

Sumpter, Yvonne

A I have two kids. Three, I have a son down south and two more daughters.

Q Your son is down south, I remember. He was born when you were working in the plant, wasn't he? Wasn't one of your children staying down south?

A All of them have. All of my kids were born here and all of them moved back down south.

Q Were they raised with your folks down there?

A My mother. Tony never lived there. Tony always been here with me ever since I had him. That other boy now that's my brother and then I have a son and two daughters down south in Alabama. My mother wants to keep Tony, but I don't know what I'd do without him. He keeps me going. He's got too much energy.

Q He is precious.

A He is a devil. He don't forget nothing. I have to watch what I say around here because he will repeat it. Last night when I went to pick him up he told me my girlfriend Michelle was over and we drank some Martel and a little bit of beer. We also smoked some weed and some cigarettes. He'll tell you that cigarette smoke bothers him. I told my sister okay now where have you been taking him? She said you have to watch what you say around him because he will repeat and he don't forget a thing.

Q Let me just give you a brief sense of what I'm doing and take a few minutes to share with you. What I hope to do is interview 20-30 folks in the plant who I think have real precious stories and different stories about their lives. Whether it's moving from the south or working in the plant or being

involved in the union or being involved in the church. Whatever has been important to the folks, their family life, their outside, whatever is key. Out of that I hope to put together some articles and hopefully a book that will sort of represent this generation of autoworkers. Which I think is the last generation because we now just got robots coming in and there is change going on and it's not going to be the same. There aren't people coming in the auto plant. Let alone people working from all different places coming together. I think this will be a chance for other people in the country to get a sense of what is going on. It is not just what Lee Iacocca has been saying about lots of money and saving some jobs. There are a lot of human beings with a lot of important stories to tell. So it is sorta like writing today's history before we are all dead and then someone else tries to write it for us. So that is what it is about. Hopefully, also, regardless as how successful it is in terms of getting it published I will make enough copies for people that were interviewed so they'll have something to read as well as a copy of the tape. You can have a copy of the tape after I'm finished. I'm not going to transcribe the whole tape. It is also my way of, I'm going to try and get out of the plant in the next couple years and it's my way of saying...when I was driving over here what I was thinking about was you are one of the few women that have stayed in the plant over these long, many years. What was it like the first day you hired in because there weren't too many women then? What was it like then? Then we'll just run with it. How long were you there?

A Since 1975. There probably weren't more than fifteen women

there when I started. Most of the women worked on the sealer deck and that's where I worked. At first it was really hard which they told me that when I got the job. I got the job through the UAW downtown on Jefferson. Actually, how I got the job me and my girlfriend went and they called her first and she was working for AAA. She told them to call me because she was already working so the guy called me. I went down and he explained to me that it was the truck plant. At first he told it was way out because at the time I was living in Detroit. He had told me it was hard work and there were two other women there for the interview and he brought us out to the plant to have our physical. They had said that they would call us in a couple weeks. In a couple of weeks they did call and me and the other two girls went. Out of the three of us I'm the only one who is still working because the other girl quit before she got her ninety days in. The other girl, Berniece, she worked a couple of years and then she quit. When I got there I was determined to work. It was really hard. At the time Larry Fischer was my foreman. They give you three days to learn the job.

Q How old were you then?

A I was 25 years old. I'm 36 years old now. Bob Baker was training me on the job. You know Bob and all these people. You worked over there with me. I was wiping cams. It was really hard work. Actually, I was used to working hard, but all this was new to me and I was trying so hard. I had sealer everywhere, the hose was in the gloves and my hands were burning and stuff. On the third day I seen Bob Baker talking to Larry Fischer and he come back and said Larry wants to see

you. Larry said I'm going to have to let you go because you can't do the job. I said I'm giving it all I got. I said if that's the way you feel about it what can I say? I've done the best I can do. Well he said you're going to have to go over and talk to Bob Serlof and tell him that I sent you over there and I went over there and said Larry Fischer told me to come over and see you because he said he was going to have to let me go because I couldn't do the job. He said were you trying to do the job? I said I was giving it all that I had. They said you know three days and my three days was up and I guess they weren't satisfied with what I was doing. So he say you go back and you tell him that I'm not going to let you go. You tell him that I said give you as much time as you need on the job, but you got to show me that you're putting in the effort to do it. So I went back over there and I told him what he said and you know how they scream and hollar and I said well honey you go over and talk to him because this is what he told me. So he said you go back over there and you him I don't have anything over here for you to do. So then he told me I'll find you one over here in two tone. Dragged me over there, pulling the trucks off the line you know with the turntable. So I was putting the trucks in the hole for him. I saw him just watching me and oh man I was really sweating it out. I was saying Lord I swear to God nothing can't be this bad. I never worked this hard in the south. I went on and I did the job and I noticed they kept watching me and the next day I came in and I went over on the sealer deck and he said I'm going to have you training with Bob Baker again. So I was doing the job and Bob Baker was stand-

ing up at the desk just talking and I'm just doing my job and for about a week I was still doing it and he come up to me and said you know I'm really impressed because me and Bob Baker was talking and we were under the impression that you couldn't do the job and here you are keeping the job up and I'm satisfied with the job. You know I'm kind of glad we kept you. I said well I appreciate that. So after that every week it was a new job until I ended up learning every job on the line. I learned how to use the guns, but I didn't learn how to use them at the truck plant. I learned how to use them next door on sealer deck over there. I learned how to do all the jobs and things were getting better and they were steady hiring women in there. I would see them come and I would see them go. They just couldn't deal with the work. For instance, Doris, when she started they were giving her a hard time and I told her you know you just got to put it in her mind that you're going to do the best that you could do. If they're not satisfied with that heh you can't do more. I said you just got to put that in your mind every time you go up to the next truck and start doing it you got to put that in your mind. Next thing you know you're around the bend which I was. After that I used to love to come to work. At that time we was working six days and there was no mandatory Saturday. At that time when I started getting my ninety days in I used to work twelve, thirteen hours a night. When sealer deck closed they would send me up stairs painting. They would tell me you don't have ninety days in so you have to work over. I did this for ninety days. I mean twelve-thirteen hours a day. Then all of a sudden things got getting

better. Every time some new person come in I went in and trained them on their job and it really wasn't that bad. Then by me knowing all the jobs over there I started relieving some of them. So actually I used to come to work. Then all of a sudden as the years went on then they eliminated the second shift. That was really a surprise to me because for instance, like that Monday and Tuesday and all of a sudden that Thursday they say they are going to have a big lay off and they're closing the second shift. I said where's the union? It looked like the union new and they should have telling these people these things so they could sorta see how they are going to get their lives together.

