

Feminism in Zora Neal Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God"& "Jonah's Gourd Vine"

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Abstract:

Their Eyes Were Watching God explores traditional gender roles as one of its main themes – specifically the way that stereotypical ideas about relationships between men and women empower men and disempower women. The novel's plot is driven by Janie's series of relationships with different men: a kiss with Johnny Taylor, followed by marriages with Logan Killicks, Jody Starks and finally, Tea Cake. Logan Killicks and Jody Starks see Janie as defined by her relationship with them, and expect her to be obedient, silent and proper. Jody sees her as a kind of ornament that bolsters his social standing and that helps to justify his efforts to assert control over everyone, men and women alike.

Tea Cake, in contrast, defines himself not by political power but rather by his physical strength and ability to have fun. Even while Tea Cake treats Janie as an equal, there still exists a certain power struggle in Janie's relationship with him, as her increasing ability to recognize her needs as an individual throughout the novel emerges in response to Tea Cake's treatment of her. Thus it is still possible to see Tea Cake as having a degree of control over Janie until the moment of his death. In each of her relationships, we watch Janie lose parts of herself under the forces of male domination.

The men are not the only characters who see the traditional take on gender relations (strong men, obedient women) as necessary and worthwhile. Nanny, as a former slave who endured brutal conditions in her life, is understandably more concerned with material well-being than self-expression. She therefore sees marriage as a means to gain status and financial security for her granddaughter, and does not believe that a black woman *can* gain independence without a man. But Janie has different concerns, separating her from Nanny and other women who accept the traditional gender roles on display in the novel. Janie seeks self-expression, and authentic love based on mutual respect—a goal she ultimately achieves in her relationship with Tea Cake and, even more so, after his death, when she has fully come to know herself and can speak her mind and tell her own story.

Introduction:

Feminism in Their Eyes Were Watching God : Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* written in 1937 is often considered as her best work and her masterpiece. Hurston's creative genius is seen best in this novel. As an anthropologist she has been able to depict the true picture of black life but more importantly as a novelist she has written an

inimitable story with real life characters which has now become a benchmark in the African American literary tradition. To quote Valerie Boyd:

In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston ransacked the language of the King's English as well as Eatonville's Ebonics—to achieve a precision of expression that was stunning. For more than fifteen years, Hurston had been working to capture in words the beauty, the wisdom,

and the complexity of her people and of her Eatonville experience. In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, she nailed it. Significantly, she did so by making a crucial revision to her memories of the village: In all her previous attempts to depict Eatonville in fiction, the porch sitters- the story tellers had been mostly men. In this novel, however, Hurston put her story in the mouth and the mind of a woman and the result is a book of transcendent appeal.(303)

Their Eyes Were Watching God is set in the Southern part of America. The novel chronicles the life of the protagonist Janie Crawford and her search for identity. She marries thrice and tries to live life on her own terms. Hurston in her effervescent style has presented complex African American culture celebrating black life and experience. In creating this work, Hurston created for the first time a text which validated the black woman's life and experience, which were earlier marginalized. In a way she became a path breaker for all other twentieth century African American women writers. When the novel was published, it received scathing reviews from Hurston's African American male counterparts. Alain Locke in *Opportunity* to Richard Wright in *New Masses* found it unsatisfactory and they even went disparaging it. They were not able to understand Hurston's literary pedagogy and her genuine efforts to show African American life as a literary artist and not as a sociologist. Today, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* has become one of the most popular African American works achieving a canonical status and being exemplary in craftsmanship. Alice Walker deeply influenced by the novel, writes in –Zora Neale Hurston—A Cautionary Tale and a Partisan View:

Condemned to a deserted island for a life, with an allotment of ten books to see me through, I would choose, unhesitatingly,

two of Zora's: *Mules and Men*, because I would need to be able to pass on to younger generations the life of American blacks as legend and myth, and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, because I would want to enjoy myself while identifying with the black heroine, Janie Crawford, as she acted out many roles in a variety of settings, and functioned (with spectacular results!) in romantic and sensual love. *There is no book more important to me than this one.* (xiii)

Though not an autobiography, Hurston has poured her emotions in to the novel. Hurston was going through a rough and painful relationship with her lover Percy Punter, and in these conditions she left for Haiti after receiving the Guggenheim Fellowship. Hurston writes in her autobiography, *Dust Tracks on a Road*:

I wrote *Their Eyes Were Watching God* in Haiti. It was damned up in me, and I wrote it under intense pressure in seven weeks.... so I pitched in to work hard on my research to smother my feelings. But the thing would not down. The plot was far from the circumstances but I tried to embalm all the tenderness of my passion for him in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. (210-111)

The protagonist of the novel is Janie Crawford. Janie is a firm minded African American woman who is in search for herself and happiness. Janie, sitting on her porch and telling her story and experiences is the basic narrative framework on which Hurston gradually builds up her meticulous novel.

