

Aaron Francis
Alwin Firmansyah
Sam Lee
Raj Parekh
Tim Kamstra

Raison in the Sun

Group 7

Analysis

Characterization - Red

Marxist/Social/Cultural/Historical – Blue

ACT 1

SCENE ONE

The YOUNGER living room would be a comfortable and well-ordered room if it were not for a number of indestructible contradictions to this state of being. Its furnishings are typical and undistinguished and their primary feature now is that they have clearly had to accommodate the living of too many people for too many years and they are tired. Still, we can see that at some time, a time probably no longer remembered by the family {except perhaps for MAMA), the furnishings of this room were actually selected with care and love and even hope and brought to this apartment and arranged with taste and pride.

That was a long time ago. Now the once loved pattern of the couch upholstery has to fight to show itself from under acres of crocheted doilies and couch covers which have themselves finally come to be more important than the upholstery. And here a table or a chair has been moved to disguise the worn places in the carpet; but the carpet has fought back by showing its weariness, with depressing uniformity, elsewhere on its surface.

Weariness has, in fact, won in this room. Everything has been polished, washed, sat on, used, scrubbed too often. All pretenses but living itself have long since vanished from the very atmosphere of this room. Moreover, a section of this room, for it is not really a room unto itself, though the landlord's lease would make it seem so, slopes backward to provide a small kitchen area, where the family prepares the meals that are eaten in the living room proper, which must also serve as dining room. The single window that has been provided for these "two" rooms is located in this kitchen area. The sole natural light the family

may enjoy in the course of a day is only that which fights its way through this little window. At left, a door leads to a bedroom which is shared by MAMA and her daughter, BENEATHA. At right, opposite, is a second room (which in the beginning of the life of this apartment was probably a breakfast room) which serves as a bedroom for WALTER and his wife, RUTH.

Time: Sometime between World War II and the present.

Place: Chicago's Southside.

At Rise: It is morning dark in the living room. TRAVIS is asleep on the make-down bed at center. An alarm clock sounds from within the bedroom at right, and presently RUTH enters from that room and closes the door behind her. She crosses sleepily toward the window. As she passes her sleeping son she reaches down and shakes him a little. At the window she raises the shade and a dusky Southside morning light comes in feebly. She fills a pot with water and puts it on to boil. She calls to the boy, between yawns, in a slightly muffled voice. RUTH is about thirty. We can see that she was a pretty girl, even exceptionally so, but now it is apparent that life has been little that she expected, and disappointment has already begun to hang in her face. In a few years, before thirty-five even, she will be known among her people as a "settled woman" She crosses to her son and gives him a good, final, rousing shake.

RUTH Come on now, boy, it's seven thirty! (Her son sits up at last, in a stupor of sleepiness) I say hurry up, Travis! You ain't the only person in the world got to use a bathroom! (The child, a sturdy, handsome little boy of ten or eleven, drags himself out of the bed and almost blindly takes his towels and "today's clothes" from drawers and a closet and goes out to the bath- room, which is in an outside hall and which is shared by another family or families on the same floor.

RUTH crosses to the bedroom door at right and opens it and calls in to her husband) Walter Lee! . . . It's after seven thirty! Lemme see you do some waking up in there now! (She waits) You better get up from there, man! It's after seven thirty I tell you. (She waits again) All right, you just go ahead and lay there and next thing you know Travis be finished and Mr. Johnson'll be in there and yo.u'll be fussing and cussing round here like a madman! And be late too! (She waits, at the end of patience) Walter Lee it's time for you to GET UP! (She waits another second and then starts to go into the bedroom, but is apparently satisfied that her husband has begun to get up. She stops, pulls the door to, and returns to the kitchen area. She wipes her face with a moist cloth and runs her fingers through her sleep-disheveled hair in a vain effort and ties an apron around her housecoat. The bedroom door at right opens and her husband stands in the doorway in his pajamas, which are rumpled and mismatched. He is a lean, intense young man in his middle thirties, inclined to quick nervous movements and erratic speech habits and always in his voice there is a quality of indictment)

WALTER Is he out yet?

RUTH What you mean out? He ain't hardly got in there good yet.

WALTER (Wandering in, still more oriented to sleep than to a new day) Well, what was you doing all that yelling for if I can't even get in there yet? (Stopping and thinking) Check coming today?

Walter's life revolves around money, the first thing he says in the morning is about money.

RUTH They said Saturday and this is just Friday and I hopes to God you ain't going to get up here first thing this morning and start talking to me 'bout no money 'cause I 'bout don't want to hear it.

WALTER Something the matter with you this morning?

RUTH No I'm just sleepy as the devil. What kind of eggs you want?

WALTER Not scrambled. (RUTH starts to scramble eggs) Paper come? (RUTH points impatiently to the rolled up Tribune on the table, and he gets it and spreads it out and vaguely reads the front page) Set off another bomb yesterday.

(Historical) It shows the time and setting of when A Raisin in the Sun was written about. In this case, it shows that it is during some war possibly Korean War or the Vietnam War.

RUTH (Maximum indifference) Did they?

WALTER (Looking up) What's the matter with you?

RUTH Ain't nothing the matter with me. And don't keep asking me that this morning.

WALTER Ain't nobody bothering you. (Reading the news of the day absently again) Say Colonel McCormick is sick.

(Historical) This quote helps to show some more background of the story by providing an important historical figure within the time period. Colonel McCormick born 1880-1955 was the owner of a prestigious Chicago Newspaper. This section helps to narrow the bridge of the time frame in which the story is told, between 1945-1955.

RUTH (Affecting tea-party interest) Is he now? Poor thing.

WALTER (Sighing and looking at his watch) Oh, me. (He waits) Now what is that boy doing in that bathroom all this time? He just going to have to start getting up earlier. I can't be being late to work on account of him fooling around in there.

RUTH (Turning on him) Oh, no he ain't going to be getting up no earlier no such thing! It ain't his fault that he can't get to bed no earlier nights 'cause he got a bunch of crazy good-for-nothing clowns sitting up running their mouths in what is supposed to be his bedroom after ten o'clock at night . . .

WALTER That's what you mad about, ain't it? The things I want to talk about .with my friends just couldn't be important in your mind, could they?

(He rises and finds a cigarette in her handbag on the table and crosses to the little window and looks out, smoking and deeply enjoying this first one)

RUTH (Almost matter of factly, a complaint too automatic to deserve emphasis) Why you always got to smoke before you eat in the morning?

WALTER (At the window) Just look at 'em down there . . . Running and racing to work . . . (He turns

and faces his wife and watches her a moment at the stove, and then, suddenly) You look young this morning, baby.

Through this quote, we can observe some of the social and Marxist aspects of the story. Walter identifies some of the white people that are “running and racing to work”. By doing so, we can tell that white people had a strong purpose that many blacks did not have at the time. Also, there is a sense of bitterness in Walter’s voice because he also wants to have a strong purpose like the people he saw and he knows that it may be unattainable for him.

RUTH (Indifferently) Yeah?

WALTER Just for a second stirring them eggs. Just for a second it was you looked real young again. (He reaches for her; she crosses away. Then, drily) It's gone now you look like yourself again!

RUTH Man, if you don't shut up and leave me alone.

WALTER (Looking out to the street again) First thing a man ought to learn in life is not to make love to no colored woman first thing in the morning. You all some eeeevil people at eight o'clock in the morning.

(TRAVIS appears in the hall doorway, almost fully dressed and quite wide awake now, his towels and pajamas across his shoulders. He opens the door and signals for his father to make the bathroom in a hurry)

TRAVIS (Watching the bathroom) Daddy, come on! (WALTER gets his bathroom utensils and flies out to the bathroom)

RUTH Sit down and have your breakfast, Travis.

TRAVIS Mama, this is Friday. (Gleefully) Check coming tomorrow, huh?

By Travis also bringing up the “check”, we can tell that even a child at this age has been influenced by money. (Marxist)

RUTH You get your mind off money and eat your breakfast.

TRAVIS (Eating) This is the morning we supposed to bring the fifty cents to school.