Q You mean nobody knew that they were going to eliminate the second shift then?

A Not until that Thursday that Friday was their last day. I went into the cafeteria and at that time I think Benny Gregory was committee man and I said Benny where is Charlie? This was in 1979. I said where is Charlie. It looked like somebody could tell us something and the union said they didn't know what was going on. So at that time Frank Foley was general foreman and he said really you don't have a thing to worry about because you almost got five years in and the people with five years and up are going next door. Then things might get better and they might call them back. So they passed out the little pink things and when they passed my pink slip out they told me to report to Wayne Assembly that Monday. Then a lot of my other friends, Dot was on days and Gwen and Susie. Martha was on medical. That was all the women on sealer deck.

I said I'm not going to another plant because I got to start this all over again. They also told us that it was not guaranteed that we would go to the same department as we was in. So then I went next door and they was getting ready to launch escort. They said the people that's coming over here some of them were going to put on QC and some of them we are going to try and place them. This is only temporary. That's what they told us. We went over there and I was working in trim in QC and it wasn't so bad. After that I think I stayed on QC from April after they closed until sometime in September or something. Then they transferred me to paint on the sealer deck and that was fine because I come from sealer deck and it probably wasn't going to be that bad. I was so used to working with, what, the whole line consisted of about 18 people, that sealer deck-so then when I do get next door I'm looking at about 80 people and this is sealer deck. These people have a little patch of stuff to wipe and this is it. I said this is it? They were using the rag at the time. They didn't have the sponges like we did next door. Then I said this is it? Just wipe this and this is the whole job? The guy said yes. I said I'm not used to working around these many people one department because at sealer deck we had two cab wipes, two box wipes, a fifth wipe and six sealers and two clean up and that's it. We didn't even have a good twenty people at the most. I got to doing the job and I started at one end of the line and work all the way around and they said wow you're fast. I said that's because I'm so used to doing the whole thing when it comes to me. I got to learn all the jobs I really needed. So I was doing all the jobs

over there. The supervisors were a mess.

Q What do you mean they were a mess?

A For instance, Wayne Assembly had more women in the truck plant, but half of them were pissed off because the people from the plant were coming over and taking those people jobs that had been theirs. The foreman were so hard on us. I don't know if it was thing they had about women. I dealt with that and then they started putting me on all different kinds of rough jobs that women didn't do. I had a restriction and they ended up putting me in under body. This guy said they must be really pissed off at you. I said why is that because I never seen a woman in under body. This is what the guys in there told me. I said I can only do what they tell us to do.

Q So you were painting the undercoat?

A Yes and they had this black stuff and you are squirting this stuff. At Wayne Assembly they are so clean over there and they don't want no sealer on the floor. They don't want nothing. I said heh you training me on the job and this is what they want me to do. I had sealer and tar all over the floor. I had to change about four times. They had these paper coveralls. The guy come over and he just shook his head. He said just come on Monday. I didn't refuse the job. You told me that this is what you wanted me to do because I had a restriction. I didn't refuse it. I'm doing the best that I can do. I never did this before. I said I'm doing the best that I can. This is my first day doing this job and you want no stuff nowhere and I'm not used to this. I'm just used to going and doing the job, but as far as spraying



this stuff here I can't do it.

Q How many jobs did you run an hour over there?

A At that time they was running something like 68.

Q Sixty-eight tempos and escorts.

A No they were just escorts and lynx. Then it got up to 72, but at this time the only thing was with the truck plant and Wayne Assembly the line really, really moves fast. You worked on that sealer deck over there and you know how we could work our job when they had the two shifts all the way around when they guys were done in there. Then you could go and smoke your cigarette. And then wait until they are almost to where they are getting ready to go up there and take the chain off and then work your job back. At Wayne Assembly that line is steady moving. So they sent me home for about a week. I said who is going to pay me because every day when I come in here you tell me you don't have anything for me to do and I don't volunteer to go home. So then I got the union and they made them pay me and they moved me up tacking off by the prime. So then I just put it in my mind this is the job. I'm never going to refuse a job. I'm going to always try and do the best I can. So I just went on and did the job and so they had me up there. This was somebody's job and they were on medical. When they came back they got their job and they started just sending me anywhere. Then I went out on medical. I guess I was gone for about seven or eight months. Then when I came back to sealer deck and the union was trying to get it all together with...they was getting ready to lay off again, but the people that came from the truck plant they was trying to get them their seniority

back. They still had company seniority, but by them going to Wayne Assembly they didn't have any seniority no more than what they had when they come over there at Ford's. Like if you had two months there that is all you had. They started moving everybody, like the people that had less time than me they would place me on their job and lay them off or something. Then I went to the bumper line. Then I stayed over there about six weeks and then they moved them again because they're still laying off. When they were laying these people off they had to replace them on these jobs. Then they laid this lady off in body shop. These people were getting mad because they said they didn't want these truck plant people coming over and taking their jobs. They put me in body shop.

Q There was a lot of competition between the truck plant and Wayne Assembly?

A There was a real lot of competition there. They laid this lady off in the body shop and me and Calvin Greene sent us to the KD line.

Q What is the KD for?

A That is where they make about damn near two hundred parts an hour over there. Gwen still works there. She loves it over there. The body shop was something new to me too because I never worked in body shop.

Q They didn't have robots there and stuff?

A They just started putting the robots in last year. So they put me and Calvin back there and everybody said the job was building up the parts and building up stock and you relieve yourself. You work constantly about seven or eight hours

straight. You might be able to leave about three o'clock, but you get off at four thirty. This is including your break.

Q You have to be pushing hard?

A Yeah you got to really work. So I told them I ain't in no hurry. I'll just take my break whenever, but I ain't going to be in no hurry just to leave out of here an hour early and I still be wore out. The guy who trained me on the job told me when you put the parts in there and turn the machine on you got to find a wall or a place where you can hide to keep the sparks off you. There was an older lady and I looked at that lady and I said if this old lady can do this job so can I. I mean she was really old.

Q What do you really old?

A She was about 59 or 60. I also noticed she didn't have no hair on the top. The sparks had burned all her hair off. The job was really rough in the body shop. So then another six weeks come up and it was lay off time again and seniority had to take these jobs.

Q I didn't have to go through any of that stuff.

A There was me, Dot and Calvin Greene. It seemed like every time it was lay off time they would end up moving all of us again. The guy came up and said they are moving you today so you'll have to go to the production office because this girl had about two days more seniority than I did. He said Maura was going to get this job and me and her were both back there working and she really wanted this job because it was building up the stock and you could leave early. So I said fine and they said that was the money line, because you

worked something like thirteen hours a day. I told them I didn't need it. The guy came over and I said heh when 4:30 comes I'm going home. He said no, nobody goes home at 4:30. I said I start at four o'clock and you told me ten hours. He said well this is the money line back here and nobody goes home in ten hours. I said well I'm going and I'm not working and they didn't like that.

