

“What could I prove? I asked myself as I looked into a pile of trash next to my bed. And from that trash, glistening like some mysterious jewel, I spotted the invitation to Garland’s birthday party. Was I too late? Had it already passed? I grabbed the invitation and re-read it. I was not too late. The party was Saturday. Three days away. It was my only chance to see Garland Sousley face to face. Should I go? I would mean facing a hundred Uncle Buds: a room full of Midwestern men of my father’s generation who knew me, who knew my life story, men who had judged me not like Uncle Bud but like W.T. Sousley. These men hated me. Could I walk into their midst to question the oldest and most respected of them as to his associations with an old queer Negro?”