

W. CROFT 6/21/1974

SIDE A

Let's just start with as far back as you remember.

^{One of} ~~early~~
 My first memories of ~~Hastings~~ was that my Father took me ~~on~~
~~Hastings, which is~~ a few blocks from ^{where we are now.} ~~here.~~ He ~~took me to a place~~
~~near where his record shop had been.~~ I was a little girl, about
 3 or 4. ⁵⁷⁻⁵⁸ ~~It wasn't year at that time.~~ He walked me across the
 street from the place that we were, over to this gigantic pit
 that was in the ground. It looked like a canyon to me. It was a
 gigantic dirt pit. He looked at me and said "Ling Ting Tong
 [which was my nickname], this ^{was} ~~is where~~ Hastings used to be." All
 my life ~~I didn't know what that was as a little girl,~~ I just had
 this memory of this pit. As I got older I realized that what
~~that was~~ was the initial diggings for the I-75 ^(Chrysler) freeway. ^{And what} My
 father so ^{dramatically} ~~graphically~~ understood ^{his statement,} with ~~that~~ sentence, was that a
 way of life had been totally destroyed by the Chrysler freeway.
 The street of Hastings just no longer existed. ~~His record shop~~
~~had been at Mack and Hastings, right down the street.~~ That is
^a ~~the first~~ memory that is very graphic to me.

I was born in 1954. My father had a record shop. He was a
 man by the name of Joe ^{von BATTLE.} ~~Von Bell.~~ He had a record shop at 3530
 Hastings. One of the reasons that I also know the address is
 because he also made a record called "3530 Hastings". He didn't
 actually sing but had someone record it. ~~for him.~~

X (Not the record about the bars on Hastings? That was your father!

Yes. He also produced a record called the Hastings Street Jump that talked about the different life or something. ^{on Hastings}

There's one about the different bars. It goes from one bar to another. It includes Sonny Wilson's and the longest bar in the world. Was that his?

Maybe. I don't have copies but other people do.

tape cuts

I can't confirm the origin of these records - or if they are all the same.

My father ~~had the record shop and had developed~~ ^{started} the record shop after WWII. He had come up from Macon, GA and had worked at a number of odd jobs which a lot of people did before the war. A lot of blacks were blocked totally out of ^{large scale} ~~normal~~ production work. He worked at Eastern Market, a gas station, things like that. My father had always been an audiophile. He had always been a record collector. I remember him telling me that when he was young in Georgia he would ~~try to~~ sell records from a wheel barrel. This was in the days of "race" music. These were the days when there was no ^{overall} knowledge of the legitimacy of black music. It was just these separate "race" labels, ~~that made~~ ^{the} the record companies kind of "ghettoize" a section of their record company for this ^{"jump"} ~~"junk"~~ music as it was ^{sometimes} called a lot. He was always a record collector.

^{nothing} ~~After~~ the war, he had worked in war production ^a ~~factories~~. ^{factory}

He was in the area of Mack and Hastings. ^{I understand that} An old Jewish lady had a candy store that ~~she~~ ^{or} was either closing or going out of business. Through one thing ~~and~~ ^{or} another, he got this store in which

to do business. My father ~~was an extremely flamboyant personali-~~ ~~ty.~~ He was a brilliant person and flamboyant, ^{in his early years;} ~~very high profile,~~

high energy and busy. I imagine that he was very enthusiastic about this possibility of a record shop. Particularly where there weren't many places where you could buy black music in

Detroit. There were ~~really no such thing as~~ ^{very few} record shops as today there are ~~no such things as~~ ^{very few} record shops. ^{many of} ~~The~~ ^{independent, more pop} record shops

are gone now because the big major chains have assimilated the small shops quite a bit. It has gone through a cycle. ^{For} At that

^{AS WELL} time, there were ~~no~~ ^{few independent} record shops, ~~as we knew them.~~ He opened the shop selling ~~black music: rock 'n roll,~~ ^{AND GOSPEL} rhythm and blues. He

was also very interested in the production of music. I don't know where he got this knack for the reproduction of music. I think it must have been ^{somewhat enhanced} ~~due~~ to the technology after the war.

