From When Rap Spoke Straight to God

At a bar, a man says Love the hair, says it's the best hair, baby.

I'm Republican but would totally go liberal for you.

At a gas station, a man's *Damn girl, those tits* knocks me into the pump and I, too, can be machine. Shudder. Waiting for use. Tick.

Queue.

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When I was young, in our basement, where Africa hung on the wall, my parents danced to Isaac Hayes's

Hot Buttered Soul. I insisted its real name, Hot Monkey Love, was better. Lil' bit racist.

It happens. So I tell myself.

One time, Dad tried to race a smoke on the side of the house he thought we couldn't see, maybe hoping the wind would wash off the smell of a cop's night shift, maybe refill the sockets of his knocked-out teeth.

That's when I realized that breath was white.

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Between my legs, the eve of day's coming darkness stained with a word sounding something like a destination—

When did we get to nigger? Just how far is it to nigger?

Here.