RUTH Well, I ain't got no fifty cents this morning.

TRAVIS Teacher say we have to.

RUTH I don't care what teacher say. I ain't got it. Eat your breakfast, Travis.

TRAVIS I am eating.

RUTH Hush up now and just eat!

(The boy gives her an exasperated look for her lack of understanding, and eats grudgingly)

TRAVIS You think Grandmama would have it?

RUTH No! And I want you to stop asking your grandmother for money, you hear me?

TRAVIS (Outraged) Gaaaleee! I don't ask her, she just gimme it sometimes!

RUTH Travis Willard Younger I got too much on me this morning to be

TRAVIS Maybe Daddy

RUTH Travis!

(The boy hushes abruptly. They are both quiet and tense for several seconds)

TRAVIS (Presently) Could I maybe go carry some groceries in front of the supermarket for a little while after school then?

RUTH Just hush, I said. (Travis jabs his spoon into his cereal bowl viciously, and rests his head in anger upon his fists) If you through eating, you can get over there and make up your bed.

(The boy obeys stiffly and crosses the room, almost mechanically, to the bed and more or less folds the bedding into a heap, then angrily gets his books and cap)

TRAVIS (Sulking and standing apart from her unnaturally) I'm gone.

[The whole entire conversation that morning was about money, which goes to show that money is a social institution that dictates their life. \(Marxist\)](#)

RUTH (Looking up from the stove to inspect him automatically) Come here. (He crosses to her and she studies his head) If you don't take this comb and fix this here head, you better! (TRAVIS puts down his books with a great sigh of oppression, and crosses to the mirror. His mother mutters under her breath about his "slubbornness") 'Bout to march out of here with that head looking just like chickens slept in it! I just don't know where you get your slubborn ways . . . , And get your jacket, too. Looks chilly out this morning.

TRAVIS (With conspicuously brushed hair and jacket) Im gone.

RUTH Get carfare and milk money (Waving one finger) and not a single penny for no caps, you hear me?

TRAVIS (With sullen politeness) Yes'm.

(He turns in outrage to leave. His mother -watches after him as in his frustration he approaches the door almost comically. When she speaks to him, her voice has become a very gentle tease)

RUTH (Mocking; as she thinks he would say it) Oh, Mama makes me so mad sometimes, I don't know what to do! (She waits and continues to his back as he stands stock-still in front of the door) I wouldn't kiss that woman good-bye for nothing in this world this morning! (The boy finally turns around and rolls his eyes at her, knowing the mood has changed and he is vindicated; he does not, however, move toward her yet) Not for nothing in this world! (She finally laughs aloud at him and holds out her arms to him and we see that it is a way between them, very old and practiced. He crosses to her and allows her

to embrace him warmly but keeps his face fixed with masculine rigidity. She holds him back from her presently and looks at him and runs her fingers over the features of his face. With utter gentleness)
Now whose little old angry man are you?

TRAVIS (The masculinity and gruff ness start to jade at last) Aw gaalee Mama ...

RUTH (Mimicking) Aw gaaaaalleeeee, Mama! (She pushes him, with rough playfulness and finality, toward the door) Get on out of here or you going to be late.

TRAVIS (In the face of love, new aggressiveness) Mama, could I please go carry groceries?
(Historical, Social, Cultural) This shows that during this time period on how even through all the civil rights achievements to this point black people were still in a sense in servitude to white people. Ruth is a maid to a “white” family, Walter is a chauffeur to a “white” family, and now Travis, as a job, wants to carry groceries for “white” people.

RUTH Honey, it's starting to get so cold evenings.

WALTER (Coming in from the bathroom and drawing a make-believe gun from a make-believe holster and shooting at his son) What is it he wants to do?

RUTH Go carry groceries after school at the supermarket.

WALTER Well, let him go ...

TRAVIS (Quickly, to the ally) I have to she won't gimme the fifty cents . . .

WALTER (To his wife only) Why not?

RUTH (Simply, and with flavor) 'Cause we don't have it.

(Social, Historical, Cultural) This shows that the family did not have money at the time, even a small amount of fifty cents.

WALTER (To RUTH only) What you tell the boy things like that for? (Reaching down into his pants with a rather important gesture) Here, son

(He hands the boy the coin, but his eyes are directed to his wife's. TRAVIS takes the money happily)

TRAVIS Thanks, Daddy.

(He starts out. RUTH watches both of them with murder in her eyes. WALTER stands and stares back at her with defiance, and suddenly reaches into his pocket again on an afterthought)

WALTER (Without even looking at his son, still staring hard at his wife) In fact, here's another fifty cents . . . Buy yourself some fruit today or take a taxicab to school or something!

Walter giving his son 50 more cents than he asked for highlights the general perception of black society after WW2 during the height of the civil rights movement, Sticking it to the man presumably enthralled America and gave a unify slogan to the African American race. We can infer that from this statement that Walter is a very proud man, a very strong black man. And as he alludes to later on in the passage he hates seeing his son struggle, his wife work endless hours and his family fall apart, he will do anything to make their lives better, anything to make it easier. And for him to give his only son just a little bit more money than he asked for to see the smile on his sons face, and equally how he sticks it to white

society. During this era black people have been excluded, shunned from public exhibitions and this is Walter's way of proving them wrong, proving to society that he is equal to the white man, that his son and himself are better than anyone else, matter a fact even better.

TRAVIS Whoopee

(He leaps up and clasps his father around the middle with his legs, and they face each other in mutual appreciation; slowly WALTER LEE peeks around the boy to catch the violent rays from his wife's eyes and draws his head back as if shot)

WALTER You better get down now and get to school, man.

TRAVIS (At the door) O.K. Good-bye.
(He exits)

WALTER (After him, pointing with pride) That's my boy. (She looks at him in disgust and turns back to her work) You know what I was thinking 'bout in the bathroom this morning?

RUTH No.

WALTER How come you always try to be so pleasant!

RUTH What is there to be pleasant 'bout!

WALTER You want to know what I was thinking 'bout in the bathroom or not!

RUTH I know what you thinking 'bout.

WALTER (Ignoring her) 'Bout what me and Willy Harris was talking about last night.

RUTH (Immediately a refrain) Willy Harris is a good-for-nothing loudmouth.

WALTER Anybody who talks to me has got to be a good-for-nothing loudmouth, ain't he? And what you know about who is just a good-for-nothing loudmouth? Charlie Atkins was just a "good-for-nothing loudmouth" too, wasn't he! When he wanted me to go in the dry-cleaning business with him. And now he's grossing a hundred thousand a year. A hundred thousand dollars a year! You still call him a loudmouth! (Marxist) Walter defends Charlie Atkins just because he has money. This shows that money within that seems to change the attitude a person has of another person.

RUTH (Bitterly) Oh, Walter Lee . . .

(She folds her head on her arms over the table)

WALTER (Rising and coming to her and standing over her) You tired, ain't you? Tired of everything. Me, the boy, the way we live this beat-up hole everything. Ain't you? (She doesn't look up, doesn't answer) So tired moaning and groaning all the time, but you wouldn't do nothing to help, would you? You couldn't be on my side that long for nothing, could you?

(Marxist) Walter is sick and tired of not being able to climb up in the social ladder. He is stuck at the bottom and blames his colored wife for doing “nothing to help”.

RUTH Walter, please leave me alone.

WALTER A man needs for a woman to back him up , . .

(Social, Cultural, Historical) This quote shows that during this time period a man’s perception of a woman is to “back him up” and support him.

RUTH Walter

WALTER Mama would listen to you. You know she listen to you more than she do me and Bennie. She think more of you. All you have to do is just sit down with her when you drinking your coffee one morning and talking 'bout things like you do and (He sits down beside her and demonstrates graphically what he thinks her methods and tone should be) you just sip your coffee, see, and say easy like that you been thinking 'bout that deal Walter Lee is so interested in, 'bout the store and all, and sip some more coffee, like what you saying ain't really that important to you And the next thing you know, she be listening good and asking you questions and when I come home I can tell her the details. This ain't no fly-by-night proposition, baby. I mean we figured it out, me and Willy and Bobo.