After ~~every~~ ^a ~~was~~ ^{le} ~~situation~~ there are ^{Sometimes} ~~always~~ technological breakthroughs that filter down into normal life. I'm sure that re-

recording became one of those breakthroughs. It became more accessible. He began to record in this record shop. Hastings was always a place where there was a lot of entertainers, entertain-

ment, singers that always came through the bars and the clubs. My father was the first person to record a lot of ^{FAMOUS} ~~people~~ because

there was nowhere else they could be recorded. I can remember when I was a little girl, the artists would be fascinated by the reproduced sound of their own voices. This was in the ~~early~~

1950's. This was pre-Motown. It would be a big deal to go to Joe's record shop and have your voice recorded. Sometimes he would let kids in the neighborhood do it. It was a big thing. This went on for some time and he became very successful. There were very few record shops; ~~he wasn't the only one~~ In particular, very few in this area where blacks were congregated-around Hastings and Brewster, ~~and this area here~~. He became very popular as the place you bought records in that area. ~~he was open almost all night long~~. ^{Sometimes} He always played records out of ^a the loud speaker of the record shop so you could hear ^{the} music ^{out of the street} ~~as things went on~~. I can remember people like John Lee Hooker being at the record shop. Even local ~~news~~ people such as Washboard Willie--I always remember him. I thought that was so crazy that a man would play a washboard.

My father was ^{Also} a song writer. He wrote a lot of music but mostly was involved in the production of music. He was a very strong figure at that time. ~~He~~ was one of the first blacks to independently produce ^{urban black} music. ~~it~~ had not really been done on a large scale before. Before the "race" music was done ^{as} sometimes subsidiary labels. There were ~~small~~ labels out of the South. There has always been black music recorded. He was one of the first here to try to do it on a large scale professionally and to try to get this music out. That went along for a period of time and he became quite prominent during that time of the mid to late 1950's. He was in ^{SEPIA} ~~CPM?~~ magazine which was comparable to Ebony magazine. He was in the Michigan chronicle as one of the best dressed men in Detroit. He was a profile around town and always

involved in ~~the~~ music and entertainment.

~~It is~~ ^{A significant thing that} what happened is that ^{the} Rev. C.L. Franklin had a church in the area and was already known for his extraordinary preaching skills. People would just flock to his church to hear him preach. He was an institution already in the 1950's. My father had heard about Rev. Franklin, they were all in the same neighborhood, and approached him and asked if he could record these sermons. This was something that had not been done on any wide scale. ~~Some actual sermons had been reproduced but not on the level that this was being done.~~ Even at that time it was rare that someone had a tape recorder. This was in the days of the big reel-to-reel tapes.

My father had his own record label. His gospel label was called Battle, which was his last name. ^{JVB} ~~JBB~~ was also a record label. ^{VON} ~~Don~~ was a record label. He produced rhythm and blues on those labels as well. He was in a ^{an} ~~leasing~~ arrangement of some kind with Chess records in Chicago.

I remember when they began to record Rev. Franklin's sermons. This was the first time they were formally recorded although Rev. Franklin had been on the radio prior to that. This was the first time ^{that the sermons} they would be able to be bought. They would play these sermons on the large speakers and more than once had to call the police to break up the crowds that could gather to hear Rev. Franklin preach. It was amazing. Rev. Franklin's impact is really something. There is a story to be told about his ^{me} as well. It has always been kind of strange for me growing up with in this environment of my father's business and his talent. He was a conduit for other people. I took for granted

that my father was on the radio. I was always in the middle of these personalities coming by the house, playing music in the back yard. I called my father's record shop one time after it was on 12th Street, just to speak to Daddy and Stevie Wonder answered the phone! That was how I grew up. ^{but} he wasn't famous per se in his own right, ~~which is why~~ I want to ^{tell} have his story, ~~told.~~

Elaine talks about telling the stories of the people who weren't famous and how they are important. The people who aren't going to have their stories told are the people who really made history... .