Q Most of the folks worked overtime.

A I told him I didn't want it. I said no way. I didn't need it and there is no way in the world I'm going to stay here no thirteen hours building up parts and stock for the day shift. I said I'm not going to do it. So they really wanted me out back then anyway because I refused overtime. Extra overtime, I already did two overtimes. So the girl she was doing her job and so then they moved me. We went back to the production office and he said I'm so sick of this. I am really sick of this. We are just doing paper work and transferring people here and there. I said when you decide what you're going to do with us just let us know. Then we'll go on to the job. So we sat there a couple hours and then they finally told us to go to the bumper line where we had come from. We went over there and the people really started complaining and said when these truck plant people, they found out that we only the seniority that we had since we had been there. We didn't have like four or five years like next door. So then they said we are going to have to lay the truck plant people off. Then the union said you can't do that because they are in the same union. If it was a different union then it would be something different, but Wayne Assembly

and the truck plant are the same local. So they laid us off and I think I got laid off over there two times, but only for like you probably get laid off in February and when it starts getting hot they send us back. Everybody was like being laid off. You work in the summer time and part of the winter time and you still got time off. It was alright.

Q You were still getting paid?

A Yes we were still getting paid. So actually it wasn't bad. When everybody started complaining we are in the same union why isn't that we can't bring our seniority? So then they said it was the president. He didn't want to do it like that. So they had to go by seniority because it was two plants and one union. Then they called the people back and then the people that they had in there we had to take their jobs. Then they got laid off and then there was no more you work the summer months and part of the winter months and then you off for five or six months. There was no more of that. Then I went back to the bumper line. I was off a couple of months I think. The longest I've ever been was five months. When I came back there was really a lot of hate in that plant because of the truck plant people coming in and taking these people jobs. For a long time the women over didn't like the women from the truck plant.

Q It isn't a white-black thing? It wasn't a male-female thing? It was just a real seniority and competition thing?

A Yes that's what it was. But I'll tell you one thing there was a lot of prejudice in that plant. In Wayne Assembly. There was a lot of it in there, but the people could deal with it. The black people could deal with it and the white people, in

the long run, they couldn't do anything but deal with it too. They had to go along with it.

Q Give me an example.

A If you had a better job than I did, but I had more time than you did the first thing I would say you give the white boy the better job. You know the same old routine. The same thing over there. It was the same way about the foreman. The employees were prejudice. For a long time, I had been there since 1979 at Wayne Assembly and up until about 1982 when a woman talked to me she was from the truck plant. I was on days for a long time, something like almost a year, and every day like I do now I would walk on down and do my job and they would tell me why is it that you just walk so slow and you don't be running. I said because it's going to be there when I get there. I'm not a runner and I don't walk fast. I walk slow. I used to talk to everybody. I don't care who it is. I talk to everybody. These guys said they didn't have no nice women over there and they liked the truck plant women.

Q That was the line for whoever came in there?

A Yes. When I was over there I used to talk to all the guys and the women would never say anything to me. I would speak to them. As far as holding a conversation I never did it, unless they said something to me because I knew they already got the word out they don't want them truck plant people over there and especially the women. The truck plant didn't have more than about 40 women out of the whole two shifts. If it was that many. One day, what made the women on days start talking to me was at lunch time. The lunch room was so far

that my relief man would always let me leave a couple of minutes early if I wanted to go up and get me something for lunch. He said something once and one of the girls said I can't stand her. He said how could you say that you don't even know her? He said she is a nice person. She don't say nothing to nobody but if you talk to her she'll talk to you. I had told them that I was brought up that way. All of my friends is men. Now don't get me wrong. My mother used to always tell me, a long time ago, whatever you do don't be around a bunch of women all the time because it's not going to do anything but cause a bunch of confusion. Even when I was in school I always ran with my brothers. Then all of a sudden one of the girls, one of the main ones over there that everybody looked up to, me and her ended up talking and the next thing I knew I was talking to all of them. All of a sudden we all got to be good friends which just in the plant. Laughing and talking just in the plant. That was it. So then I went nights.

Q Let me ask you a questions before you go nights. You were raised down in Alabama. What did your folks do? What was it like down there? How did you end up here? Where in Alabama?

A Besimer. A lot of people say Bermingham, but I don't. I say Besimer because this is where I'm from. They say that because Bermingham is a big city. Birmingham is just like Inkster and Wayne. You drive out of Wayne and you in Besimer. Like I went to school with a lot of guys and I didn't know they were here until I started working out there. There are a lot of folks from Besimer. Dillard is from Fairfield.

I think all these fellows is from Birmingham and I don't know why people say they're from Birmingham, when they're not. Hark, Norm and my oldest brother all grew up together and I didn't know none of these guys were here until I started working at the truck plant and they all say I'm from Birmingham. They're not from Birmingham. I don't know why they do, but they're not from Birmingham.

Q It's like saying your from Detroit when you're from River Rouge.

A Yeah, just how it is. I came from a big family. I have six sisters and four brothers. So that's eleven.

Q How did your parents feed them all?

A It was hard. I tell my kids now they really have it made because when we was coming up my mother raised all of us my herself. I didn't know my father. I didn't get to meet my father until I was eighteen. My mother raised all eleven of us. She worked. Everybody worked. My mother didn't have to come home and cook or clean up.

Q What kind of work did your mother do?

A Domestic. There was eleven kids and my mother. We had three rooms. I tell my kids you know you all tell me every week that you need this or need that. We couldn't do that. When we was coming up it was Easter, Christmas and the Fourth of July. That's when you got something new. That was it. Also when school started, but nothing in between.

Q What do you remember getting new for Christmas one year?

A At that time they had this thing called Goodfellow where they would send you your card and for each child they would give four apples, four oranges, a toy or doll or something. Real small things, nothing big. I got shoes. I remember



these big dolls that they had. There were dishes, tea sets, and things like that. Everybody was happy, especially during Christmas time because you had a whole lot of stuff.

Q Did you think you were poor?

A On the street that we lived on there were ten houses and everybody helped everybody. It wasn't a thing where I got more than you got because everybody helped everybody. Back then my mother would make something like \$20.00 a week, but we had everything. My mother was on welfare.

Q I didn't know they had welfare in Alabama. I didn't think George Wallace allowed it.

A My mother had eleven kids and she used to get \$150.00 a month and at that time there was no food stamps. I mean you couldn't have no TV or radio which we didn't have none of this.

