way she has been living.

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" No, I'm not railroadin' any more now. I got so tore up I quit. I didn't have nothin' to work fer when Kitty left me. I felt like it wasn't no use to try to make money, what good was it, if I had no wife and no home? I always liked to farm and handle horses and I thought if I quit the work I had been doin' when my trouble come, it might help me to forgit, so I give up my job where I was makin good with and come back to Virginia and got work on a farm. It didn't ease my mind any, fer I was closer to Kitty and seen her every once in a while. Then all the old feelins' come back and I would hate myself because I still cared a damn about such a woman, but I caint help it. I reckon it will always be the same. I don't believe any man can marry and then separate divorce or no matter what they do, they ca'nt ever fergit." Do you believe they can?" No sir, theys no fergittin' the woman you once marry, let her be an angel or mean as the devil, you'll always remember her as bein' your wife. I'm a-goin' to git a divorce, but I aint marryin' a-gin' not me, I haint no faith in no woman, except my mother. I aint a-wantin to marry no woman, but I'll be free, in a way. The law caint handle me if I want to step out. I don't aim to harm nobody but I figger theys no use o' me actin' a hermit all the rest o' my days and let Kitty go foot loose, a-havin' her big times, an' her still my wife, too. I'll do a little steppin' too, just to show her I CAN go with other women, if I want to. I feel like

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I'd like to show her that I can get along without her, but she don't care fer nothin', If she had she would never have went off with that low down Ben. I'ts been three years now, since she went. Oh, its no use fer me to pretend I don't care fer I do, and I get so mad at myself I don't know what to do. Theys nothin' right in this old world nohow, and I just say ---DAMN, DAMN, DAMN everything and see if I care."