A lot of that early history is on Hastings. There is a tendency to treat Hastings as ^{only} a night life area because people gravitate to the ^{stories} ~~stores~~ regarding the bars. ^{AND NIGHT CLUBS} In fact it was a major ~~center of the~~ community. It was where business ^{es} were. Over a period of time many blacks began to buy into or take over the ~~Jewish~~ storefronts. They began to work there and own grocery stores and businesses, cleaners, shoe shine places. ^{THERE IS A} ~~We have a~~ tendency to glamorize black history into ^{AN EXOTIC} a Harlem Renaissance kind of picture of black life. Everybody does not go to night-clubs. People go to work every day. They always did. People go to the grocery store. You have to be careful to get some balance because this glamorization of history can trivialize our history ~~into~~ "Hastings was a bunch of bars". The Eastern market was a very central place at that time. It was ^{it} a place like now for subur-

banites ^{AND YUPPIES} to come and ~~taste of the fruits of~~ ^{experience the atmosphere of} Detroit. It was ^{just} the place where people shop. ^{PEO} At that time the Eastern market was a central, ^{basic} part. There is a very old friend of my family that has just recently deceased, 90 something years old. He owned a grocery store on Hastings street for years and years. His name was Ollie ^{Ouff} Smith. He had gone to ^{Tuskegee University and had known} school with George Washington Carver and ^{had been} ~~was one of his students~~. Because of segregation and ~~the enclosure of people in that area~~, there were so many people who were very, very talented who made up the backbone of that community. This is why people must be careful in talking about Hastings ^{only} as a place where all the "players" ^{were} were. That's nonsense. That's an aspect of life, as the social aspect is always an aspect of any life. You had peopled who were degreed people who owned the grocery stores because they could not assimilate into the ^{larger, white} normal society. These pillars of the community were all over ^{the community}. You can also glamorize the close-knittedness they talk about now. It was a real community. The reason I think it is described as ^{unusually} close-knit ^{today} is because it ^{has become} ~~is almost of as if it~~ is impossible to conceive of a "normal" black community today because of ^{media and the} ~~the~~ destructions ^{of} in the community. So ^{it} ~~that~~ was just a ~~normal~~ community of a people that lived in a certain area, were all a part of the infrastructure, had their social roles, teachers, post people there. All of these people were in this one community. Whether it was close knit or not, you can say that for lack of any better way to describe it but it was a ~~normal~~ community. It was also coming to be a very prosperous community because you had a number of black business people that had been in the trench ^{es} for many years. They had serviced that

community and were becoming what one could call affluent. This is one reason ~~throughout the history of~~ ^{that} Hastings, in retrospect, people talk about how Hastings was destroyed purposefully. That has always been the scuttlebutt within the community. The white ^{Power structure} man decided to get rid of Hastings because that community was becoming too strong. That it was a way that blacks were able to function properly.

This is why I always remember my father and that pit. Here was this scar that used to be Hastings, that was an entire community of life. I can remember that we used to go visit an older Jewish man called the mad Russian, why ^{they call him that} I don't know. He was an older guy, a real kermudgeon type. He was a record wholesaler. ^{For a while} ~~long~~ after Hastings was gone his little store still stayed.

There are still some storefronts left right there. On Hastings and Mack. My father picked up ~~his~~ records wholesale there and ^{Sold} sell them. I remember visiting him. He was part of that community for many years.

~~Hastings over a period of time, . . . People now remember,~~

These are not my memories, ^{but other people} remember, when the rumors began that they were going to put a freeway through Hastings. It was laughed off by a lot of people. When the media berates Coleman Young about ^{saying} ~~these~~ ^{white} people want to take back Detroit, that is the same thing that happened to Hastings. People ^{would} began to say, they're going to get rid of us here and people would laugh at it. When they look back at that they ^{know} ~~feel the truth~~ that this area was totally demolished for this freeway. You understand what the role of freeway development does to these communities. ~~It's very~~

It

~~purposeful~~ and totally destroys the infrastructure of the people in that area because of the disbursement that takes place. ~~The disbursement of Hastings, a lot of that took place on 12th Street.~~ After that period of time, I don't personally know what went on when my father moved, how it took place. My actual memories were on 12th Street. My father's record shop moved from Hastings to 12th. ~~It was a migration that took place.~~ I remember how many people were still familiar from Hastings. It was like a migration of a people from one section of a country to another. They still had ^{some of} the same businesspeople. ^{many} They had moved to 12th Street to try to re-implant their businesses in the community. ^{but} Of course, something is lost in that sort of major transition.