From the opening lines of the novel, Hurston manifests that *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is a story of a woman and that this woman has a deep sense of individuality and identity. She has the capacity to take her own decisions and live her life according to her will. While black men are fighting and fretting to achieve their dreams which seem so distant and

–mocked to death by Timell (175). According to Hurston: Now, women forget all those things they don't want to remember, and remember everything they don't want to forget. The dream is the truth. Then they act and do accordingly.

So the beginning of this was a woman and she had come back from burying the dead. Not the dead of sick and ailing with friends at the pillow and the feet. She had come back from the sodden and the bloated; the sudden dead, their eyes flung wide open in judgment.

This particular opening paragraph of the novel introduces to the main theme of the novel, the theme of the search for identity and individuality. Just as Janie relates her story to Pheoby, the novel slowly unfolds to reveal Janie's process of growth and her search for identity. Janie is brought up by her grandmother Nanny, who works for a white family called Washburn in Western Florida. Janie plays with white children unaware that she is black. One day she sees her photo and realizes that she is colored. Hurston depicts this scene of racial discovery with utmost ingenuity and complexity. Hurston writes:

So when we looked at de picture and everybody got pointed out there wasn't nobody left except a real dark little girl with long hair standing by Eleanor. Dat's where Ah wuz'posed to be, but Ah couldn't recognize dat dark chile as me. So ah ast, _where is me? Ah don't see me. (181)

Janie had an image of herself as a white which is shattered. For the first time in her life she becomes aware of her identity of being a colored person. She says, –Aw!Aw!Ah'mcolored !!(182). This self-realization is not a painful one, but marks an aspect of development of Janie's identity. Hurston also shows that by this

time Janie has no proper name. Janie says –Deyall use ter call me Alphabet cause so many people had done named me different names!! (181-182). As –Alphabet!!, Janie is depicted to be nothing more than a character. At the beginning, Janie is shown nameless and unrecognizable. The photograph reveals that she has no identity of her own. According to, Elizabeth Meese –Janie receives her sense of definition from others. She is woman as object in a racist, patriarchal culture. Failing to recognize herself as the one black child in a photograph, she begins her story without name or color (61-62).

Janie blossoms into a beautiful black teenager girl, in her youth, she has another self-revelation in her Nanny's yard. She becomes aware of her sexuality. Hurston writes:

Janie had spent most of the day under a blossoming pear tree in the backyard. She had been spending every minute that she could steal from her chores under that tree for the last three days. That was to say; ever since the first tiny bloom had opened it. It had called her to come and gaze on a mystery. From barren brown stems to glistening leaf-buds, from the leaf buds to snowy virginity of bloom. It stirred her tremendously. How why? It was like flute song forgotten in another existence and remembered again. What? How? Why? This singing she heard that had nothing to do with her ears. The rose of the world was breathing out smell. It followed her through all her waking moments and caressed her in her sleep. It connected itself with other vaguely felt matters that had struck her outside observation and buried themselves in her flesh. Now they emerged and quested about her consciousness. (182-83)

