

1975

## Soft Kid

Waring Cuney

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### Recommended Citation

Cuney, Waring. "Soft Kid." *The Iowa Review* 6.2 (1975): 5-5. Web.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.1821>

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## Fifteen / Shirley Williams

(from *SOMEONE'S SWEET ANGEL CHILE:  
BESSIE SMITH*)

I looked in her face  
and seed the woman  
I'd become. A big  
boned face already  
lined and the first line  
in her fo'head was  
black and the next line  
was sex cept I didn't  
know to call it that  
then and the brackets  
round her mouth stood fo  
the chi'ren she teared  
from out her womb. And  
yo name Bessie, huh,  
she say. (Everyone  
call her Ma o' Ol  
Lady.) Bessie; well  
le'me hear you sang.  
She was lookin in  
my mouth and I knowed  
no matter what words  
come to my mind the  
song'd be her'n jes as  
well as it be mine.

## Soft Kid / Waring Cuney

Soft kid bought a hot dog  
He needed a steak,  
Went to bed with the chills  
Too tired to shake.

Soft kid bought a hot dog  
He needed a break,  
Fell asleep with the Blues—  
He forgot to wake.