What was happening on 12th Street that it could accommodate that influx.

~~This is my political analysis of it.~~ Interspersed in all of this is real estate turnover and money. When you talk about the destruction of a city you have to be more sophisticated than to talk only about crack cocaine. You're talking about ~~the~~ ^{property} ~~economic fabric~~ ^{of the city} being turned over and over ⁱⁿ ~~by~~ real estate ^{transactions and} speculation. By a lot of stuff that is going on behind the scenes determining where these people are going. Because with every forced migration of blacks out of one community, there opens up another major community because of the ^{real estate} speculation that takes place. ~~it generally has been said that we follow the Jews but I don't like that.~~ What happens is that the real estate turns

over. Another area is opened up for those that precede us. They move further west. We move in to supplant those businesses but there is always a mixture there. There is always a mixture during the transition. There were always Jews, Slavic peoples that were also store owners. Then you had the blacks who had the various different businesses. It's more like, there's money crossing hands underneath. I don't mean illegal.

There is a dynamic that is taking place that is more than what it appears to be in order to accommodate major moves from one area to another.

There are a whole lot of people who are profiting from all this.

Oh yes. This is where these crocodile tears come from people who "just can't understand what happened to Detroit but they've made all their money in real estate. ~~You have to be careful listening~~

~~to these people~~ There was money to be made. It's not just financial, it's also psychological in terms of ^{the} turnovers. The physiogamy of the city, how it sets itself up from one area to another. When the Hastings break-up took place, there was ~~some disbursement to the East side~~. Some of the business community went to the West side. It was almost like people who come from down south feeling comfortable up north still because they are around people that they know from the south. That was the dynamics from Hastings to 12th. Not just 12th Street but that whole neighborhood: Virginia Park, Claremont, that whole strip. I remember my grandmother telling me prior to the 1950's wanting to buy a house on ~~Claremont~~. She had saved her money diligently and

CLAREMONT.

was told that the ^{white} neighborhood there was very concerned about her buying a house there and ^{that} there was going to be trouble. They encouraged her to find another place to live. She refused to do so. They came to her with an offer not only to return the money she had bought but to give her the asking money to buy another house in order to get out of there. ^{so} She ~~did~~ moved to ^{the} Conant Gardens area. It was prior to the 1950's. ^{That} It will show you just ^{what} the racial composition of ~~that same area just before that~~. ^{the CLAIMANT AREA WAS THEN.} The turnover was ~~pretty~~ immense.

The record shop was on 12th Street. I was about 10 years old. I used to work there every weekend. ^{AND DURING THE SUMMER.} My older half-brother, ^{Joe was Battle Jr.} always worked ^{at} and ~~was the proprietor for sometime of the record shop on Hastings. He's very knowledgeable on Hastings and grew up on Brewster.~~ By the time the shop got to 12th street, 12th too was a normal community. I remember a restaurant called the Cream of Michigan. it was like a focal point. It was a big deal to go there on Sunday mornings. ~~You'd see people all dressed from church going there to eat.~~ My memories are of Saturday night on 12th Street because the record shop would stay open very late. It was intense night life. This was from a child's eyes: seeing big cars and convertibles and sharp men. It was very exciting. My father never feared me standing right outside the record shop and watching. He never feared that something bad would happen to me. ^{In about 1965} ~~During that period,~~ I remember having a heightened sense of consciousness about the influx of drugs. ^{in the AREA.} ~~For the first time, drugs were a part of my consciousness. Drugs were in the area.~~ ^{consciously} This also coincided with the black movement that was developing. The Black Panther party had opened an

office in that area. This is the early 1960's. I remember that this was creating the condition so that there were ^{more} people that you thought might rob you. Because the society had been broken up from Hastings, that same familiar ^{NEIGHBORHOOD} infrastructure was gone.

Do you have any notion why drugs started to prevail? Do you have an opinion?