Then Janie sees the vision of the pear tree being pollinated by bees. She goes to see a bee pollinating the bloom. She comes to know that –this was a

marriage (183). At this point of time, Janie's search for self and identity primarily focuses on the social institution of marriage. She thinks that she will attain her self-realization by getting married to a man. However, corresponding the marriage with total realization of self, once again manifests Janie's immature consciousness. Unfortunately, Nanny marries her off to a much older and a simpleton named Logan Killicks. He is a man of stable financial position—sixty acres and a mule. Janie vehemently protests against this marriage but to no avail. Janie leads an unhappy life with Logan who is —ole skull-head in de grave yard (185). There is no identification in her experience and the vision she had dreamt off for herself. According to Janie, Logan is, —Some folks never was meant to be loved and he's one of them (193). In this utterly failed marriage, Janie matures to be a woman who comes to know that merely marrying a materialistic man like Logan Killicks cannot fulfill Janie's life. Janie leaves Killicks and marries an ambitious man called Joe Starks. In him, Janie sees a new sense of romance. He even promises to rescue Janie from her miserable domestic life. Joe or Jody Starks is a man of —big voice (196) and big visions. Hurston writes, —He meant to buy in big. It had always been his wish and desire to be big voice and he had to live nearly thirty years to find a chance (197). Janie is ready to take another gamble with her life in pursuit of her identity, Janie and Joe settle in Eatonville spending the next twenty years together.

Joe Starks becomes the mayor of Eatonville and a man with big properties and ample money in the bank. At first Janie seems to be happy with Joe, but

gradually, she feels oppressed. Joe puts a lot of restrictions on Janie. He does not allow her to talk to other members. She leads a lonely life with no voice and does not participate in community life. Joe says, —Mah wife don't know nothin' bout no speech-makin. Ah never married her nothing lak dat (228). Janie once again becomes aware of the futility in her second marriage. She now merely spends the life of a mayor's wife and is occasionally abused by Joe, both physically and emotionally.

Feminism in *Jonah's Gourd Vine*:

Jonah's Gourd Vine is Zora Neale Hurston's first novel published in 1934. This novel aptly exhibits Hurston's penchant for African American culture, dialects, folk- customs and oral traditions. This is a poignant tragic morality novel depicting a man's rise and fall due to his own follies. Valerie Boyd writes in this context:

Jonah's Gourd Vine—a first novel that was, for its time, remarkable in its ambition and achievement. Even today, the novel holds up, in the words of Pulitzer Prize—winning poet Rita Dove, as —a glorious paean to the power of the word. (255)

Hurston wrote the novel, in little more than two months and it was published in first week of May 1934. Early in 1933, Hurston had written a short story —*The Gilded Six Bits* which was published in the magazine *Story*. This short story caught the attention of Lippincott Publishers who then asked Hurston if she was working on some novel. Hurston readily told them —yes! though she was working on none. In the next two months, Hurston completed her first novel, loosely based on her parent's lives and named it *Jonah's Gourd Vine*. Though the novel was completed in 1933, Hurston

had been thinking about it since the year 1929 when she was conducting her anthropological research and field work. She wrote in her autobiography, *Dust Tracks on a Road*:

While I was in the research field in 1929, the idea of *Jonah's Gourd Vine* came to me. I had written a few short stories, but the idea of attempting a book seemed so big, that I gazed at it in the quiet of the night, but hid it away from even myself in daylight. (171)

Hurston was sure of one thing, that she would write her stories or novels based on the rich African American culture, celebrating it rather than lamenting it. She wanted her works to encompass multi-colour panoramic view of black life replete with optimism. She wrote emphatically in *Dust Tracks on a Road*:

For one thing, it seemed off key. What I wanted to tell was story about a man, and from what I had read and heard, Negroes were supposed to write about the Race Problem. I was and am thoroughly sick of the subject. My interest lies in what makes a man or a woman do such- and-so, regardless of his color. It seemed to me that the human beings I met reacted pretty much the same to the same stimuli. Different idioms, yes. Circumstances and condition having power to influence yes. Inherent difference, no. (171)

Hurston's first novel also serves as model for her later works such as *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), *Moses, Man of the Mountain* (1939) and *Seraph on the Suwanee* (1948). This first novel deals with major themes such as race, class, gender, family, love, marriage, religion, nature, migration which can also be found in her later novels. The protagonist of the novel is John Pearson and Hurston's narrative depicts his social, emotional, physical and psychological

growth, and other characters related with him.

