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<th>Wallace, Margarette: &quot;The True Life of Josephine&quot;: holograph, photocopy</th>
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<td>Wallace, Margarette</td>
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The True Life of Topsy

Topsy was born in St. Louis, Mo.-1906 on the 3rd of June. Raised by
our mother and Mrs. Carrie McDonald Martin and my father, Arthur
Martin. We were raised in slums of St. Louis, not far from the
Mississippi River. She was the older
of four children. Richard was born
the 12 of Oct.-1907. Margaret was
born in Dec.-1908. We all went
to school. Which was at 14th Street
Tempey as we all called her was
a smart girl, who did not like to
go to School, but would take us
because she had our lunch, which
was molasses and pancakes, our
mother had to work, and papa worked
when he could. As there was not
much for men doing those hard times,
and it was very cold in the winter.
Tempey used to stoke us in coal. Roads
yards to pick up coal to heat our
two rooms house. Papa made a
stove out of a large garbage can.
And mamma also cooked our food on it.
I remember when papa went in the rail road yards to pick up some coal for us. and the watch man caught him. he arrested him. the policeman came and told mama. the next day mama took us all to court. when the judge came and called Arthur Martin to the stand. he asked why he was stealing coal. but before papa could speak. Timpie jumps up and Mr. Judge please don't put papa in jail he only took a little coal to keep us warm, as we are poor and papa don't have any work so he can help some coal. and if you don't him in jail when I am a big girl I will pay you back. So please don't listen to that watchman because he is bad. have see me take Sister don't and Good Shoes. Also Mama and papa have sick on our feet. the judge said little girl. you are a Good girl. So I am going to let your Papa go. but you must promise and that you bend papa will. pay in the yards again. also I am going to give you the money to help your
Sister came. Shoes. Now you go home and be a good girl. Maf! I had bless you all. Lumpy was so happy what I remember is why Lumpy always though of brotherhood was the bond we were raised. Mama raises us to say half sister nor brother. Because Dad gave us to her. They had us to bring us in the world herself and no one else. So we must love one another for she was the mother of us. Each child was her love and to never let her the word of half. So Lumpy and all four of us grew up with her love for each other. Lumpy seeing how free were. I think she made up her mind that mankind could live together as one whole family as God had planned in the first place. So she went about trying to do God's will. Often times she would say to me Sister you was pretty and sweet. I wish I could be like you. And I would say to her you are the one who is pretty. I am big and fat. And of course we would get into it.
one saying the other was pettles. But it would end up talking about God and good he was to us. I'd still being together as we had came along ways from St. Louis in the slums it a month day hunger and cold. She would say poor mama and papa did their best and she could never for get those good old days. That was why her life was so different from other people. We were poor but happy, to remember our young life. She always wanted to do all she could for the poor people. She took her children to show people that we live together, no matter how poor as long as we love and respect each other. About East St. Louis race riot, we never lived East St. Louis nor in boy Car alhew we did live Basement as sheef were renteal cheap. Yes we all seen how the Colored came over the cases Bugh some of them were trying to away. Babies were in the Mississippi river like rats. Mother stomach Cuh open with baby in her lump and us kids bleed and
afraid, but Mama told us not to be scared as
God would take care of us. Lumpy ask
Mama would God take all these
colored people to Heaven with him. She
said one day she was going to be rich and
take us here and never far away. Where
we would never be hungry nor cold
I also remember one time. Lumpy was
a smart kid. She use to peep in the
bed and would put it on me. Mama
would give me a good Spaning and Say
I was lazy. But Papa Said Carrie don’t
beat her baby more because I am sure
it is not Margaritte. Mama Said how do
you know? Papa Said to me we will
tell the truth. So after ever so was in
bed but Papa was not Sleep as he was
waiting. Sometimes during the nite he
said the lamps turn up. He got up to
see what was wrong and there before:
the heating Stone was Lumpy drying
her nite gown. Papa called Mama to
look. The next morning my place was
wet. Papa Said to Lumpy. Lumpy you
pee in the bed and put father in sparse
place. Now I want the truth. Have you
been lying and putting it on sister. no you are not going to get a spanking of you tell the truth. i think it is very bad of little girl to lie. lumpy started to cry and told papa it was her and she was very sorry, and would not do it again.

i also remember our first xmas tree. it was on a saturday before xmas. we all got up early to go with lumpy to scrape steps. it was very cold. so mama put paper to put in our shoes. also put newspaper on our chest so we wouldn't catch a cold. we walked all the way to see lumpy. i was all happy because lumpy was telling us what santa claus was going to bring for xmas. when we got to place she was to work. the lady said 'josephine what are you doing on a cold day like this?' she said that to morrow was xmas, and she had to make some money so santa claus could come and bring some nice things for sisters and brother, and a nice present for mama and papa and our grandmother.

the lady said to josephine, 'what would you like to do?' she said 'josephine told what wanted for xmas all.' she said that would cost
a lots. Josephine said that she could buy all fur five dollars. She laid it on the table. Josephine is going to give the money. You must promise me, Yace, you will go home and this cold weather. Your brother and sister will catch a death of cold also Yace. She gave Lumpy the money. Josephine wish her Merry Xmas. We was going home when Lumpy saw a Xmas tree. She, her sister and brother gave wish here, as I am going in this store and ask how much does the man wants fur this Xmas tree- so we can take it home. Sure enough, Josephine got the tree for 50 cent. When we got home Mama asked where we get the money from and, of course we told Mama what had happen and Lumpy gave the rest to Mama to buy our dinner and other things that was needed. Papa work for a man who had a fruit market, he gave Papa all the fruit for his Xmas present. Lumpy stay up with Mama, Papa and Grandma to dress the tree and help with the cooking. The next day we had a nice Xmas.
ate, after seven years, Lumpen wrote to Mama and said she was coming to us. That was 1935 Oct. I was then married to Elmo for three months, everyone was so happy. Aunt Emma, Uncle Peter and all our cousins came to our house to see her. Richard, his wife and all his children. She could only stay four days.
So she said to Mama, "We are all going to have a real party. Mama there is the money you go out and buy everything for a big family dinner. As I want to see you all happy together, as God has been so good to us. Even if baby sis and are not with us and more. We will remember them just the same."

The four days passed so fast and in no time, far Lumpen to go away again.

But before she left, she asked brother why he wanted her to tell her she needed a coal truck. She asked brother, "I am going to buy one for you. Tomorrow you come and get me and Mama, and we will go see about one for you.

So the next day they went get a new Ford truck and paid 13 hundred