RUTH (With a frown) Bobo?

WALTER Yeah. You see, this little liquor store we got in mind cost seventy-five thousand and we figured the initial investment on the place be 'bout thirty thousand, see. That be ten thousand each. Course, there's a couple of hundred you got to pay so's you don't spend your life just waiting for them clowns to let your license get approved

(Social, Cultural Historical, Marxist) This shows Walter, for money, is willing to do anything even if it taints his integrity. Walter referring to white people as “clowns” is his bitterness towards them and the lack of power he has.

RUTH You mean graft?

WALTER (Frowning impatiently) Don't call it that. See there, that just goes to show you what women understand about the world. Baby, don't nothing happen for you in this world 'less you pay somebody off!

(Social, Historical, Cultural) Walter in this quote patronizes Ruth when she questions his means of getting a license which coincides with the social, historical, and cultural aspect that was existent within the time. Women were considered inferior to men and so in this Walter treats Ruth as inferior to him.

RUTH Walter, leave me alone! (She raises her head and stares at him vigorously then says, more quietly) Eat your eggs, they gonna be cold.

WALTER (Straightening up from her and looking off) That's it. There you are. Man say to his woman: I got me a dream. His woman say: Eat your eggs. (Sadly, but gaining in power) Man say: I got to take hold of this here world, baby! And a woman will say: Eat your eggs and go to work. (Passionately now) Man say: I got to change my life, I'm choking to death, baby! And his woman say (In utter anguish as he brings his fists down on his thighs) Your eggs is getting cold!

(Social, Cultural, Historical) In this quote, Walter is trying to prove a point that a man’s dream is very

important and that it is a woman's job to support that dream. Again, he is looking down upon Ruth.

RUTH (Softly) Walter, that ain't none of our money.

WALTER (Not listening at all or even looking at her) This morning, I was lookin' in the mirror and thinking about it ... I'm thirty-five years old; I been married eleven years and I got a boy who sleeps in the living room (Very, very quietly) and all I got to give him is stories about how rich white people live . . .
(Social, Marxist) Walter is in a sense going through a mid-life crisis. He feels that he has not done enough with his life and that the only way to make his life worthwhile is to be successful like the "rich white people".

RUTH Eat your eggs, Walter.

WALTER (Slams the table and jumps up) DAMN MY EGGS DAMN ALL THE EGGS THAT EVER WAS!

RUTH Then go to work.

WALTER (Looking up at her) See I'm trying to talk to you 'bout myself (Shaking his head with the repetition) and all you can say is eat them eggs and go to work.

RUTH (Wearily) Honey, you never say nothing new. I listen to you every day, every night and every morning, and you never say nothing new. (Shrugging) So you would rather be Mr. Arnold than be his chauffeur. So I would rather be living in Buckingham Palace.

This quote helps to show Ruth's role as a wife. She says that she listens to Walter "every day, every night and every morning" which shows her obedient and monotonous role as a wife. (Social, Cultural)

WALTER That is just what is wrong with the colored woman in this world . . . Don't understand about building their men up and making 'em feel like they somebody. Like they can do something.

Walter has a negative attitude towards "colored women in this world" because they do not give the needed support that black men need. He uses his wife as a scapegoat to why he cannot be successful. In this way, the quote shows that black men at the time, needed more support to "do something" than white men. (Marxist)

RUTH (Drily, but to hurt) There are colored men who do things.

WALTER No thanks to the colored woman.

(Social, Cultural) Walter is condescending towards his wife and has an attitude that men do not need "colored women"

RUTH Well, being a colored woman, I guess I can't help myself none.

Ruth has a sarcastic tone when she says this but even so, we can tell that she understands her place as a "colored woman" who is considered to be helpless at the time. (Social, Cultural, Historical)

(She rises and gets the ironing board and sets it up and attacks a huge pile of rough-dried clothes, sprinkling them in preparation for the ironing and then rolling them into tight fat balls)

WALTER (Mumbling) We one group of men tied to a race of women with small minds!

This quote helps to identify Walters negative attitude towards a women's intelligence. Many men during the time were like Walter and believed that women had "small minds" because of their gender. (Social,

Cultural, Historical)

(His sister BENEATHA enters. She is about twenty, as slim and intense as her brother. She is not as pretty as her sister-in-law, but her lean, almost intellectual face has a handsomeness of its own. She wears a bright-red flannel nightie, and her thick hair stands wildly about her head. Her speech is a mixture of many things; it is different from the rest of the family's insofar as education has permeated her sense of English and perhaps the Midwest rather than the South has finally at last won out in her inflection; but not altogether, because over all of it is a soft slurring and transformed use of vowels which is the decided influence of the Southside. She passes through the room without looking at either RUTH or WALTER and goes to the outside door and looks, a little blindly, out to the bathroom. She sees that it has been lost to the Johnsons. She closes the door with a sleepy vengeance and crosses to the table and sits down a little defeated)

BENEATHA I am going to start timing those people.

WALTER You should get up earlier.

BENEATHA (Her face in her hands. She is still fighting the urge to go back to bed) Really would you suggest dawn? Where's the paper?

WALTER (Pushing the paper across the table to her as he studies her almost clinically, as though he has never seen her before) You a horrible-looking chick at this hour.

BENEATHA (Drily) Good morning, everybody.

WALTER (Senselessly) How is school coming?

BENEATHA (In the same spirit) Lovely. Lovely. And you know, biology is the greatest. (Looking up at him) I dissected something that looked just like you yesterday.

Beneatha is an example of a girl that tries to rebel against the typical female stereotype that women are stupid. As you can see, she thinks "biology is the greatest" and stands up to her brother unlike other women. At the time, women were still under male dominance but a rare amount of women were beginning to become more independent.

WALTER I just wondered if you've made up your mind and everything.

BENEATHA (Gaining in sharpness and impatience) And what did I answer yesterday morning and the day before that?

RUTH (From the ironing board, like someone disinterested and old) Don't be so nasty, Bennie. There is a strong contrast between Ruth's tone of voice and Bennie's. Ruth represents the majority of women at the time that are obedient and dominated by males while Bennie represents the rare amount of women that rebel against this female attitude. (Social, Cultural, Historical)

BENEATHA (Still to her brother) And the day before that and the day before that!

WALTER (Defensively) I'm interested in you. Something wrong with that? Ain't many girls who decide This quote helps to show that many women at the time did not attempt to become individually successful. (Social, Cultural, Historical)

WALTER and BENEATHA (In unison) "to be a doctor."
(Silence)

WALTER Have we figured out yet just exactly how much medical school is going to cost?

RUTH Walter Lee, why don't you leave that girl alone and get out of here to work?

BENEATHA (Exits to the bathroom and bangs on the door) Come on out of there, please!

(She comes back into the room)

WALTER (Looking at his sister intently) You know the check is coming tomorrow.

BENEATHA (Turning on him with a sharpness all her own) That money belongs to Mama, Walter, and it's for her to decide how she wants to use it. I don't care if she wants to buy a house or a rocket ship or just nail it up somewhere and look at it. It's hers. Not ours hers.

WALTER (Bitterly) Now ain't that fine! You just got your mother's interest at heart, ain't you, girl? You such a nice girl but if Mama got that money she can always take a few thousand and help you through school too can't she?

BENEATHA I have never asked anyone around here to do anything for me!
[Beneatha represents one of the few women at the time that is very independent. \(Social\)](#)

WALTER No! And the line between asking and just accepting when the time comes is big and wide ain't it!

BENEATHA (With jury) What do you want from me, Brother that I quit school or just drop dead, which!

WALTER I don't want nothing but for you to stop acting holy 'round here. Me and Ruth done made some sacrifices for you why can't you do something for the family?

RUTH Walter, don't be dragging me in it.

WALTER You are in it Don't you get up and go work in somebody's kitchen for the last three years to help put clothes on her back?

[This quote helps to identify the servitude that Ruth had to do. As a colored woman, the only job she was able to get was working in "somebody's kitchen for the last three years" \(Social, Cultural\)](#)

RUTH Oh, Walter that's not fair . . .