Permeated with folklore and folk customs, *Jonah's Gourd Vine* is the story of John Pearson, rising from the life of an illiterate, poor worker to become a famous and successful minister in central Florida. John is a mulatto son of former slave Amy Crittenden. He was the result of the illegitimate union between slave Amy and owner of the plantation, Alf Pearson. John lives with his mother Amy, step father Ned and his other brothers. He is treated cruelly by his step father Ned and ultimately leaves his house and goes over –the big Creek to work in Alf Pearson's house and farm. Seeing his potential, Pearson sends John to school where he falls in love with his classmate Lucy Potts. Later John and Lucy marry despite stiff resistance from Lucy's parents. Even after marriage, John's philandering continues. He has illegitimate relations with several women though he returns to Lucy each time. John leaves Alabama and settles in Eatonville. After they arrive, Lucy helps John to rise to prominence in Eatonville community and soon he becomes a minister in the Zion Hope church. He also becomes the mayor. Meanwhile John's affairs with other women continue, as he is unable to resist them. Eventually, Lucy grows sick and dies.

After Lucy's death, John remarries his mistress Hattie Tyson much to the chagrin of his children and parishioners. John realizes his mistake in marrying Hattie and starts beating her up for attempting to conjure him. Hattie and other people try to malign and remove John Pearson from his role in the community. John and Hattie are divorced. After his last sermon, John leaves the town and heads for Plant City where he meets a woman named Sally Lovelace. John with the help of Sally returns to preaching, but is killed in an accident when

he is about to mend his ways and bring a change in himself. In the novel, Hurston has tried to bring out the true experience of African Americans, their hopes and aspirations, drawbacks and follies and their pain and agonies. In a brilliant way, Hurston develops her themes and narration using imagery, metaphor, symbols and motifs to bring out the indepth. Most importantly she uses African American folklore, and folk tradition to bring out the culture and life of African Americans.

Jonah's Gourd Vine is replete with so many themes that are often intertwined and sometimes difficult to sort out. Hurston's treatment of her themes varies from the comic to the tragic, from realistic to surrealistic, and from ironic to symbolic.

Jonah's Gourd Vine is set in the early years of the twentieth century. In the very opening pages of the novel, Hurston examines the life of African Americans in the post-slavery Southern part of America. She depicts the unfortunate legacy of slavery that continues to affect the lives of African Americans. Through the characters of Ned Crittenden, Amy Crittenden and Pheemy, all former slaves, Hurston tries to explore the psychological and emotional trauma that affects the African American even after so many years. Ned Crittenden, step-father of John Pearson warns John to stay far away from the Whites. He tells John, –Come out dat do' way and shet it tight, fool! Stand dare gazin 'dem white folks right in de face! Yo' brazen ways wid dese white folks is gwinter git you lynched one uh dese days“ (4). In fact, Ned is so scared of whites, that he warns his wife Amy also, —Amy, you better quit talkin' bout de buckra. Some of 'em be outside and hear you and turn over tuh de patter roller, and dey'll take you outa heah and put uh hun'ed lashes uh raw hide on yo'

back. Ah done tole yuh but yuh won't hear (9).

Amy Crittenden, mother of John Pearson was herself a former slave. Through the character of Amy, Hurston portrays African American women being treated as sexual chattel on slave plantations. Amy was abused by her slave owner Mr. Alf Pearson, a white. He rapes her and the result is the birth of John, a mulatto. Though born a slave, Amy after leading a slave's life attains freedom. She poignantly tells Ned that blacks should treasure and value their children unlike in slavery times when they were most liable to be taken away. Amy says:

Course dey don't, but we ain't got tuh let de white folks love our chillun fuh us, is us? Dass jest de pint. We black folks don't love our chillun. We couldn't do it when wuz in slavery. We borned 'em butdat didn't make 'em ourn. Dey b'longed tuh old, Massa. 'Twan't no use in treasurin' other folkses property. It wuz liable tuh be took uhway any day. But we's free folks now. De big bell done rung! Us chillun is burn. Ah doan know, mebbe hit'll take some of us generations, but us got tuh 'gin practice on treasurin' our younguns. Ah loves deseheah already uh whole heap. Ah don't wont 'em knocked and 'bucked. (6-7)

