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Sommario/riassunto	David Robertson charts W. C. Handy's rise from a rural-Alabama childhood in the last decades of the nineteenth century to his emergence as one of the most celebrated songwriters of the twentieth century. The child of former slaves, Handy was first inspired by spirituals and folk songs, and his passion for music pushed him to leave home as a teenager, despite opposition from his preacher father.

Handy soon found his way to St. Louis, where he spent a winter sleeping on cobblestone docks before lucking into a job with an Indiana brass band. It was in a minstrel show, playing to raci
