

## Tekst 8

*De volgende tekst is het begin van het korte verhaal Tennessee, geschreven door Ann Patchett en is voor het eerst gepubliceerd in 2008. Tennessee is een staat in het zuiden van de Verenigde Staten en Nashville is de hoofdstad.*

### Tennessee



I've been told that the secret to making money, big money, is to find the place on the edge of town where the real estate stops being priced by the acre. The idea is then to buy as many of those acres as possible and wait for town to creep towards you so that you will be there, ready and waiting, 5 when those acres are converted down into square feet.

Having lived in Nashville for most of my life, I have seen this theory put into cash-making practice time and again. Acres that once were home to lazy cows and nibbling deer are now the physical underpinnings of sprawling shopping malls and housing developments and golf courses — 10 thickets of blackberries mown under to make way for irrigated expanses of manicured greens. The cows and the wildlife, not unlike the urban poor, were forced from their neighborhoods and herded off to distant pastures.

Nashville is not a city that can take any pride in its urban planning. Lovely old homes are knocked down, appalling condominiums spring up in 15 their stead, traffic multiplies geometrically, mom-and-pop operations issue a mouselike cry trying to hold back the big-box chains, and then are devoured by those chains in a single bite.

But for every way this city has changed for the worse, there is some other way it has changed for the better. When I was a little girl, the Klan<sup>1)</sup>

20 marched down at the square on Music Row on Sunday afternoons. Men in white sheets and white hoods waved at your car with one hand while they held back enormous German shepherds with the other. My sister and I pushed down the buttons of our door locks and sank low in the backseat. Those men are gone now, or at least they aren't out walking the streets in  
25 full regalia. If growth and modernization means getting rid of the Klan while bad condos spread like lichen over tree trunks, well then, let's hear it for modernity.

There was a time when Nashville cared more for genealogy than character. (In some very limited circles this may still be the case.) If your  
30 family hadn't been in the state long enough to remember what Lincoln had done to it, then you might be politely tolerated but you would never truly be accepted. I knew this, having moved here just before I turned six. We were Californians, and we may as well have been Martians. But then there was a shift — too many people moved here in the last two decades to  
35 keep up with who was from where. Somewhere in all the confusion I became a local.

noot 1 the Klan = afkorting van de Ku Klux Klan, een organisatie in de Verenigde Staten die vooral door racistisch geweld bekend is geworden