Slavery worked in a systematic way to break African Americans families and used each and every individual of the African American family as a commodity. It efficiently worked against any effort to bring cohesiveness in black family, disrupting relationship between man and woman, parent and children. Ned wants to send John to Cap'n Mimms a cruel white plantation owner, –dat everybody knowed wuz de wust in southern Alabama. He done whipped niggers nigh tuh deathl (8). This replicates the situation where slave owners used to sell their own children. The slave's

loyalty belonged only to their masters. Hurston shows that little has changed in the post war South. Hurston through the Crittenden family shows the ill – effects of slavery faced by African Americans, but she also shows putrid aspect of slavery through Alf Pearson, a white slave owner. Alf had abused Amy during slavery days and never acknowledges John as his son. He rules over not only his slaves but his town and community. When Alf meets John for the first time, he says, —What a fine stud! Why boy, you would have brought five thousand dollars on the block in slavery time! Your face looks familiar but I can't place you. What's your name? (17). Alf Pearson's treatment of his son is ironic yet reminds readers of the days of slavery. John Lowe rightly asserts, —We laugh at the joke on Pearson, but wince as well at the equally ironic and immediate translation of a human being, his own son, into financial and breeding terms, which seems to be a post bellum hangover of slave owning (104).

Concomitant with the theme of slavery, class is also an important thematic concern in the novel. The novel is set in small towns of Alabama and Florida centered on the lives of African Americans in rural setting. During this time period i.e. late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, a large number of African Americans worked as labourers on plantations owned by rich whites in a system called share cropping. African Americans were allotted a plot of land by whites to cultivate in exchange of a big share of profit. Usually this transaction proved to be a loss for the blacks resulting in heavy debt as they had to pay rent for housing, farming supplies apart from surrendering huge share of profit. Though blacks became free but their economic slavery continued. In the novel, Hurston shows blacks and whites living in two

worlds apart, one living in a state of poverty and other in affluence. Sharon L. Jones writes, —Hurston probes into the complex dynamics of race and class relationships by chronicling the lives of former slaves and slave owners (77). Alf Pearson symbolizes upper class white society. He is an influential person in his town as well as a judge. Other whites portrayed in the novel such as Mr. Shelby, Mr. Mimms too are shown rich. Ned, Amy Crittenden and their sons live in poverty. They try to make a living by picking cotton but they fail miserably. They work for Mr. Beasley who is a rich but cruel white plantation owner who often exploits them. Amy says to Ned:

Ah tole you when dey hauled de cotton tuh de gin dat soon ez everything wuz counted up and Beasley give us share for yuh take and haul it straight tuh dis barn. But naw, yuh couldn't lissen tuh me.

Beasley told yuh tuh leave hit in his barn and being he's uh white man you done what he told yuh. Now he say ain't got no cotton uh oun.

Me and you and all de chillun done worked uh whole year. Us done made sixteen bales uh cotton and ain't even got uh cotton seed to show. Now he say he ain't got no cotton uh oun. Me and you and all de chillun done worked uh whole year. Us done made sixteen bales uh cotton and ain't even got uh cotton seed to show. (7)

Hurston demonstrates the area —over de Big Creek to manifest the difference between people from varied social and economic classes. When John arrives across the creek for the first time he is surprised to see people from different classes and African Americans living a more prosperous life than he had ever seen. Hurston writes:

Negro children going to learn how to read and write like white folks. See! All this going on over there.... and the younguns over the Creek chopping cotton! It must be very nice, but may be it wasn't for over the creek niggers.

Conclusion:

Their Eyes Were Watching God is a novel written by Zora Neale Hurston, one of famous African-American authors. The black woman's experience on a quest for her own identity and freedom; reach for new sense of self-awareness inspired her to write this novel. In this novel, Hurston describes about black woman experiences particularly through main female character, Janie Crawford's. The novel tells about Janie as a main female character that through four stages of life in her quest for respect, independence, and happiness. Her life is controlled by others in the first three stages, first her grandmother, then Logan Killicks, Joe Starks, and Tea Cake. Through feminism concept, the writer focuses in Janie's characteristic that implies a feminist concept; independent, courageous, outspoken, decisive, and mature. Although Janie placed as an inferior and surrender woman who got a suppression and oppression treatment from her husband, nevertheless, Janie then placed in a strong position in facing the unfair treatment or society. With her courage and very determined will, Janie started her new life by leaving her husbands. From those explorations of a strong female character's consciousness of Janie, the writer analyzes that it has made Janie as a feminist character who lived in the environment that dominated by men and she tried to against it. It seemed that Janie has feminist perspective; therefore, she struggles to against what she thought that was not right and contradicts with her mind and principles. The success of Janie in fighting against her husbands and the patriarchy system that adhered is the end

