

August: Osage County
By Tracy Letts

Violet

Did I ever tell you the story of Raymond Qualls? That's a boy I had a crush on when I was thirteen or so.

Real rough-looking boy, beat up Levi's, messy hair.

He had the most beautiful pair of cowboy boots, shiny chocolate leather. He was so proud of those boots, you could tell, the way he'd strut around, all arms and elbows, all puffed up and cocksure.

I convinced myself that I needed to get a girly pair of those boots, and I was sure if I did that, he'd ask me to go steady and say "that's the gal for me."

So, I found the boots in a window downtown and I just went crazy...rehearsing the conversation I would have with Raymond when he saw me in my boots.

Must've asked Momma a hundred times if I can just get those boots. "What do you want for Christmas, Vi?" "Momma, I'll give all of it up for those boots", Bargaining...So, she started dropping little hints about a package under the tree she wrapped up, real nice wrapping paper. "Now Vi, don't you cheat and don't you go in there before Christmas morning", Little smile on her face.

Christmas morning, I was up like a shot: boy, under the tree, tearing that paper. There were boots in there ...men's work boots, holes in the toes, chewed up laces, caked in mud and dog shit.

Lord, my Momma laughed about that for days.

My Momma was a nasty mean old lady.

I suppose that's where I got it from.