Oh yeah. On the one hand, it's a social pacifier. On the other hand, addiction is a disease. There is a balance in between that. you can't force people to be addicts. Addiction is a disease process. The environments which people live in can encourage addictive behavior, addictive disease processes to flourish.

And also encourage pacifying.

Oh yes. During that period, this is when the black consciousness was beginning to raise. During the early 1960's.

Part of it can be that when somebody starts to see the reality but feels powerless to have any effect on the reality, the tendency is to escape, very often.

Because they can't accept the powerlessness.

I know in many situations, when you deny your own problem, in any

situation, while you're denying it, you cope. But once that period after denial but before solution, that's when someone is in the most danger because they see the problem but they're incapable of dealing with it and they're terrified. Maybe we're talking about that feeling.

Yes, but I'm careful about talking about addiction as a social phenomenon, although it is. . . . (tape cuts)

(tape back on). . . which gave him his extraordinary flamboyancy and drive but he self-destructed toward the end. But that is something that I want to deal with my self in terms of how I record that.

12th Street seemed to me as a kid to be very exciting. We sold a lot of records. My father's record shop had a regular pop and rhythm & blues section and then it had a gospel section. he always specialized in gospel music. People would always come in, they wanted a record by ^{ALJ.} James Cleveland or Rev. C.L. Franklin. Then I remember his record shop was always filled with recording junk and tapes. Tapes of people who had been recorded over a course of 20 years. Just a lot of stuff all the time. My father developed this real hatred against Sears and Roebucks as an expression of the major chains. In other words, white society was beginning to get a piece of this black music for the first time. They were beginning to understand the marketability of black music. It drove him crazy that a person could now go to Sears and pay 75 cents or whatever a 45 was, and buy a record. That had never been true before. ^{black} He had the resentment of a person who thought "what are you all interested in our stuff now

for?". He didn't like that. He was right. ^{but} That is the course of capital, the big ones eat up small ones, regardless of the color.

Then you had Motown that had developed simultaneously with my father. My father ^{became} was very stubborn ^{AND OLD FASHIONED} and would only record Negro music, blues, gospel whereas Barry Gordy was taking a different track. He understood the new wave or marketability of ^{pop} that music. I know that they knew one another ^{early on} and were ^{freely} competitors of a sort. Until Barry Gordy just out-stripped everybody and left everybody in the dust with what he was doing. My father's record shop wasn't that far away from the Boulevard which is where Motown was. ^{Daddy's Shop at} It was ^{12th AND P. N. ST. E} at 12th and Philadelphia. For a time it was at Euclid ^(not sure).

Over a period of time, the influence of his record shop became less and less. ~~Because of the development of Motown, which I'm sure caused my father a little chagrin. I'm sure in the early days of Motown they cooperated with one another. Also~~ Because of the mainstreaming of black music. You could just go anywhere now. ^{to buy it.} There was a time when people would come from out of town to the shop because there was no place to get this music. People would mail order records. I have copies of letters of peoples who would want a record of Rev. Franklin and had to write from Georgia to get it.

~~I can remember that one day in July 1967, we woke up and my family lived in Highland Park. We grew up there which is a few miles from 12th Street. We could look over the trees and we saw these clouds of black smoke coming from 12th Street. We also had~~

My family lived in Highland Park, which is a few miles from 12 Street.

I can remember that one day in July 1967, we woke up AND

begun to hear these news reports that something was happening over there. Daddy knew that there was something really brimming over there. He had been at the record shop ^{the night before} and it was a really situation developing. In the early parts of the riot, the first day, it seemed like kind of a fight that might be contained somehow. It was like some bad stuff happening but it would blow over. I remember the tension during that time and my father conjuring up this bravado that he would be OK, that they weren't going to bother his record shop. It was like all of life shut down during those days, normal ~~life~~ ^{life} didn't go on anymore. Everybody was watching television. Everybody was really intense about ~~what~~ ^{that} this thing was going on over on 12th Street. Older people remembered the race riots on Belle Isle in the 1940's. All of them knew that this was not a race riot. My Daddy would always say that this "ain't no race riot". The news kept saying ^{that} ~~this~~ was a race riot developing. He knew it wasn't because there were white people in the tumult ^{alongside} ~~with~~ the black people. In a way, that was one of my first experiences with how the media projects what they want. I was about 13. It was so clear to my own eyes and everyone who I knew, ~~know~~ ^{that there were} the white people were out there looting too. But they kept saying it was a race riot. Not to say that the racial tensions didn't exist, but it wasn't black against white. It was like the propertied against the non-propertied. This cloud of smoke was continuing to develop over the horizon, it was getting bigger and bigger. My dad, after his first day, kind of closed down the record shop day thinking that the police would contain this thing and it would all blow over. Then he said that he was going to get one of those signs that said "Soul

