



Wild Thing: Aggie's Legacy (Wild Things Book 1)

Peggy Poe Stern

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Wild Thing: Aggie's Legacy, (Peggy's 8th novel, a tall tale) 106,711 words, 367 pages (paperback)

The Church of Sodom members took turns raising Aggie, an abandoned child. The deformed girl disappeared one day at the age of twelve.

Excerpt from Chapter 2:

The mountain was scary for a child alone. Animals were maundering on a warm summer night and Aggie was sure she would be eaten by something. She hoped whatever got her would kill her fast so she wouldn't have to suffer.

She tried to find tight crevices under rocks where she could squeeze her body into at night to keep less of her exposed. After going from rock to rock, she happened on the cave.

At first, she was afraid to go further than the light penetrated for she had no way of knowing what waited in the darkness. Mountain lions, bears, timber rattlers crossed her mind and paralyzed her with fear.

Many times, she thought of going back to the valley, to the people that tormented her, but she couldn't. Death would be better than what awaited her down there.

The children had chanted, "Your back, your back, you're bent bowed back was hunched and scrunched and put in a sack. Your momma tried to throw you away, but the devil said she's here to stay."

Sometimes during the summer when she tanned from being in the sun, they would sing. "Aggie's rotten, rotten, rotten. Send her south to pick some cotton."

Sometimes they would pinch her if she got close, or throw rocks at her until she got far away. Why was it that children could be so cruel? Why did they want to hurt someone that never hurt them?"

It was the cave that offered her salvation from the elements of the harsh Ruffian Mountain, if she only had a way to see where she was going inside the cave. She had never experienced total darkness before, and beyond the penetration of light was 'a blackness', so complete it was overwhelming.

It was hunger that drove her off the mountain. She had to go back for food if she was to survive. She knew every house and every person in the valley, and she knew their habits. It would be easy to slip in and out without being seen. She had learned early on how to stay out of sight most of the time.

She didn't take much, a tomato from one person's garden, a few potatoes from another, all the green beans she could carry in her dress tail, but only picking one or two from each vine. She slipped inside a can house and got a jar of canned blackberries and saved the empty jar to carry things in.

It was her craving for something solid that would fill her belly better than fruit and vegetables that made her go inside Amy Donovan's house and fill her jar with flour. While she was there, she took a handful of

matches. She slipped out the door and hobbled to the woods as fast as she could manage, sure she would be caught any second.

She sank down on a log and discovered she was crying, sobbing like a baby. She hated herself for her weaknesses, hated herself for her deformities, hated her mother for making her this way. Why couldn't she have killed her? It would be better than this. Surely anything would be better than this."

Finally, she wiped her nose on her dress tail, and made herself stop crying.
"I'm not dead," she told herself. "And if I'm not going to be dead, I better use my head."

Her head told her to hide her supplies under the log and make her way to the end of the valley. She could take an ax from one house and a knife from a house in the middle of the valley. She knew the boys that had the best knives, and they owed her more than a knife. With an ax, a knife, and matches she could survive.

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