WALTER It ain't that nobody expects you to get on your knees and say thank you, Brother; thank you, Ruth; thank you, Mama and thank you, Travis, for wearing the same pair of shoes for two semesters
[The fact that Travis has worn the "same pair of shoes for two semesters" shows that the family struggles with financial issues and that Walter wants to be able to provide his son with these kind of things out of pride. \(Social, Cultural\)](#)

BENEATHA (Dropping to her knees) Well I do all right? thank everybody! And forgive me for ever wanting to be anything at all! (Pursuing him on her knees across the floor) FORGIVE ME, FORGIVE ME, FORGIVE ME!

RUTH Please stop it! Your mama'll hear you.

WALTER Who the hell told you you had to be a doctor? If you so crazy 'bout messing 'round with sick people then go be a nurse like other women or just get married and be quiet . . .

In this quote, Walter holds a very dominant male attitude towards women. He tells his sister to work like typical women as a nurse rather than a doctor or get married. This dominant male attitude was very common at this time period and also shows that average women were meant to do jobs that were lower in rank than jobs for men.

BENEATHA Well you finally got it said ... It took you three years but you finally got it said. Walter, give up; leave me alone it's Mama's money.

WALTER He was my father, too!

BENEATHA So what? He was mine, too and Travis' grandfather but the insurance money belongs to Mama. Picking on me is not going to make her give it to you to invest in any liquor stores (Underbreath, dropping into a chair) and I for one say, God bless Mama for that!

WALTER (To RUTH) See did you hear? Did you hear!

RUTH Honey, please go to work.

WALTER Nobody in this house is ever going to understand me.

BENEATHA Because you're a nut.

WALTER Who's a nut?

BENEATHA You you are a nut. Thee is mad, boy.

WALTER (Looking at his wife and his sister from the door, very sadly) The world's most backward race of people, and that's a fact.

BENEATHA (Turning slowly in her chair) And then there are all those prophets who would lead us out of the wilderness (WALTER slams out of the house) into the swamps!

RUTH Bennie, why you always gotta be pickin' on your brother? Can't you be a little sweeter sometimes? (Door opens. WALTER walks in. He fumbles with his cap, starts to speak, clears throat, looks everywhere but at RUTH. Finally:)

WALTER (To RUTH) I need some money for carfare.

RUTH (Looks at him, then warms; teasing, but tenderly) Fifty cents? (She goes to her bag and gets money) Here take a taxi!

(WALTER exits. MAMA enters. She is a woman in her early sixties, full-bodied and strong. She is one of

those women of a certain grace and beauty who wear it so unobtrusively that it takes a while to notice. Her dark-brown face is surrounded by the total whiteness of her hair, and, being a woman who has adjusted to many things in life and over-come many more, her face is full of strength. She has, we can see, wit and faith of a kind that keep her eyes lit and full of interest and expectancy. She is, in a word, a beautiful woman. Her bearing is perhaps most like the noble bearing of the women of the Hereros of Southwest Africa rather as if she imagines that as she walks she still bears a basket or a vessel upon her head. Her speech, on the other hand, is as careless as her carriage is precise she is inclined to slur everything but her voice is perhaps not so much quiet as simply soft)

MAMA Who that 'round here slamming doors at this hour?
Shows her dominance within the family and the household

(She crosses through the room, goes to the window, opens it, and brings in a feeble little plant growing doggedly in a small pot on the window sill. She feels the dirt and puts it back out)

RUTH That was Walter Lee. He and Bennie was at it again.

MAMA My children and they tempers. Lord, if this little old plant don't get more sun than it's been getting it ain't never going to see spring again. (She turns from the window) What's the matter with you this morning, Ruth? You looks right peaked. You aiming to iron all them things? Leave some for me. I'll get to 'em this afternoon. Bennie honey, it's too drafty for you to be sitting 'round half dressed. Where's your robe? Her , verymily

Spring-archaetype for a new beginning, a resurrection.
Mama is concerned with her family, very protective and all knowing
Shes the idealist mother figure, concerned with every aspect of everyone life.

BENEATHA In the cleaners.

MAMA Well, go get mine and put it on.

BENEATHA I'm not cold, Mama, honest.

MAMA I know but you so thin . . .

BENEATHA (Irritably) Mama, I'm not cold.

MAMA (Seeing the make-down bed as TRAVIS has left it) Lord have mercy, look at that poor bed. Bless his heart he tries, don't he

Shows her religious perspective. We can tell that shes been through a lot.

(She moves to the bed TRAVIS has sloppily made up)

RUTH No he don't half try at all 'cause he knows you going to come along behind him and fix everything. That's just how come he don't know how to do nothing right now you done spoiled that boy so.

MAMA (Folding bedding) Well he's a little boy* Ain't supposed to know 'bout housekeeping. My baby, that's what he is. What you fix for his breakfast this morning?

Boys aren't supposed to know about housekeeping. Shows the social attitude of the time period, women are undermined. Women are perceived as the backbone of the house, the sole person in charge

for keeping the house clean and running smoothly.

RUTH (Angrily) I feed my son, Lena!

MAMA I ain't meddling (Underbreath; busy-bodyish) I just noticed all last week he had cold cereal, and when it starts getting this chilly in the fall a child ought to have some hot grits or something when he goes out in the cold

Continuously shows her caring nature, the over-zealous mothering sense. Mama can't help to intrude, she's trying to help Ruth, make her life better, make her go without the struggles she had in her life.

RUTH (Furious) I gave him hot oats is that all right!

MAMA I ain't meddling. (Pause) Put a lot of nice butter on it? (RUTH shoots her an angry look and does not reply) He likes lots of butter.

This shows Mamas complete full knowledge of the family.

RUTH (Exasperated) Lena

MAMA (To BENEATHA. MAMA is inclined to wander conversationally sometimes) What was you and your brother fussing 'bout this morning?

Mama needs to know everything that is happening in her house. She is the mediator, the mother, the unbiased typical motherly figure.

BENEATHA It's not important, Mama.

(She gets up and goes to look out at the bathroom, which is apparently free, and she picks up her towels and rushes out)

MAMA What was they fighting about?

RUTH Now you know as well as I do.

MAMA (Shaking her head) Brother still worrying himself sick about that money?

Mama knows that her son Walter is infatuated with money, a Marxist minded attitude toward a goal in which he will never be able to obtain. But Mama even knowing that Walter is on a failed course, but continues to try and make her son happy.

RUTH You know he is.

MAMA You had breakfast?

This quote reiterates Mama's caring nature as a mother

RUTH Some coffee.

MAMA Girl, you better start eating and looking after yourself better. You almost thin as Travis.

Mama is portrayed as a motherly figure to Ruth. There is a hint of concern in Mama's voice when she

talks to Ruth.

RUTH Lena

MAMA Un-hunh?

RUTH What are you going to do with it?

MAMA Now don't you start, child. It's too early in the morning to be talking about money. It ain't Christian.

This quote shows a little of Mama's background. You can tell that she is very religious and does not like to think about money too much.

RUTH It's just that he got his heart set on that store

MAMA You mean that liquor store that Willy Harris want him to invest in?

RUTH Yes

MAMA We ain't no business people, Ruth. We just plain working folks.

This quote shows Mama's attitude and thoughts on her own race. She feels that being African American meant having to be "working folks" rather than "business people". At the time, not many African Americans owned businesses and it was rare that those who had businesses ended up succeeding. With that said, Mama's attitude was shared among the majority of society at the time.

RUTH Ain't nobody business people till they go into business. Walter Lee say colored people ain't never going to start getting ahead till they start gambling on some different kinds of things in the world investments and things.

MAMA What done got into you, girl? Walter Lee done finally sold you on investing.

You can tell from this quote that Mama is still very skeptical about Walter trying to invest.

RUTH No. Mama, something is happening between Walter and me. I don't know what it is but he needs something something I can't give him any more. He needs this chance, Lena.

This quote shows the change of dynamics that is occurring between the family. Ruth begins to sense that Walter "needs something" that she cannot give to him. This "something" could be identified as his desire to have more power in society. (Marxist)

MAMA (Frowning deeply) But liquor, honey

This quote identifies Mama's disapproval with liquor. As a strong Christian, she feels that investing in liquor is not a good idea and strongly looks down upon Walter doing so.