of Their Eyes Were Watching God novel. Janie's courage to make decision by leaving her husbands can be said as her success to be free from the patriarchal system and the reflection of the concept of feminism. The writer suggests for those who are interested in the study about literature, on prose subject, especially in Their Eyes Were Watching God novel by Zora Neale Hurston, they can use feminist literary criticism approach, in comprehending and enhancing the image of women in the novel. Anyone who is interested in doing deeper study about this novel may use many approaches and many point of views. Besides that, the writer also expects that the research will be useful to the reader who wants to analyze woman character through feminism approach in any kind of literary work. Finally, the writer hopes too this thesis can give a positive contribution in Literature study, especially for the students of English letters department, letters and humanities faculty, State Islamic university of Jakarta, as an additional reference in studying African-American novel. The paradigm of the new political identity that grew out of the Harlem Renaissance movement, called for a dissection of Black culture—an aesthetic sacrifice Hurston was not willing to make. Her rebellious, non-compliance became an inescapable component of her personal and literary career, and the source of much dissension among her fellow sophisticates. In the face of stinging criticism and persistent opprobrium, Hurston realized her extraordinary and unprecedented goals of preserving and presenting the elegant and rugged beauty of the rural, southern African American.

A retrospective glance allows clear sight of Hurston's extraordinary contributions to American anthropology and folklore, her collections of folk materials, novels and essays a testament to her

incredible prolificacy. She challenged the parameters of the Harlem Renaissance and has similarly compromised the impenetrable exterior of the canon of American literature. Since the Alice Walker led revival of the 70s, Hurston's stock has appreciated to eminent status. The discussion covered most of all the contradictions of the feminist theory as it clearly discards a more severe oppression based on racism and classicism which black women suffer. It was because of this ignorance and ethnocentrism that the black women chose womanism as a more intense fight against oppression and prejudice. We tried to clarify the stages of development of the black woman in the texts of American literature from the mulatta to a fully developed character. The mulatta, who is part-white part-black, is an image that helped aggravate the pain of the colored person as she struggles in the midst of her mixed color which is neither black nor white. The mulatta finds herself fighting a sense of emptiness because she does not know where she belongs and another deeper sense of guilt because she does not know to whom she should be loyal, her black slave mother or her white landowning father. In *Their Eyes Were Watching God* Hurston presents a shockingly unusual female character who contradicts the white ideology of true womanhood and the familiar stereotypical black female characters. The brief survey of Hurston's contexts showed the hostility she faced from prominent Renaissance contemporaries like Du Bois and Locke, mainly because she refused the calls for collective action.

She believed that every person white or black should lead an individualistic struggle to transcend his social conditions. Her critics assume that she was preoccupied with folklore and voodoo while she should have been an active voice in the combative literary productions of The Harlem Renaissance. However, nowadays she is

considered as one of the writers who played an important role in preserving and celebrating the beauty of the black culture, linguistically and artistically. In portraying the quest of her protagonist for selfhood and freedom, Hurston produced an exhilarating tale of a vitalist heroine who escapes, marries three times, and kills to save her life. To perpetuate the sense of vitalism, Hurston used two motifs: the sun and the horizon. Janie's fascination with these natural elements are mirrored in her final encounter with death as she kills her beloved husband to have a new chance at living, in much the same way as the sun erases the night to bring a new day. The horizon in the end is all hers as she finds herself alone in a highland far from danger with a new and most appreciated life. The language of Janie is another narrative strategy that we shed the light on. Hurston used the simple pastoral language of the South to keep her characters authentic and believable. The use of language or communication with other people especially women was a technique that Hurston implied to drag Janie out of solitude and into a deeper understanding of herself and the others.

Jonah's Gourd Vine is an epitome of literature portraying slavery and escape motif in African-American society. The literary work is exemplary in describing the intricate features of the characters. John's characterization specifically has been remarkable in the sense of bringing out the essence of irony where he is depicted as both passionate and perfect as well as imperfect in a moral sense. John's character has been subjected to much debate by various authors. It is clear from the analysis of this literary work that there are many instances portraying characters' desire to escape the ill treatment and mundane society. The same has been perceived as a desire of women as well due to intense male domination in the African-American society.

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