

The Stolen Light
1989

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JOHNNIE'S
VOICE

IT WAS FRIDAY, THE DAY THE RESIDENCE HALLS OPENED for new students at my college, in California. All day, sophomore men had been weighing and measuring—“sizing up”—the freshman women as they were about to enter their dormitory. The “sizing-up” ceremony for women was one of a series of initiation rites for all incoming freshmen, men and women. I was a freshman myself, and, eager not to be left out of anything, I had a “dink” (a green beanie) on my head and, in my pocket, the student “Bible” (a handbook that listed the college organizations, set forth the college rules, and gave the words of the college songs and yells). Each of us “greenhorns” was required to wear a dink and carry the Bible at all times on the campus and in town, on pain of court-martial by the sophomores. With a great many other men, I was pushing and shoving to get near the front porch of the dormitory, where a scale had been set up. Sophomore men were