RUTH Well like Walter say I spec people going to always be drinking themselves some liquor.

MAMA Well whether they drinks it or not ain't none of my business. But whether I go into business selling it to 'em is, and I don't want that on my ledger this late in life. (Stopping suddenly and studying her daughter-in-law} Ruth Younger, what's the matter with you to- day? You look like you could fall over right there.

Mama believes in the freedom to choose whether to consume liquor or not but she is against going “into business selling it to ‘em”. She feels that by doing this, she is encouraging those to drink and that is against her values. After saying this, Mama begins to worry about Ruth. She is concerned about Ruth’s strange attitude and senses that something is not right with her.

RUTH I'm tired.

MAMA Then you better stay home from work today,
You can tell from this quote that Mama worries more about Ruth’s health than her ability to work.

RUTH I can't stay home. She'd be calling up the agency and screaming at them, "My girl didn't come in today send me somebody! My girl didn't come in!" Oh, she just have a fit ...

MAMA Well, let her have it. I'll just call her up and say you got the flu
This reiterates Mama’s motherly attributes and her willingness to stick up for Ruth.

RUTH (Laughing) Why the flu?

MAMA 'Cause it sounds respectable to 'em. Something white people get, too. They know 'bout the flu. Other- wise they think you been cut up or something when you tell 'em you sick.
Mama tries to find an excuse that would be acceptable to a white person. She does this because she still feels that white people seem to look down upon her race. Indeed, at the time, you could tell that whites simply degraded blacks and felt like they were lower than them

RUTH I got to go in. We need the money.
This portrays the family’s poor financial situation and how much they need money.

MAMA Somebody would of thought my children done all but starved to death the way they talk about money here late. Child, we got a great big old check coming tomorrow.
This quote shows how Mama is not concerned about money and how money is not a topic she likes to discuss in the family. In addition, she is very optimistic now that the family will be receiving the “big old check”.

RUTH (Sincerely, but also self-righteously) Now that's your money. It ain't got nothing to do with me. We all feel like that Walter and Bennie and me even Travis.

MAMA (Thoughtfully, and suddenly very far away) Ten thousand dollars
At the time, ten thousand dollars was a huge amount of money. With this amount, you were able to boost a family’s social status.

RUTH Sure is wonderful.

MAMA Ten thousand dollars.
Mama repeats the amount of money she is receiving because it still feels surreal that she is receiving this great amount of money.

RUTH You know what you should do, Miss Lena? You should take yourself a trip somewhere. To Europe or South America or someplace

MAMA (Throwing up her hands at the thought) Oh, child!
Mama feels the idea of taking a trip somewhere is ridiculous

RUTH I'm serious. Just pack up and leave! Go on away and enjoy yourself some. Forget about the family and have yourself a ball for once in your life

MAMA (Drily) You sound like I'm just about ready to die. Who'd go with me? What I look like wandering 'round Europe by myself?

Mama is skeptical about leaving the house and taking a vacation. She does not want to be wandering by herself and seems to enjoy staying with the family more.

RUTH Shoot these here rich white women do it all the time. They don't think nothing of packing up they suit-cases and piling on one of them big steamships and swoosh! they gone, child.

This quote helps to portray some of the social aspects of society during the time. Ruth mentions that "rich white women" were able to take trips whenever they wanted while African Americans like herself were not able to have this pleasure. This comes to show that white women still have more power than African American women, and that African American women dream about having the same lifestyle as white women.

MAMA Something always told me I wasn't no rich white woman.

While Ruth looks up to white women and want their lifestyle, Mama does not feel the same way. Mama seems to understand and accept her social status.

RUTH Well what are you going to do with it then?

MAMA I ain't rightly decided. (Thinking. She speaks now with emphasis) Some of it got to be put away for Beneatha and her schoolin' and ain't nothing going to touch that part of it. Nothing. (She waits several seconds, trying to make up her mind about something, and looks at RUTH a little tentatively before going on) Been thinking that we maybe could meet the notes on a little old two-story somewhere, with a yard where Travis could play in the summertime, if we use part of the insurance for a down payment and everybody kind of pitch in. I could maybe take on a little day work again, few days a week
This quote shows that Mama values Beneatha's "schoolin'" and buying an "old two-story" where "Travis could play in the summertime more than Walter's desire to invest in a liquor store. Mama is even willing to work again to keep a new house for themselves.

RUTH (Studying her mother-in-law furtively and concentrating on her ironing, anxious to encourage without seeming to) Well, Lord knows, we've put enough rent into this here rat trap to pay for four houses by now

MAMA (Looking up and then looking around and leaning back and sighing in a suddenly reflective mood) "Rat trap" yes, that's all it is. (Smiling) I remember just as well the day me and Big Walter moved in here. Hadn't been married but two weeks and wasn't planning on living here no more than a year. (She shakes her head at the dissolved dream) We was going to set away, little by little, don't you know, and buy a little place out in Morgan Park. We had even picked out the house. (Chuckling a little) Looks right dumpy today. But Lord, child, you should know all the dreams I had 'bout buying that house and fixing it up and making me a little garden in the back (She waits and stops smiling) And didn't none of it happen.

This quote helps to show some of Mama's background with Big Walter. Mama did not want to live in the house she was living in "no more than a year" when she initially bought it. She talks about her dreams

of creating her own garden and how she was not able to do it. Mama is disappointed with her inability to grow her own garden and longs to find a new house where she could finally do this.

(Dropping her hands in a futile gesture)

RUTH (Keeps her head down, ironing) Yes, life can be a barrel of disappointments, sometimes.

MAMA Honey, Big Walter would come in here some nights back then and slump down on that couch there and just look at the rug, and look at me and look at the rug and then back at me and I'd know he was down then . . . really down. (After a second very long and thoughtful pause; she is seeing back to times that only she can see) And then, Lord, when I lost that baby little Claude I almost thought I was going to lose Big Walter too. Oh, that man grieved himself ! He was one man to love his children.

This shows Mama's love for Big Walter. She praises him as a good father that truly loved his children. By describing Big Walter, Mama also shows her own personality. You can tell from her descriptions that Mama feels that the amount of love you have is the one thing that defines a good person.

RUTH Ain't nothin' can tear at you like losin' your baby.

MAMA I guess that's how come that man finally worked himself to death like he done. Like he was fighting his own war with this here world that took his baby from him.

RUTH He sure was a fine man, all right. I always liked Mr. Younger.

MAMA Crazy 'bout his children! God knows there was plenty wrong with Walter Younger hard-headed, mean, kind of wild with women plenty wrong with him. But he sure loved his children. Always wanted them to have something be something. That's where Brother gets all these notions, I reckon. Big Walter used to say, he'd get right wet in the eyes sometimes, lean his head back with the water standing in his eyes and say, "Seem like God didn't see fit to give the black man nothing but dreams but He did give us children to make them dreams seem worth while." (She smiles) He could talk like that, don't you know.

Mama's general judgment of a person is shown within this quote. When describing Big Walter, Mama reveals that the most important thing for a person in her eyes is to have love for your children. Even though Big Walter was, according to Mama, "hard-headed, mean, kind of wild with women", Mama emphasizes that "he sure loved his children". There are also some social, cultural, and historical aspects within this quote. When Big Walter used to say that "God didn't see fit to give the black man nothing but dreams", it shows that African Americans, when Big Walter was alive, were not able to take much action in the world.

RUTH Yes, he sure could. He was a good man, Mr. Younger.

MAMA Yes, a fine man just couldn't never catch up with his dreams, that's all.

She feels sympathy for Walter because she knows that there was a lot of things that he wasn't able to accomplish before his death. You can infer, that she really loved Walter and really misses him. Also considers the money that is coming as a parting gift.

(BENEATHA comes in, brushing her hair and looking up to the ceiling, where the sound of a vacuum cleaner has started up)

BENEATHA What could be so dirty on that woman's rugs that she has to vacuum them every single day?