Q You had no radio or TV?

A Not on welfare, you couldn't have that. It is still that way down there. We used to get this cheese, butter, rice and peanut butter.

Q That's what we give now in Detroit which is nice.

A Yes, but back then it was good stuff, pork and gravy. This stuff they're are giving now that's no good. Spam and stuff, oh man we lived like a king. After she got the job making \$20.00 a week they cut her off. It was rough. My grandmother lived in Birmingham.

Q Is she still alive? How old is she?

A My grandmother is 82. We really didn't have to want anything because my mother was raising us by herself and she had help from my two aunts. My mother came from a big family on her father's side, but her mother only had three girls.

With the help of my grandmother, two aunts and my aunt's husband like every summer they would get the girls. We would go to Chicago for the summer. While we would be there with my two aunts and uncle we never had to worry about no dentist or nothing like that because when we go there they would have all our dental work done, teeth filled and they would buy all of us school clothes. Every summer we did this.

Q So the north was a pretty special place for you?

A Yes. E<sup>V</sup>ery summer we'd be looking forward to going there. They would get the girls and the boys would stay home with my mother. My aunts knew my mother was going through a thing for us trying to raise us which I got to say she did a pretty good job because out of all eleven kids all of them is living and doing pretty good for themselves. My mother never had to get any of them out of any kind of trouble. She would work and every evening I would have to rush home from school. Like I had two brothers and one sister older than me and they was working after school. I would have to come home and I can remember this when I was in the first grade on up until I left home, I would have to come home every evening and cook dinner. When my mother would come home from work everybody would eat dinner and the kitchen was cleaned up. The house was cleaned up. Everybody was happy. I tell my kids when they be hollaring about things we didn't do this and when we got those things on those special days we was happy. Even if my mother came and said what do you want and we knew we couldn't say a whole lot of things like a bike and stuff like that because none of us had a bike. Not even a tricycle. My mother

kept working and we kept going to school.

Q You must have done a heck of a job because she still likes to have all your kids go down there.

A My mother has had all my kids. During the summer she gets Tony. The people in the neighborhood used to tell my mother that girl of yours, Yvonne, when you leave that house looks like she just takes over. My mother raised all the rest of my brothers and sisters under me because my mother had to work. I would come home every evening and cook and clean up. When my mother had some place to go I would stay home and watch them. So then my brothers got into high school and found themselves a job after school and then they began to help. We were still living in these two rooms, a living room and a kitchen. I'll never forget that.

Q For eleven of you, a living room and a kitchen?

A Yeah, that's all we had. We had a bed in the kitchen and a stove and an ice box. We didn't have no refrigerator.

Q This is what year? You see I want this pictured because I'm from Brooklyn, New York and that's like city streets. It's a whole different world for me. We are the same age. I'm 37.

A I can remember this back in the 1950's. We are something like 1957 on up to now. We didn't have no TV. We didn't have no radio.

Q And no refrigerator?

A No refrigerator.

Q So you went and got ice?

A No the ice truck used to come. My mother used to pay 15¢ for a big old cake of ice. The ice would only last for a couple

of days. We had a toilet indoors. We didn't have a bath tub. We used to have to take a bath in a number ten tub, on the back porch. All of my mother's kids get together at Christmas and we be sitting around telling the kids about this and they'd be saying oh no I don't believe it, but all of this really happened. We had a bed in the kitchen and a stove and ice box. We had a table, but we didn't have chairs. We used to have to stand at the table and eat. My mother didn't believe in us eating all over the house. When it was time to eat we all stood around this table to eat. In the living room we had a little closet with the toilet and a bed on this side and a baby bed. Two of my brothers slept in the baby bed. Me, my mother and two of my sisters slept in one bed. The boys and the girls slept together. There were no walls. Then my aunt came to live with us and her boyfriend. Then there was already twelve people in these two rooms. There was always food there. Enough food.

Q What did you dream about? What did you think you'd be doing when you were thirty years old? What did you used to tell your sisters?

A The only thing we used to actually sit around and talk about was when we get grown we are going to get married and we are going to have kids and stuff like that, but there was never actually nothing special. None of us set a goal to get. We just wanted to live the way we was brought up. Everybody in the neighborhood knew each other and helped everybody. All of us grew up together. We all are still friends. We all keep in touch. My mother finally moved up and everybody moved out of the little neighborhood, but still those twelve

families still live right around together. They moved, but they all moved close to each other. Down south you live on a street where you hardly ever see a car and we used to sit on the porch and say well there goes so and so. Cars were there, but you hardly knew anybody who had a car.

Q Even when you were in high school?

A During the elementary school years we lived on this little street. Then we moved. They started building projects.

Q High rise projects or two story projects?

A No projects like a townhouse. Like from one bedroom up to five. This lady told my mother you know they finished our building projects. First they started up on this hill and my mother said I wonder if I could get a job. My mother went up there and she got a job washing the windows. We said we are moving up now because she was making a lot more money. At that time if you were working with the projects you was making really good money, like a hundred and some dollars. That is big money especially when you're not used to this. She got a job washing those windows in all these projects before they opened them. They had built them, but they had to get the paint and stuff off the windows. Then my mother filled out an application. The house had started to thin out because a couple of kids had gone. My two brothers were in the service. When they went into the service they began to help. My mother was working and we still didn't ask for nothing. We still just got those things on those days. Then my mother got this project. We didn't even have a lamp. We didn't even know what a lamp was. My mother had this socket with this extension cord and you would screw the bulb in. We

used to have to move this socket and that was the lamp. Then one day my mother came home from work and she told us...when she would come home from work all her kids would be sitting on the porch waiting for her with their hair combed and clean clothes. Even though there was only two rooms everything was always cleaned. This is the way we was brought up with my aunt and grandmother. My grandmother used to always slip up on us. My grandmother used to raise a lot of stuff. Like she had a garden and she had chickens.

Q Right in Birmingham?

A Yeah. She had peach trees and pear trees. She used to can a lot of stuff. So this is why I say that food was no problem. My grandmother used to ride this bus to work. My grandmother used to work just to help my mother with us. She used to ride this bus and the man knew that she had a daughter that had a lot of kids and that she was helping her. My grandmother would go to grocery stores on Saturdays and buy things for her and buy things for us and she would put them on the bus and call and tell us what time the bus would be there and the bus driver would let it off.

Q You can't do that now.

A Oh no. No way. Then at that time it was only a nickel. He drop the food off and we would be standing at the bus stop. He would get off and give us the bag. Then my mother came home one day and said I got a project and we are going to move. We were still in these two rooms. My brothers had gone off to the service. Then we moved into the projects.

Q Do you remember how old you were then?

