

## *Excerpt from The Road from Money*

*Author, Sylvester Boyd Jr.*

### *Chapter 5*

# He Shot Her!

Estella was shocked for the second time that day. *How could this happen? And why? It was always the same answer....because the South was just that way. So what if it was just another Negro dead in the South.* Once again, tears streamed down her face, as her grandfather and brother boarded the wagon. In silence, Paul turned the wagon around, and together the family rode on back to Money. The only sound came from Julia, who kept sighing, “Why, dear Lord? Why?”

Four days later it happened to be Sunday. It was also going to be the day of Mandy’s funeral. Paul had taken his sister’s body to the undertaker the night she was shot. Now the family dressed and ate quietly. Julia stood at the kitchen window, looking out to see a grey cloudy sky, “Sometimes I think some people have no feelings,” she said in a soft voice.

Paul answered, “They can take someone’s life, like it ain’t nothin’!”

“Lord have mercy....when will all this stop,” Julia asked with tears in her eyes. Estella knew there was nothing else to say.

“Y’all better be getting ready; Reverend Lockwood goin’ to start the service early today,” Paul told them.

As the family rode to the church, Estella continued to think about how Mandy had been killed. As the family filed into the church, Paul added, “I don’t want to go in...but I got to.”

Standing at the coffin, Julia said, “She look so peaceful.”

A few minutes later everyone took a seat in the pews near the front of the church, as Reverend Lockwood walked past the coffin and up to the pulpit, saying, “Let the service begin.” Everyone was shocked—there was a big smile on his face.

“I know you think this smile on my face is out of place on such a sad day. But today is not a day to be sad. It is a day to be glad. Our Sister Mandy is at peace. I am smiling because she ain’t goin’ to pick cotton in the hot sun no mo! She ain’t goin to be disrespected no mo! She ain’t goin’ to be poor no mo! She ain’t goin to say ...yes ma’am and yes sir, no mo because of the color of someone’s skin no mo! She ain’t goin’ to see no mo Negroes hanging from a tree! If only our world would be a place of peace, love, respect, and understanding. ‘cause Sister Mandy is in a place of peace and love!”

Everyone nodded, knowing the reverend was right, and suddenly Paul and his family felt at peace too. The reverend motioned for the choir to sing another hymn as the coffin was carried out the church’s front doors and to the small cemetery behind the church. As the four men gently lowered the coffin into the ground, the reverend said a prayer. Just as he finished, the sun came from behind the clouds, filling the sky with light. Pointing to the sky, Reverend Lockwood said, “Sister Mandy just got a new home!”

*Excerpt from The Road from Money*

*Author, Sylvester Boyd Jr.*

**Chapter 19**

**PaPa's Lesson**

For the next few hours, as the sun began to set in the sky, Paul and Estella sat on the front steps of the small shack, talking about the test she had taken for Mrs. Williams, and the upcoming graduation.

“You know when you told me you wanted to go to school in Greenwood, I didn't know how good you would do but, I knew you could do anything you tried to do. You always asking why this and why that, so I know you needed good schoolin'.”

“But Papa, I still don't know why Negroes get treated the way we do.”

Paul knew it was time to help his granddaughter learn an important life lesson, he replied,

*“I think that's 'cause some people think they better than other people 'cause they skin ain't the same color. Some people make lots of money off working Negroes hard and they pay 'em very little. I know this; the bottom today, goin' be the top tomorrow. You must keep goin' to school; 'cause good schooling can take you places that Negroes ain't ever seen. Remember there is good and bad in all of us--no one is all good or all bad. When you on top, you can always fall; and when you on the bottom, ain't no place to go but up. When you ain't got but a little bit, try to make it go as far as you can; waste not, want not. Always respect other people, even the ones you don't like. Keep your head high even when things ain't goin your way and times be hard. One last thing I'm goin' tell you: love and respect for yourself and others will carry you far.”*

Estella smiled at her grandfather; he was so smart, and she loved him with all her heart. Looking up, she was surprised to see the setting sun. They had talked for a long time. She would always remember all the things her grandfather had told her.

☆☆ **Book Reviews** ☆☆

**John Cox – Midwest Book Review – September 7, 2014** *“Although a work of fiction, it is a story that has deep factual roots in the African American experience. Superbly crafted from beginning to end, **The Road from Money: A Journey to Find Why?** is as thoughtful and thought-provoking as it is solidly entertaining throughout making it very highly recommended for personal reading lists and community library general fiction collections.”*

**Joan Adamak – Book Reviews Blog by Joan - June 22, 2014** *“A type of quiet segregation still exists. The conditions in the South after the Civil War, causing much more suffering because of northern carpet baggers, as so aptly portrayed in “Gone With the Wind,” created havoc on both southern Whites and Blacks, but the Blacks took the biggest brunt of it as time passed, as is so forthrightly displayed in the above historical novel. The events and experiences are based on those of a real Black woman, Estelle, in Money, Mississippi, who at age eight realized the unfairness of the quality of life for a Black when compared to a White person.*

**Cynthia Robinson, Chicago, IL -- June 8, 2014** *“The Road from Money” is a simple, yet compelling book, that keeps its readers' spellbound while reading about its' character, “Estella Reynolds”. I recommend you read this book, however be prepared to not be able to put down this page turner. This book has dynamic energy and it has expanded my thinking and knowledge on how growing up as an African American in Americas deep south was at the start of the 20th century. Be prepared to be hungry for more! I am on edge waiting for more, can't wait for Book 2!!*

## *Excerpt from The Road from Money*

*Author, Sylvester Boyd Jr.*

### *Chapter 20*

## Some Kind of Day

Mrs. Williams turned and walked to the front of the room. "Please be seated!" she shouted. The room had been noisy with people talking; now it became quiet as people took their seats to hear Mrs. Williams' commencement speech. You could hear a pin drop.

*"Welcome, all of you. This is a great day--a day that until recently was not possible because just sixty-eight years ago, we Negroes became free to go to school, to live and work as free people. Just sixty-eight years ago, the Civil War came to an end after Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves. In this room, some of our grandparents were slaves. Today they are proud of you because you know how to read, write, do arithmetic, and know how to use good English. You are graduating eighth grade, something none of your grandparents and few of your parents have been able to do.*

*Remember as you move on with your life to always respect everyone, because everyone wants to be respected. Respect others even when they don't respect you. Don't do something to others you would not want done to you. Be proud of yourselves, but remember you did not get here by yourselves. Always keep your heads high even when others try to make you put it down. Learn as much as you can all of your life. Give love to others, even when they don't know to show you love. Last but not least, remember skin color is on the outside and tells one nothing about what's on the inside. I am very proud of each and every one of you--now go out and show the world who you are."*

The whole room erupted with loud applause that went on and on. Estella thought that much of what Mrs. Williams was saying sounded much like what her mother and grandpa taught her. Always help others; you know how to read and write, and if you know someone who can't, then help them to learn. The applause stopped when Mrs. Williams put her arms into the air, saying, "Thank you, thank you." At last the room became quiet once more.