RUTH I wish certain young women 'round here who I could name would take inspiration about certain rugs in a certain apartment I could also mention.

BENEATHA (Shrugging) How much cleaning can a house need, for Christ's sakes.

MAMA (Not liking the Lord's name used thus) Bennie!

This shows Mama's religious devotion.

RUTH Just listen to her just listen!

BENEATHA Oh, God!

MAMA If you use the Lord's name just one more time

Mama is so religious that she becomes angry when Beneatha uses Gods name in vain.

BENEATHA (A bit of a whine) Oh, Mama

RUTH Fresh just fresh as salt, this girl!

BENEATHA (Drily) Well if the salt loses its savor

MAMA Now that will do. I just ain't going to have you 'round here reciting the scriptures in vain you hear me?

This again shows Mama's religious attitude and formality.

BENEATHA How did I manage to get on everybody's wrong side by just walking into a room?

RUTH If you weren't so fresh

BENEATHA Ruth, I'm twenty years old.

MAMA What time you be home from school today?

Even though Beneatha is twenty years old, Mama still thinks of her as a child and acts as a motherly figure by asking this question.

BENEATHA Kind of late. (With enthusiasm) Madeline is going to start my guitar lessons today.

(MAMA and RUTH look up with the same expres- sion)

MAMA Your what kind of lessons?

BENEATHA Guitar.

RUTH Oh, Father!

MAMA How come you done taken it in your mind to learn to play the guitar?

You could tell from the way Mama talks in this quote that she is not very educated because her grammar is heavily mistaken.

BENEATHA I just want to that's all.

MAMA (Smiling) Lord, child, don't you know what to get tired of this now like you got tired of that little do with yourself? How long it going to be before you play-acting group you joined last year? (Looking at RUTH) And what was it the year before that?

Mama is skeptical about Beneatha learning how to play guitar after she ended up quitting her “play-acting group”. This shows that Mama is very involved with Beneatha’s life.

RUTH The horseback-riding club for which she bought that fifty-five-dollar riding habit that's been hanging in the closet ever since!

MAMA (To BENEATHA) Why you got to flit so from one thing to another, baby?

This reiterates that fact that Mama takes interest in Beneatha’s life and wants what is best for her.

BENEATHA (Sharply) I just want to learn to play the guitar. Is there anything wrong with that?

MAMA Ain't nobody trying to stop you. I just wonders sometimes why you has to flit so from one thing to another all the time. You ain't never done nothing with all that camera equipment you brought home
Mama wants what is best for Beneatha but at the same time, she tries to give her some freedom to do things her way. Mama tries to give advice to Beneatha without forcing her to do something she does not want to do.

BENEATHA I don't flit! I I experiment with different forms of expression

RUTH Like riding a horse?

BENEATHA People have to express themselves one way or another.

MAMA What is it you want to express?

BENEATHA (Angrily) Me! (MAMA and RUTH look at each other and burst into raucous laughter) Don't worry I don't expect you to understand.

MAMA (To change the subject) Who you going out with tomorrow night?

This is another example of how Mama is portrayed as a typical mother. Typical mothers always ask these kind of questions in order to either make sure Beneatha is safe or relieve the curiosity that comes with being a mother.

BENEATHA (With displeasure) George Murchison again.

MAMA (Pleased) Oh you getting a little sweet on him?

RUTH You ask me, this child ain't sweet on nobody but herself (Vnderbreath) Express herself!
(They laugh)

BENEATHA Oh I like George all right, Mama. I mean I like him enough to go out with him and stuff, but

RUTH (For devilment) What does and stuff mean?

BENEATHA Mind your own business.

MAMA Stop picking at her now, Ruth. (She chuckles then a suspicious sudden look at her daughter as she turns in her chair for emphasis) What DOES it mean?

BENEATHA (Wearily) Oh, I just mean I couldn't ever really be serious about George. He's he's so shallow.

RUTH Shallow what do you mean he's shallow? He's Rich!

MAMA Hush, Ruth.

BENEATHA I know he's rich. He knows he's rich, too.

RUTH Well what other qualities a man got to have to satisfy you, little girl?
(Marxist) Ruth is basically saying all an ideal husband needs is money which is a social institution Beneatha has put beneath her and wants someone intellectual and passionate like her.

BENEATHA You wouldn't even begin to understand. Anybody who married Walter could not possibly understand.

MAMA (Outraged) What kind of way is that to talk about your brother?

BENEATHA Brother is a flip let's face it.

MAMA (To RUTH, helplessly) What's a flip?

RUTH (Glad to add kindling) She's saying he's crazy.

BENEATHA Not crazy. Brother isn't really crazy yet he's an elaborate neurotic.

MAMA Hush your mouth!

BENEATHA As for George. Well. George looks good he's got a beautiful car and he takes me to nice places and, as my sister-in-law says, he is probably the richest boy I will ever get to know and I even like him sometimes but if the Youngers are sitting around waiting to see if their little Bennie is going to tie up the family with the Murchisons, they are wasting their time.

RUTH You mean you wouldn't marry George Murchison if he asked you someday? That pretty, rich thing? Honey, I knew you was odd
(Social, Historical, Cultural, Marxist) Ruth can't comprehend why Beneatha won't marry George when he has so much money and because she is so clouded by money she can't see that Beneatha does not care about the money but about the personality.

BENEATHA No I would not marry him if all I felt for him was what I feel now. Besides, George's family wouldn't really like it

MAMA Why not?

This is social, Beneatha doesn't feel that George would want to marry her because they are not in the same social class. In a sense, she is similar to her mother because she is not about the money. She believes in the person as a whole rather than the material possessions. She wants to marry a person she truly loves and doesn't want to conform to society's beliefs in marrying for status or money.

BENEATHA Oh, Mama The Murchisons are honest-to- God-real-live-rich colored people, and the only people in the world who are more snobbish than rich white people are rich colored people. I thought everybody knew that. I've met Mrs. Murchison. She's a scene!

MAMA You must not dislike people 'cause they well off, honey.

BENEATHA Why not? It makes just as much sense as disliking people 'cause they are poor, and lots of people do that.

Beneatha shows throughout the story thus far that she is, in a sense, ashamed of the black race. She feels that colored people are going to remain on the bottom of the social class. She is a prime example of the typical women that wants to break away from this male dominant society. (Social, Historical, Cultural)

RUTH (A wisdom-of-the-ages manner. To MAMA) Well, she'll get over some of this

BENEATHA Get over it? What are you talking about, Ruth? Listen, I'm going to be a doctor. I'm not worried about who I'm going to marry yet if I ever get married.

MAMA and RUTH If!

(Social, Historical, Cultural) Women back in the day were expected to be married and lived a regular life performing motherly roles such as cooking and raising children. Mama and Ruth are shocked to hear that Beneatha is actually given thought of not marrying. It was abnormal for the time period for women to think like this.

MAMA Now, Bennie

BENEATHA Oh, I probably will ... but first I'm going to be a doctor, and George, for one, still thinks that's pretty funny. I couldn't be bothered with that. I am going to be a doctor and everybody around here better understand that!

(Social, Historical, Cultural) It is amusing to George that Beneatha wants to be a doctor because women in general were not doctors. For her to be colored and wanting to be a doctor isn't normal. A doctor is a male dominant occupation and extremely unlikely for a colored women to become.

MAMA (Kindly) 'Course you going to be a doctor, honey, God willing.

Mama knows that her daughters dreams are a little farfetched but still believes in her.

BENEATHA (Drily) God hasn't got a thing to do with it.

MAMA Beneatha that just wasn't necessary.

BENEATHA Well neither is God. I get sick of hearing about God.

MAMA Beneatha!

BENEATHA I mean it! I'm just tired of hearing about God all the time. What has He-got to do with

anything? Does he pay tuition?

MAMA You 'bout to get your fresh little jaw slapped!

The conversation with Beneatha is getting to the point that it is annoying Mama and there is foreshadowing that Beneatha is about to get slapped. So far, whenever it comes to God with Mama; she takes it very seriously. Beneatha is making fun of God and in a sense she is making fun of Mama's ideals at the same time.