A This was in 1959.

Q You were ten?

A Yes. The next day she told us she was going to move because she didn't even tell us she had filled out the application. I guess she had probably told my grandmother then, but she didn't tell us. She came home with the keys. It was up on this hill and we didn't have no car. She wanted all of us to see the house and we walked and we was so happy. She said this is going to be the girl's room, this is going to be the boy's room and this is going to be my room. There were four bedrooms. Then we had the living room and the kitchen. My aunt had a bathtub, but it was the kind that had the legs on it. This bathtub was built in. Everybody was so thrilled about this bathtub because we were so used to taking a bath in number ten tub. When we moved we were so excited. We stood in line that night to take a bath. My brothers were in the service and they were sending money home. We finally got a living room set which included a couch, chair, lamps and end tables. We was so used to making a fire and was never used to gas. We didn't have gas. We used to have to get up in the morning, all year round, and make a fire. That's what would heat the whole house and cook on. We was thrilled with the gas stove that we had and the refrigerator. No more ice box. Everybody was still themselves. My aunt and them were still helping us.

Q When I was 10-11 years old what I remember vividly about Birmingham was the mayor of Birmingham and the dogs and the civil rights movement. What kind of an effect did that have on you and your family?

A The rioting and stuff started in 1962. When we would go to my grandmother's house we would ride the bus and I didn't know anything about when the black people had to sit on the back of the bus. The white people used to sit on the front. When we got on the bus we would just get on the bus and if there was a seat we would just sit there. If an elderly person got on the bus we would get up and give them the seat. Before this you got to up because you black and I'm white...I look at you and I say when did this happen. They say it happened in Montgomery. The bus thing started back in 1960 I believe. Like I said at that time...

Q There was one boycott started actually 1958-59 in Birmingham and then the successful one was in 1960 in Montgomery.

A Like I said that was the only thing if an elderly person got on the bus you would get up. We was brought up that way. I used to march when they come here.

Q You marched?

A Yeah we marched. It was something to do with the kids in school. It was so exciting because they walked out of school. That's what it was all about. That's what the rioting and marches was all about. They would come with the little things to talk out of and all of a sudden they would tell the kids to come and go and march with us.

Q Who was they?

A The people who was with Martin Luther King. We marched for them.

Q You were only ten or eleven years old? Your still pretty young?

A Yes, but we still marched. I mean they came to the schools and the kids would just walk out. I think when it actually



quieted down was when they bombed the church and killed the kids. They were talking the non-violent stuff and the people was pretty fed up with that. When they put the hoses on us it was exciting too because we went and got bathing suits and went out there and played in the water. Then he came out with the dogs with the gold teeth, the German Sheperds you know. They just had this back on TV during Martin Luther King day and all of this really happened. When they bombed the church, oh man, they forgot about the nonviolence. They said you can't keep on letting these people do you like that. I'm going to tell you something about the south, the only thing it did was quieted it down because I could never...I have a home right now in Alabama and I could never, ever go there to live again because those people are still doing the things that they did. There are certain parts of Alabama where blacks don't stop.

Q Rural areas? Small towns?

A They are still burning crosses.

Q There is more now than five years ago.

A Right in the back where my mother moved into those projects there was a mountain. We call it a mountain because there is a lot of pine trees and they'd be up there at night burning crosses like hell. The KKK you know. Even when we are going home down south if we run out of gas we try not to run out of gas because it is a mess. I don't think of it as a change. I really think the only thing is they just try and be like the rest of the cities, like getting a black mayor. Putting black police on the force. I went home back in 1976 and it

shocked the fuck out of me to see a black policeman. Because I never, never saw it. I think the south will always be the south. I don't think they'll ever change, no matter what they do for the racial thing because now some northerners, white, go down there and they are hard on them. This is why I didn't want to go to Atlanta. It would have been some 150 miles from my home and I could have gone home on the weekends. I can't deal with those people. I deal with these people up here, but I lived and was brought up with those down there and I know how they are. These people up here at the plant like how prejudice they are, those people are from the south. Those foremen that are prejudice like that they are definitely from the south.

Q Do you think it has changed over the ten years to less or worse?

A A little. It has really changed a lot in a way, but like I say you still got those people from the south there. They still got that hate in their heart. They still got that hate for blacks. People fail to realize we all the same and the only thing is the color of your skin. You got the same thing the next man got and I got the same thing the next woman got. Only thing is her blood is not white. My blood ain't black. People are hollering at work black and I tell the guys and laugh and say this is black I'm not black. I don't think they will ever get that out of their systems.

Q You have been in the plant for 10-11 years now. Living here in a nice apartment, it has everything that a modern apartment has and it is a long way from where you lived and where you came from. You also shared a lot about lay offs. Do you think that you'll be working there in 5-10-15 years?

A You know I signed up for the computer classes because I think that we would still be working if I live and nothing happens. I think I'll still be working. A few years ago I thought I actually would never be coming back to the factory again because of the way they were laying people off and the way the economy was and they said nobody had no money and that's why there were all the lay offs and things. I said then well my mother made it. I looked at that. I tell people today I don't cry about whether I'm going to have a job tomorrow or the next day because I looked back at the time when my mother had all those kids and she made it. She was only making \$20.00 a week and she made it. Some people say I can't make it off of 40 hours a week. I says you can't make it? What do you mean you can't make it? I think back to those days.

Q How much did you make last year?

A \$32,000.

Q \$32,000. That's probably more than your mother made in her lifetime.

A Yes, in her lifetime. I looks at that and I just say well like I know the generation has changed and things are changing, but like the old saying if there is a will there is a way. Like people are starving and don't have places to live. These people are that way because they want to be that way. As long as there is a grocery store anywhere I'm going to eat because if I go in that store and eat up the food they ain't got no evidence because I've ate up. I'm not going to starve myself to death when food is there, but you got to pay for it. It might be stealing. It won't be stealing

to me, but I'm not going to die. I'm going to either steal or I'm going to die. One of the two you know. I just look at that and I say heh my mother made it all by herself.

Q Your young one is two years old now. What do you think your kids will be doing in twenty years?