it wasn't
black against
white per
.se, AN

Brother" and put it on his shop so that they wouldn't bother him.
I remember ^{being Amused} ~~teasing him~~ about that because he was like an old school, older black that didn't like to be called black, didn't believe in this Soul Brother stuff and here he was going to put up a Soul Brother sign to save his record shop. Then my father decided after about the second day that he better take a pistol over there. He took a pistol over there and sat in the doorway and like dared anybody to come in there. But ~~as~~ the riot began to move closer, ^I In the meantime we were watching it on TV but we were ourselves involved in it because this is our father's livelihood. ~~This is how we eat.~~ I think in a lot of accounts you hear the ^{stories} ~~accounts~~ of people who were either a part of the disturbance or had people die, but we had kind of an odd vantage point in that we were outside and in it at the same time. Watching it on TV and knowing that this was something that intimately involved our life. Maybe other kids in ^{our} ~~the~~ neighborhood were just watching on TV but we knew that Daddy's lifeline was here, that this thing was getting closer and closer. Even me at that time beginning to get a little bit of black consciousness, I had this real divided feeling because I knew that those black people were doing this for a reason. That there was something wrong with the way that they were living for them to feel this strongly. To want, to be compelled, to trash this area the way that it happened. I almost felt a little embarrassed: had my father done anything wrong to cause this? ^{But} ¹ Really he was just a store owner in the midst of all of this. As the days went on, it became obvious that his record shop was going to be caught up in

the conflagration.

~~this too~~. The tension in the house kind of built. He knew that he could not save ^{his shop} ~~this thing~~.

In the meantime, the National Guard was stationed across the street from our house. We lived in Highland Park ^{in a neighborhood} ~~in California~~ which at that time was a ^{very} idyllic place. In a way I had these two dichotomous lives. One was at home in Highland Park

and the other ^{one} was on 12th Street which was a very high activity business district and nightlife. Then here is my nice ^{big} ~~little~~ home in Highland Park. One day we looked up and here was this army across the street. They were stationed at this motel that was across the street. I remember when the National Guard were out there and walking ^{on the balconies of the motel.} ~~down the street~~. I was kind of a young girl and have always had these visions of ^{soldiers that} ~~what~~ you see in the movies. It was just like a movie: the army goes into an area and you're the natives. ^{But there} ~~It~~ was a ^{also a} bizarre feeling that they're supposedly here to protect you but you kind of know that they might kill you too. I walked down the street one morning, and here were what ~~appeared to be~~ ^{with} soldiers. ~~They would have~~ their weapons and stuff. It like a conquering army in a way. It was real weird to experience that here you have this kind of idyllic life and look up to see the army right in your ^{front} ~~back~~ yard. They were off duty at the time they were stationed there so they ^{would} be milling around, waiting for orders, drinking pops. I walked down the street to wave at them-just like in the movies. I will never forget my mother snatching me back and saying "Get over here." I've never been so ^{surprised} ~~scared~~ in my life, ^{But I guess} ~~because~~ my mother understood. Here were the people that were here to save her husband's livelihood but she feels compelled to keep me protected from them

with the beautiful houses, trees and lawns in Highland Park,

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because she also understands that they might bring me harm. That's something else. Of course, a lot of things did happen to just regular people that happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time.