RUTH That's just what she needs, all right!

BENEATHA Why? Why can't I say what I want to around here, like everybody else?

MAMA It don't sound nice for a young girl to say things like that you wasn't brought up that way. Me and your father went to trouble to get you and Brother to church every Sunday.

Mama's beliefs are an extension of societies' beliefs and therefore this upsets Mama when Beneatha suddenly doubts Mama's beliefs. This also shows that the way Beneatha is acting is not socially acceptable. This also shows that Mama and her husband did their best to imbed the Christian values in their children.

BENEATHA Mama, you don't understand. It's all a matter of ideas, and God is just one idea I don't accept. It's not important. I am not going out and be immoral or commit crimes because I don't believe in God. I don't even think about it. It's just that I get tired of Him getting credit for all the things the human race achieves through its own stubborn effort. There simply is no blasted God there is only man and it is he who makes miracles!

Beneatha starts criticizing God and this really upsets Mama. This shows that Mama is very religious and truly believes in god as much more than idol. In Mama's point of view, Beneatha is being foolish about god and life in general. Her daughter doesn't understand what society expects of her. This is a powerful scene because this is the first time that Mama gets really upset to the point that she uses violence to stop Beneatha's muttering.

Also back then, colored people tended to be more religious because it was usually the colored people that faced with many dilemmas financially and socially during this era. Usually when people are in need they go to religion and God to take their mind off their actual situations and this is extremely prevalent, especially, in the life of Mamma who has already gone through so much. (Social, Historical, Cultural)

(MAMA absorbs this speech, studies her daughter and rises slowly and crosses to BENEATHA and slaps her powerfully across the face. After, there is only silence and the daughter drops her eyes from her mother's face, and MAMA is very tall before her)

MAMA Now you say after me, in my mother's house there is still God. (There is a long pause and BENEATHA stares at the floor wordlessly. MAMA repeats the phrase with precision and cool emotion) In my mother's house there is still God.

Mama is extremely upset that her own daughter is doubting her religion and ideals. She slaps Beneatha and tells her that she must understand that there is God in the household. Colored people truly believe in God because they believe that with all the hardships that they have gone through their lifetime that they are able to survive. By Beneatha, condemning god basically throws away years of history and hardships.

BENEATHA In my mother's house there is still God.
(A long pause)

MAMA (Walking away from BENEATHA, too disturbed for triumphant posture. Stopping and turning back to her daughter) There are some ideas we ain't going to have in this house. Not long as I am at the head of this family.

This is signifying the impact and influence religion plays in the life of Mamma. Up until this point Mamma seems to be understanding of different situations such as Travis not making his bed, however, when Beneatha criticizes God Mamma takes it personally and unleashes a fury and anger upon her.

BENEATHA Yes, ma'am.

(MAMA walks out of the room)

RUTH (Almost gently, with profound understanding) You think you a woman, Bennie but you still a little girl. What you did was childish so you got treated like a child.

BENEATHA I see. (Quietly) I also see that everybody thinks it's all right for Mama to be a tyrant. But all the tyranny in the world will never put a God in the heavens!

(She picks up her books and goes out. Pause)

RUTH (Goes to MAMA'S door) She said she was sorry.

MAMA (Coming out, going to her plant) They frightens me, Ruth. My children.
Mamma feels that her children are strong-willed, however, in a more negative sense. All the values that she has and feels strong about have not translated into her children, Walter and Beneatha. She's "frightened" of the fact that they are so different from her ideals.

RUTH You got good children, Lena. They just a little off sometimes but they're good.

MAMA No there's something come down between me and them that don't let us understand each other and I don't know what it is. One done almost lost his mind thinking 'bout money all the time and the other done commence to talk about things I can't seem to understand in no form or fashion. What is it that's changing, Ruth.

Again, Mamma is confused at how her children have values so different from her. She is a strong, Christian woman who prioritizes her family above all else, yet she's disappointed that her children are so different her to the point where communication ceases to exist or becomes difficult.

RUTH (Soothingly, older than her years) Now . . . you taking it all too seriously. You just got strong-willed children and it takes a strong woman like you to keep 'em in hand.

MAMA (Looking at her plant and sprinkling a little water on it) They spirited all right, my children. Got to admit they got spirit Bennie and Walter. Like this little old plant that ain't never had enough sunshine or nothing and look at it ... {She has her back to RUTH, who has had to stop ironing and lean against something and put the back of her hand to her forehead}

RUTH (Trying to keep MAMA from noticing) You . . . sure . . . loves that little old thing, don't you? . . .

MAMA Well, I always wanted me a garden like I used to see sometimes at the back of the houses down home. This plant is close as I ever got to having one. {She looks out of the window as she replaces the plant} Lord, ain't nothing as dreary as the view from this window on a dreary day, is there? Why ain't you singing this morning, Ruth? Sing that "No Ways Tired." That song always lifts me up so (She turns at last to see that RUTH has slipped quietly to the floor, in a state of semiconsciousness) Ruth! Ruth honey what's the matter with you . . . Ruth!

Ruth mentions that Mama is a strong women and as soon as she mentions that Mama turns to her plant. This symbolizes that the plant is a symbol of her family and that she is nurturing the plant and in a sense her family. In the beginning of this scene there are many arguments, which means that the plant is wilting. So if Mama is sprinkling water it shows that she is making improvements in her family.

Curtain

ACT 1

SCENE Two

It is the following morning; a Saturday morning, and house cleaning is in progress at the YOUNGERS. Furniture has been shoved hither and yon and MAMA is giving the kitchen-area walls a washing down. BENEATHA, in dungarees, with a handkerchief tied around her face, is spraying insecticide into the cracks in the walls. As they work, the radio is on and a Southside disk-jockey program is inappropriately filling the house with a rather exotic saxophone blues. TRAVIS, the sole idle one, is leaning on his arms, looking out of the window.

TRAVIS Grandmama, that stuff Bennie is using smells awful. Can I go downstairs, please?

MAMA Did you get all them chores done already? I ain't seen you doing much.
This supports Mama's statement earlier stating that they are working folk. She resembles the ideal mother performing all the basic household chores. (Social)

TRAVIS Yes'm finished early. Where did Mama go this morning?

MAMA (Looking at BENEATHA) She had to go on a little errand.
This shows that she is truly the head of the family because she knows bits of what everyone is doing. Travis asked Mama for a reason and not Bennie.

(The phone rings. BENEATHA runs to answer it and reaches it before WALTER, who has entered from bedroom)

TRAVIS Where?

MAMA To tend to her business.
This shows that she is skeptical to exactly what Ruth is doing, but doesn't want to tell Travis because realistically there is no harm in telling Travis where she is. There might also be a secret that Mama is hiding from Travis.

BENEATHA Haylo . . . (Disappointed) Yes, he is. (She tosses the phone to WALTER, who barely catches it) It's Willie Harris again.

WALTER (As privately as possible under MAMA'S gaze) Hello, Willie. Did you get the papers from the lawyer? . . . No, not yet. I told you the mailman doesn't get here till ten-thirty . . . No, I'll come there . . . Yeah! Right away. (He hangs up and goes for his coat)

BENEATHA Brother, where did Ruth go?

WALTER (As he exits) How should I know!

TRAVIS Aw come on, Grandma. Can I go outside?

MAMA Oh, I guess so. You stay right in front of the house, though, and keep a good lookout for the postman.

The entire family is excited for the mail today because of the insurance money 10,000 dollars that is suppose to arrive. This is also something that the family knows about and that is very important if they want to upgrade their lifestyle.

TRAVIS Yes'm. (He darts into bedroom for stickball and bat, reenters, and sees BENEATHA on her knees spraying under sofa with behind upraised. He edges closer to the target, takes aim, and lets her have it. She screams) Leave them poor little cockroaches alone, they ain't bothering you none! (He runs as she swings the spraygun at him viciously and playfully) Grandma! Grandma!

MAMA Look out there, girl, before you be spilling some of that stuff on that child!