A I tell my kids to come up the way my mother brought us up. We didn't rip and run the street and be in no gangs and all that. There was none of that. I try and teach mine and they say I'm hard on them, but I'm not. My mother whipped us when she had to, but a lot of times she talked. I punish Tony and my other kids. I whip them if they really deserve it. They never do anything that makes me want to hurt them. That is why me and my husband broke up because one day he slapped my son because we had bought him a suit for Easter and he went outside and got dirty. He slapped him and I told him don't you ever put your hand in his face because my mother didn't ever slap us. My mother brought us up and I don't need you here to be slapping on them because there is a better way then to be just slapping on the child. You can only punish a child so much, you can beat him, you can talk and some of them just don't want to. It is just in their system. There is a bad cell somewhere. Thank God I haven't had any trouble out of my kids. My kids are sorta like me I guess. They talk a lot. They know I'm loud and when I say something to them they never talk back to me. None of them, they never talks back to me. Even my girls down south and whenever I tell them do something they do it. My mother had him after all her kids was grown. I have him up here with me because my mother is getting old and he was running with a bunch of

little guys down there and they was getting him in a lot of trouble and that is something my mother never had to deal with with all her kids, but him because it was the crowd that he was running with. When we got out of hand my mother whipped us. I guess it is because she is getting up there in age. We sit back and tell her you know when we was coming up we got a whipping whenever we got out of line, but now she don't ever whip.

Q How old is your mom now?

A My mother is 60 years old. She had him when she was about 40 something. She had grown kids, grand kids. My mother had grown grand kids and she had him. I guess by him being the baby and all her other kids is grown I guess she actually spoiled him and stuff. When I come back to the truck plant, you know we had to come back to get our seniority, and I guess there was so much pressure and tension in there because they had eliminated jobs and overloaded their jobs. People were scared they were going to lose their jobs if things didn't straighten up and you know they had to be hard on them I guess. When I came back I said God knows there's no way in the world I can do all this.

Q You mean it changed that much?

A Yes. This is my second time back at the truck plant. They put me outside picking up paper because I couldn't do a job they put me on. So then I wanted to go back next door. Then last January they said we are going to have another lay off. This time the people that we lay off, which you do work 6-7 months out of the year, so I still can draw unemployment and I got sub and stuff and so it really wouldn't be that bad.

So they laid us off the first of February. They laid off some 60-70 people a week and at that time I said heh I don't mind. I drew unemployment for about a month. We knew it was going to be getting hot and we would be coming back. So then we came over there and when I came over there I really didn't want to come back because I had been there before and all the guys I knew when I was there before they had aged so. I just couldn't believe it. I said the lines over here don't move fast. I'm used to moving really fast by being next door. Then they put me on this job and I hurt my leg. Me and the foremen were getting into it and I told him I didn't come here to kill myself I come here to work. Now I hurt my leg and I worked on this bad leg for a week and it was steady swelling up. So then the doctor sent me to this specialist and the man told me I had torn ligaments in my ankle. So they didn't want me to find another job. The doctor said this is bullshit. They didn't want me to go out on another medical because I hurt myself at work and they would have to pay me, which they didn't. So they put me on medical for two weeks. So when I came back they tell me to go back to that job. I told them no I'm not going back because I already hurt myself once and I'm not going to hurt myself no more. Like I tell you I came here to work, not to kill myself.

Q But it has gotten that bad and has changed that much?

A Oh yeah. Like now where I'm working from April when they brought us back up until now my general foreman and super-intendant would not speak to me. They would say anything to me because we had a few words because I told them I was not going back to that job. Jay really helped me a lot. You

know Jay used to be my general foreman too. I went up there and everyday I would say Jay heh and he would say Yvonne you know how it is. You ain't just now coming to this plant. You know how these people are in here. I said yeah that's true, but I said you can only take so much. I'm at the point now that I actually want to quit. He said why and I told him. The plant doctor went out there and told them this woman cannot do this job. You're going to have to find her a job that she's able to do. You know for her size and stuff. So then he said what in the fuck do you want? Do you want my mother fucking job? This is what Butler said. I said bend the mother fucking job I got. I said now you talk to me like I ain't shit and I can talk to you like you ain't shit. All of them dropped their mouth like heh. Heh I'm not no child and you don't talk to me like I ain't shit. You know I come here to work and you not giving me anything. I'm working for what I get. Then the doctor come down there and picked out this job I'm doing and she told them this is her job. They didn't want to give it to me. So I was doing the job and I knew how to do the job because I did the job next door. I knew I had three days to learn the job. So like Architiny and all of them come up there and like all the rest of the people that come back they didn't have this little session. We went to school for a day. Up there in the conference room we talked to all the big shots. Me and Booker worked there before. There was ten of us. Me and Booker know what the deal is and I know these is lies.

Q And they sent you for a day of school for the E.I. program?

A Yeah. So Architiny came up there and he said to me and

Booker I know you're lying and these other people from next door never worked there before. They just smiled at me and Booker was just sitting back. Then Frank Foley come up there and he said well Booker I would like to get you all back in paint, but there is no way you could get back. They are really cutting back in paint. He said damn near anybody who was in paint is being scattered. Then Butler came up there and said well if you three days to learn a job, but if you need five, even if you need two weeks we'll give you that. I told Booker you hear that don't you Booker. Booker said yes. So I didn't tell them that I did a job like that before. So S<sup>A</sup>ndy who worked in the paint department, tried to run the paint department said she'll never learn this job. She is going to get Mr. Butler and he is going to pull me to the side. I said look man you all told me if it takes three days, you'd even give me a week and you also told me if a week wasn't enough you'd give me two weeks. I said but you expect me to learn this job in three days when I work here for an hour and then I go on the frame line or in trim or in paint the other nine hours and then the fourth day you want me to do this job. I said I haven't had the three days training yet. So I was going through a thing with them about the job because they wanted S<sup>A</sup>ndy to have the job. So they were still giving me a hard time after I started doing the job. I said if I could have had a week on it I could have done the job. I was done the line doing the job let them know heh I can do the job. Sandy told them what I can't do and stuff. Everybody started bitching why can she walk around and do nothing all day, Sandy. So she had told them that I



had hurt my leg. That's a real good job. I said heh I understand all the good jobs is taking. If this job is so good why don't you have it. They was loaning me out every day. After the doctor had told them to put me on this job. I said I'm not going to be loaned out and then me and the foreman would be having it out. I wouldn't smile and I would be made every day. There was so much hatred in that plant. Only time I could smile was when I come out the front door. Foley come up to me one day and said what's the matter, you don't smile like you used to. I said I can't. He said why? Because first of all I can't deal with these people. I have tried. No matter what I do I got to go through a thing with them. I said I come here to work, not come here with a lot of pressure on me and all this tension here. I can't do it. I'm at the point that I have been up and I told them I'm just about to quit. The doctor put me on this job and they are mad because I won't do that job back there because I hurt myself on it. I said they want Sandy to have the job which I told them find me another job. Give that woman that job. I don't need this. I come here to work. I did not come here to go home every day when I can't even sit down and be comfortable. I am full of tension and depressed like hell because of the stuff I am going through at work. He said don't worry about it. He got Tom and Butler and all of them and he talked to them and shit and they really got mad. He told them I don't want you to loan her out anymore. This is the job the doctor put her on and I want her to stay on it. They couldn't loan me out no more. Oh man, they was really pissed off at me then. Be-

cause I had went to Foley on it. I had to go over their heads. Because I steady going to Butler and to Day and I ain't getting no results. I'm still getting a lot of pressure and all this shit. I started doing the job so they took two bolts off the job saying that it was the E.I. leader. They took two bolts off the job and they ended up giving part of this other man's job which that took three more different kind of hoses. Plus I had to build up one of them. I had to put a clip on them. That's from two bolts.

