CONTENTS

I

The Family Album 1 Les Anciens 2 A Sounding in the Woods 4 Badlands 5 Jackson 14 The Hanged Man 15 Gandy Dancer 16 Roman 17 For the Want of a Shoe 18 Rebel 20 Ablution 21 Sepia Women 23 A Given Name 24 All That They Were 26 Lawdy Miz Clawdy 27 Chitlin' Circuit 29 Kin Folk 31 33 Immersion 35 Uncle Brother Top Kick 36 The Thief of Time 37 Saturday Nights 39 A Rightful Place 41 Sunday Best 43 The Weight of Silence 45 Rough Trade 54 Immutable Geography 55

Π

Paint Me Visible 59 Lost Baby Blues 60 What the Body Remembers 61 Home Remedies for Children 62 Precocious 63 The Answers to Why 64 The Legacy 67 Learning to Love Bessie Smith 68 My Mother's Baby Toe 69 Did You Ever Have the Feeling 70 Chevalier 72 Aces and Eights 73 **Defining Life** 76 Lessons in Deportment 77 The Spinsters 85 **Breaking Wild Horses** 87 The Fire Inside 89 90 **Missouri Blues** Throwing Stones at the All White Pool 92 Fade to Black 93 Double Dutch 94 **Tongue Tied** 96 99 **Twilight Sleep** The Mistress of Secrets 100 The Prodigal Daughter 102 Lividity 104 Did I Know You Back Then? 105 The Third Stage 107 Blood Lines 108

Acknowledgments 111