After a period of days, my father would continue to go back and forth through the area. It had been cordoned off and ^{sort of} ~~like~~ evacuated after a certain point. He was very distressed about that because he couldn't see after his ^{record shop} ~~property~~. I think he had to have special dispensation to go into the area if he could at all. As the tail end of the riot, Daddy took my ^{me,} brother and ^{Sister} myself (there are 4 children and I'm the oldest of my father's second family) to look at the record shop. He just said "Oh Lord". ~~What had happened was~~ ^I it was like being in a war zone. I had never seen a lot of glass like that in the street. Glass was all over the street. The record shop was just torn apart, stuff was everywhere. ~~I believe that there must have been~~ ^{There was} a lot of damage. It wasn't burnt down as he had feared but had been totally looted. He had tapes that he had had for a generation just destroyed. It was like his whole life's work had been destroyed. I remember that feeling of witnessing my father witness that. Of seeing your own father that powerless over a situation that had taken place. The chaos of it because ^{of the smoke,} firemen were still running about and guardsmen running around. I think back how strange it is that in fact we ^{had} experienced a war situation for that period of time and I witnessed what ^{war} ~~it~~ must have been like. After that ~~my mother says that~~ he reopened the shop for a time. He was able to somehow pull it together but it never did flourish

after that. He ended up losing it ^{Some time} shortly after that. ~~He never~~
~~could get back together.~~ ^{AND HE WAS NEVER THE SAME.} There ~~was~~ ^{was} nothing left. I ~~don't know~~
~~how my mother remembers that because I don't see how.~~ It could
~~have only been days.~~ It was like ^a full circle in a way. It was
almost as if Hastings was destroyed from the outside and 12th was
destroyed from the inside. Because it was external forces that
caused a freeway to be built at Hastings, ~~but it no outside forces~~
~~imposed on 12th to destroy it.~~ ^{AND EXTERNAL} It was if the conditions were set
up for the people ~~inside~~ ^{inside} to destroy ~~it~~ 12th street.

I've heard in that area, the city also wanted to destroy that
area. That they indeed ignite something that was a small inci-
dent.

I'm trying to be diplomatic. It was just a party.

Just dealing with human dynamics, you can't always attribute
conspiratorial ^{motives} ~~things~~ to human events. Sometimes things just
happen. ^{but} I do know that things can be encouraged to happen when
it fits certain interests. I do know the way that they have
compelled the migrations over time. They're various forms of
things happening that cause migrations outward. Part of the
crack epidemic to me is that. ^{It has resulted in a clearing of} ~~It's a way to clear out~~ land.

When I look at areas that a person unfamiliar with Detroit would
see as total bomb zones, I remember when these areas were just
nice neighborhoods. I also see over a period of time how this
land and property becomes, . . . They set up the conditions so
that you will beg them to do what they wanted to do in the first
place. ~~Allow~~ ^{is allowed} a situation to develop in a neighborhood so that

eventually

the neighbors are begging you to tear down houses. Over a period of time ^{CERTAIN NEIGHBORHOODS ARE DECIMATED} you clear all the property out and when ^{the property values become} it's very cheap developers come in and snatch it all up. I don't want to be ~~rigidly~~ conspiratorial about it but there are certain ^{situations} trends that do exist. There people are always so busy on the news doing all these exposes of stuff but they only touch on these things like arson for hire.

It's hard for me to separate my story from what I feel about what was happening here. I have opinions about what is happening.

(. . . This has really been great. You don't know how helpful you've been. You've also given me some questions to ask other people. . . .

You could tell a whole story about the riots this way. Whenever the news does a commemorative story about the riots they do it real safe. They never get down to these kind of thing that people know to be true as far as what was going on behind this. It's more that it appears to be: why it was contained in a certain way on the East side. There happened what has always been called a mini riot prior to the big riot, on Kercheval. That was ~~within the year, maybe~~ the summer before.

I even wonder if that wasn't the beginning of a shift in the media coverage. I think that was a low point that took place in terms of the way they were going to handle race relations, how they would structure the city, what determined where the next

freeway went in. The next one was the Jeffries and broke up that area that had moved from 12th over to the west side. Every time, something has been lost. Every single time you lose the family times that exist. From Hastings you had the generations that had come from the South and now had a generation or two there and a community of people that kept discipline in the community, kept the kids paddles properly. 12th you lose a part of that because you lose the familiarity of people. It's like something is gone in every one of these transitions. Another migration takes place and breaks it up a little more.

END OF TAPE