Q What's the job do?

A I had to put the jacks on, the oil filter and had to hook up all the electrical wires. I had to seat the seatbelt, put on different hoses and there was a whole bunch of different stuff I had to do. The committee people come down there and said it was too much for one job so then they took the clamp off. I was still doing the job. I come in to work, not running down this line, not running behind these trucks. I walk at a normal pace. They can't handle it. I don't run behind those trucks. I'm not going to do it. Sandy the E.I. leader tried to get the job back and they told her she couldn't get the job back because the doctor told them that this is the job they wanted me to do. Then they started training her on that so called good job that I hurt myself on. I didn't have to hook up all the electrical wires. Just on the 4 X 4's and the 250's. I didn't have to hook nothing up on the Bronco's. She went to E.I. and told Tom because Art was doing the Bronco's, she said all the electrical wires should be one person. So what they did was they added another part of Art's job.

Q I thought the E.I. program doesn't make it harder on people.

I thought it was so everybody could get along.

A Everybody on the line said this is too much. Some of the repairman went to Art and said you need to put a stop to this because Sandy wants that job back, Sandy is going to Tom and they still added on to that girl's job. They had eliminated different parts of three men's jobs by giving it to me by taking off two bolts. Labor relation came down and said what in the world is all of this? You all know this job is overloaded. She ended up doing the job. They took stuff off the job. I could have did it all, but it was just too much. I come there to work and not kill myself and at the rate I was going in two years I would have been dead.

Q Let me ask you just a couple more questions and then you all can go and I appreciate you all being so patient. What do you think your kids will be doing in terms of work? Or living in the north or south? School? When they are sitting here thirty years from now?

A I don't think my kids would ever live in the north. My kids can't wait until school is out to go. He went one year to elementary school here and this is his first year of high school here. He can't wait to go back. My daughters is down south.

Q So do you think they'll be moving back down south?

A I hope all of my children will go to college and get them something.

Q When you say something what do you mean?

A Some kind of training or something. In order for them to get them some kind of job because as far as the auto industry is going none of these kids will be able to no jobs. I'm

hoping that my kids will go to college and get them some kind of skills. I sit back and think about the time my son was about nine or ten he used to sit around and tell me when I get grown I'm going to be a doctor so I can take care of you. I always say I hope you can go to school so you can get that degree for a doctor or whatever. I know my daughters are going to go to college. My oldest daughter she don't like kids. I don't have to worry about her. She might get married, but as far as having a houseful of kids I know that is out because she cannot stand no kids. I hope the other one will go to college. They will have to go somewhere to get them skills in order for them to get some kind of good job. Even if it is some kind of training program just to get them something.

Q How long do you think you'll be working in the plant?

A Not really because every day I get up and I say Lord you got so many ways of people who can get rich quick for instance hitting the lottery. If I hit the lottery today I would tell Ford Motor Car Company I appreciate what you did, but I no longer want to stay here to get no thirty years. If I have to work the rest of my life and get my thirty years I will. I'm not going to be like some of these people who get 35 or 36 years. Thirty is enough for me. If I get thirty years I would say good bye and I appreciate what you did for me, but if I hit the lottery today I would tell Ford Motor Car Company I've come into some money. There is so much hate.

Q What do you think the biggest problem in the plant is right now?

A There is a lot of prejudice in there. A lot of that. It is getting to be on both sides. The blacks and the whites. You know there are not that many blacks in the truck plant.

Q There are very few left.

A It is about 10% black and 90% white. The way these jobs are going everybody is so scared that they are going to lose their jobs. Everybody is out to hurt each other. You got to try to work together in order to accomplish something. Take for instance where I'm working now, the repairman, their jobs is to repair and get the stuff that the people missed. They don't like me over there now because I told them I come here to work and I am not going to run down this line and do these jobs while you all running me down the line you can run back up here to read your paper. I'm not going to do it. I had the union down there and labor relations and I said you tell me where my work area is right here than this is where I'm going to be right here. I'm not going to run down this line for these repairman and QC people to stand up and read their paper. When they're not doing anything. As soon as you miss something, a screw, them repair guys run and tell the foreman when God knows they ain't did nothing all day. I have looked and I said to myself Lord I see why there is so much hatred in this plant. Everybody wants a check, but nobody wants to do their job. That's the way it is over there. Them guys stand there and read a paper all day and as soon as you miss one thing they run and tell the foreman.

Q They are creating a few good jobs and speeding up the line for everybody else.

A Like I told them this man come here and he read his paper. He come here and he snatch that paper out, he pat here, touch here and slam that door in my ear. I tell them tell him where he is suppose to work at because there is no way in the world I'm going to stand here and let this man slam this door in my ear all day so he can read his fucking paper. It's no way I'm going to do it. Everybody is hollering about big years. Heh give the next man a chance to get these many years, but your job is to get what they miss. If they don't miss anything you don't have a job because they don't need you. As soon as you miss something they are running and telling or letting it go.

Q What do you think of the union? Does the union do anything?

A I wish there was some kind of way I didn't have to pay union dues because I don't know why I pay it. Ford Motor Car Company pays them union people just like they pay me. They can only do what Ford Motor Car Company tell them to do. Like now they are campaigning and I tell them I don't vote. I say I don't vote no more because the only thing these people run and they're talking about this person, don't vote for him because politics you know? You don't talk about a person in order to try and get a position. This is what is wrong with them. They tell you don't vote for so and so. None of them out there are helping you. Only thing they are doing is getting out of running behind those trucks and cars on that line. You hear me?

Q I hear you.

A That's what it is all about. All they want to do is lay back and smoke their cigarettes and drink their coffee and read

their paper and wait on their checks on Fridays. While you are out there doing all the damn work. See that's the thing. In other words you don't need no union. You really actually don't need no union. What does the union do, tell me? Nothing. Not a thing. God knows, oh man. Okay take this man Charlie. Those people didn't even know this man was gone for two months. They don't even have no plant chairman because he got a higher position and he gone. They ain't telling nobody shit. You hear me? I ain't telling nobody nothing, he up and he gone. Then his position got opened. Then you heard talk about all of them. The ones that was running. He knows he no good, he this, he that. Ain't none of them no good. They come up to you and say you cannot do that. You cannot do nothing. Our union is where the union is paying these representatives to represent you. When Ford Motor Car Company is paying those union representatives to represent you you ain't got no union, because they can only do what them people tell them to do. They can't go to that man and say ...I just listen to the conversation and say I'm going to do this and I'm going to do that. Like one day I was sick with the flu and the doctor sent me home and my doctor told me to stay off a couple of days and they wrcte me and wouldn't accept my excuse. They wrote me up and Brian was laying back in the chair saying well we going to write it up and let it go to the review board. So about a month later, Martin brought the paper down there and said this is the results from the review board. They are going to leave it standing on your record. They would not accept your excuse. I read it and they wouldn't accept it because I was sick with the flu and they said that wasn't

good enough.

Q You got ten years in ?

A Ten years is the same thing. Rick, I'm telling you you have to have over fifteen years in order for them to start talking that shit about you can miss days if you want to. At first it was ten and now it is fifteen. It was the same thing they was talking about putting people with thirteen years in the pep program. Because that would stop their time. They won't let them make it until fifteen years.

You'll still be working, but your time doesn't go.

Q You don't get seniority?

A No. In other words when you get ready to retire you can get all of this then if you make it that far. So I called him and I said heh come here and he come back. I told him heh you give this back to the review board and that'll tell them just what I think about them because heh how can somebody that never worked on that line...the people they got on the review board, sitting back on their ass probably got twenty-five or damn near thirty years, and they aren't doing shit. Then the people up in that office never worked on this production line a day in their life and going to sit up and tell me that they can't accept my excuse and they want me to come to work every day. Even if I'm sick they won't accept it. I said you take that back to the review board and they can figure out what I feel about them. He looked at me like I was crazy. Like I told Art I'm pretty sure that you picked out your buddies to get on the review board from the hourly and the labor relation probably picked out the ones in salary on their board. These people never worked on this damn line.



If I could sit on my ass for ten hours a day at a desk drinking coffee or reading the paper or answering the phone I'd be here every day. I said but the way these jobs is overloaded out here there is no way in the world. Half of these people won't get thirty, not at Michigan Truck Plant. It ain't no way they're going to get it. It is no way they're going to get it Rick, not the way those jobs is overloaded out there.

Q I agree.

A I see them going and taking them out of there damn near every day somebody had a heart attack. I'm never going to fall down on that line with a heart attack because I'm not going to run. There ain't no way.

Q What do you do on the weekends? After working the fifty hours.

A On Sunday's I might go and wash. I cook every day, but on Sunday's I try to fix something that the kids really want special and that is it. I be too tired to do anything else. I don't go out. I don't go nowhere. But then like they tell me next door is being the same way. I still it could never be like Michigan Truck Plant. Never.

Q We haven't spent much time talking about those issues outside the plant. Where do you see the country going? Do you think things are going to get better for most folks? Do you think things are going to get worse? Do you think we'll be in war? What do you think?

A Let me tell you something. You think from about 1985 to last year how much tragedy there is. So many planes crashing and people are getting killed. At the rate that things are going the man is trying to tell us something. The way I look at it

these people better try to think and try to get their lives together.

Q What people?

A Everybody. Because at the rate the things are going he is showing us signs every day. Take for instance that space shuttle they were sending them up there and they got people here starving. They ain't got no place to stay. They was sending them up every month spending all this money. There is no way in the world why people should be able to like over in Africa and everywhere where people are starving and they print money every day. That's what I can't understand. I reads my bible a lot and it also states in the bible the day the world begin to come to an end when sons are be going against fathers and daughters be going against mothers and everybody is killing up everybody. This is happening today. All those people who got killed in those plane crashes and the earth is moving. Like we had an earthquake here. In January. These people better wake up and try to live and stop trying to do things to hurt the next man because when that day comes you can't take none of that shit with you. None of it. Every morning when I wake up I thank the Lord for waking me up.

Q Even though he is sending you to work?

A Even though he is sending me to work. I tell people every time the Lord know. If my luck ever change for some kind of way to get me some kind of money to hit the lottery or something there won't be no more work for me. He know this, but I was brought up to work all my life. So this is why people play the lottery it's just not for you.

Q So you don't play every week?

A No because the Lord know my heart won't be able to take it. If I hit the lottery for so many millions of dollars he know to kill me right there because I'm not used to this. I'm used to working hard and working for what I get. If there ever come up a day when I hit it God knows there won't be no more work for me. God knows I have worked all my life. Like I said ever since I was six years old. I had a family since I was six years old because I had to cook every day. I mean every day. I thank the Lord for blessing me with this job and so far I can't say that by me working at the car plant and truck plant that my life has really been miserable because it hasn't. Because I won't let it get that bad. When those people get on my nerves so bad that where I see it is effecting my life I go out on medical. I just have to let them go. When I need a rest I just get away from it.

Q What did you think of the Color Purple?

A I went to see the picture twice because the first time when I went to see it...I don't go to movies that often unless it is something I really want to see. That is the best movie I have ever seen ever since I was a little girl. They say they put the black man down. I don't see how they put the black man down. Take for instance if this was the white man doing these things. What would they say? It would have been alright. But they are telling it the way it is. These things are happening every day. God knows it is. They say black men are not like that. Yes they are. White men are like that. All men are like that. No matter what color you are. As soon as the picture came out I had to go back and

see it again. I'm going to go again before it leaves. My son had told me I bet it's not better than Rocky IV and he went and my brother went twice too. My sister she went. All of us went to see it.

Q It is sorta opposite Rocky IV.

A I asked him which was better. He said that's a good movie.

Q That's good to hear you say that. That's precious. You did great work raising them kids if they can say that.

A He said that is a real good movie. Especially at the end it really touches the soul. When they gets to singing, my sister was just standing up crying and God knows tears was coming out of my eyes. This is just the way it is. The churches are just like that down south. Like up here I go to church because we was brought up going to church every Sunday...Sunday school, church, church after church. Your whole Sunday was church. These churches up here don't move me not like the churches down south. They really know how to top it off when she came home. All of this is so true. I can't wait until Monday to see it again. I went to see Out of Africa. Out of Africa didn't show me nothing. Black people from the south know. They know that movie is right and is telling the truth and these things are happening here today. Right here in Detroit, but they keep it a secret and then as soon as they let it out and you know that's a shame that he did that.

Q Like you said it's not just a black film.

A That's right it's not just a black film like you say. This is happening every day. Even if it was a black woman and a white man it would have been alright. The white men are do-

ing the same things to their daughters or whoever.