TRAVIS (Safely behind the bastion of MAMA) That's right look out, now! (He exits)

Usually, when a child is running away from someone they usually run to their mom and in this case Travis runs and hides behind Mamma signaling that although Ruth is Travis' mother, Mamma is the real mother of the house.

BENEATHA (Drily) I can't imagine that it would hurt him it has never hurt the roaches.

MAMA Well, little boys' hides ain't as tough as Southside roaches. You better get over there behind the bureau. I seen one marching out of there like Napoleon yesterday.

Bureau is another word for cabinet and this shows that she really cares about Travis. She also wishes that Beneatha would adjust the way that Travis did. However, at the same she wants everything to be clean. She is trying really hard to have her household be presentable for society.

BENEATHA There's really only one way to get rid of them, Mama

MAMA HOW?

This shows that Mama has probably dealt with the ongoing problem with cockroaches throughout her life. She has lived the same way throughout her life also. It was very hard for colored people to become successful back in the day and most of them have lived the same way throughout their life. Their weren't a lot of colored success stories back then.

BENEATHA Set fire to this building! Mama, where did Ruth go?

MAMA (Looking at her with meaning) To the doctor, I think.

Mama understands that there is something wrong with Ruth, but she hasn't been telling Mama anything. She assumes that she is going to the doctors because she hasn't been feeling well lately. This shows that Mama is concerned for her entire family. She is ready to help anyone in her family that needs help.

BENEATHA The doctor? What's the matter? (They exchange glances) You don't think

MAMA (With her sense of drama) Now I ain't saying what I think. But I ain't never been wrong 'bout a

woman neither.

She is very wise and experienced. She is similar to Grandma "Weatherall" without the illness. She has a feeling of what is going on with Ruth, but she doesn't to tell anyone until she knows she is a hundred percent sure that her assumption is right.

(The phone rings')

BENEATHA (At the phone) Hay-lo . . . (Pause, and a moment of recognition) Well when did you get back! . . . And how was it? ... Of course I've missed you in my way . . . This morning? No . . . house cleaning and all that and Mama hates it if I let people come over when the house is like this . . . You have? Well, that's different . . . What is it Oh, what the hell, come on over . . . Right, see you then. Arrividerci. (She hangs up)

MAMA (Who has listened vigorously, as is her habit) Who is that you inviting over here with this house looking like this? You ain't got the pride you was born with!

Mama is very strict and always wants to make sure that she is presentable to people. She really takes society opinion seriously. She gets upset at Beneatha for inviting someone over when the house is dirty. Mama wants to make sure that her family meets society's expectations as well as going a little over not "Beneatha".

BENEATHA Asagai doesn't care how houses look, Mama he's an intellectual.

MAMA Who?

Mama is curious who she is inviting over, she might also be excited in a sense if it is boy because that way her daughter can get married and follow Mama's individual.

BENEATHA Asagai Joseph Asagai. He's an African boy I met on campus. He's been studying in Canada all summer.

MAMA What's his name?

She hears the name for the first time this guy name and is a little confused because it is not a normal name that you hear of.

BENEATHA Asagai, Joseph. Ah-sah-guy . . . He's from Nigeria.

MAMA Oh, that's the little country that was founded by slaves way back . . .

Mama knows her origin and is very interested at the thought of meeting an actual African and confused to why Beneatha is even talking to him.

BENEATHA No, Mama that* s Liberia.

MAMA I don't think I never met no African before.

BENEATHA Well, do me a favor and don't ask him a whole lot of ignorant questions about Africans. I mean, do they wear clothes and all that

MAMA Well, now, I guess if you think we so ignorant 'round here maybe you shouldn't bring your friends here

Mama is very confused at the moment at what her daughter tends to do with Asagai. This shows that

during this time people were more open in meeting more people and did not have that social bubble that people have nowadays. (Social)

BENEATHA It's just that people ask such crazy things. All anyone seems to know about when it comes to Africa is Tarzan

MAMA (Indignantly) Why should I know anything about Africa?

Mama feels that learning about the Africans isn't really necessary because they Africans in America and also that she feels that her family is truly American.

BENEATHA Why do you give money at church for the missionary work?

MAMA Well, that's to help save people.

Beneatha points out that Mama is being unreasonable because she wants to help these people but she doesn't want them to come to their house. This shows that Mama has very strong beliefs and that what is already set in her mind is extremely hard for her to change.

BENEATHA You mean save them from heathenism

MAMA (Innocently) Yes.

She is a strong Christian and feels that spreading Christianity is going to help others also. Mama has a lot of pride in everything she does and so it is very hard for her to accept the things that she normally goes against.

BENEATHA I'm afraid they need more salvation from the British and the French.

(RUTH comes in forlornly and pulls off her coat with dejection. They both turn to look at her)

RUTH (Dispiritedly) Well, I guess from all the happy faces everybody knows.

BENEATHA You pregnant?

MAMA Lord have mercy, I sure hope it's a little old girl. Travis ought to have a sister.

Mama is actually very happy that Ruth is pregnant and even hopes its a girl. She doesn't take into consideration of how the family is going to take care of the baby financially.

(BENEATHA and RUTH give her a hopeless look for this grandmotherly enthusiasm)

BENEATHA How far along are you?

RUTH Two months.

BENEATHA Did you mean to? I mean did you plan it or was it an accident?

MAMA What do you know about planning or not planning?

Mama believes that simply being able to bear child is blessing in itself so it doesn't matter if its an accident or not. This is a similar attitude that society had during this time. Mama again shows that she is an extension in society. People tended to have more children back in the day then they do now.

BENEATHA Oh, Mama.

RUTH (Wearily) She's twenty years old, Lena.

BENEATHA Did you plan it, Ruth?

RUTH Mind your own business.

BENEATHA It is my business where is he going to live, on the roof? (There is silence following the remark as the three women react to the sense of it) Gee I didn't mean that, Ruth, honest. Gee, I don't feel like that at all. I I think it is wonderful.

RUTH (Dully) Wonderful.

BENEATHA Yes really.

MAMA (Looking at RUTH, worried) Doctor say everything going to be all right?

Mama finally understands the situation and is now worried about the baby. However, she still wants the baby to be born because she loves children and feels that with a baby that their family would be complete except for the fact that Beneatha hasn't married yet.

RUTH (Far away) Yes she says everything is going to be fine . . .

MAMA (Immediately suspicious) "She" What doctor you went to?

Mama shows her experience and immediately catches a error in Ruth's part. She knows that women aren't doctors and therefore she did not go to a doctor and instead want somewhere else, where she shouldn't have gone instead. Mama isn't entirely sure to what is going on though.

(Social, Historical, Cultural) Women during this time were not doctors so Mamma is able to catch on that something is off with Ruth's statement.

(RUTH folds over, near hysteria)

MAMA (Worriedly hovering over RUTH) Ruth honey what's the matter with you you sick?

Mama suspects something, but doesn't want to make an assumption until she knows the situation completely what is going on. This shows that she is a mature lady knows all about her household and each person in her house emotions.

(RUTH has her fists clenched on her thighs and is fighting hard to suppress a scream that seems to be rising in her)

BENEATHA What's the matter with her, Mama?

MAMA (Working her fingers in RUTH'S shoulders to relax her) She be all right. Women gets right depressed sometimes when they get her way. (Speaking softly, expertly, rapidly) Now you just relax. That's right . . . just lean back, don't think 'bout nothing at all ... nothing at all

Mama can't be upset at the situation because she feels empathy for Ruth and therefore tones down the situation by being caring and understanding to Ruth.

RUTH I'm all right . . .

(The glassy-eyed look melts and then she collapses into a fit of heavy sobbing. The bell rings)

BENEATHA Oh, my God that must be Asagai.

MAMA (To RUTH) Come on now, honey. You need to lie down and rest awhile . . . then have some nice hot food.

Mama plays her normal motherly roles. After she quit her job, she now has a job and that is to take care of Ruth.

(They exit, RUTH'S weight on her mother-in-law.

BENEATHA, herself profoundly disturbed, opens the door to admit a rather dramatic-looking young man with a large package)

ASAGAI Hello, Alaiyo

BENEATHA (Holding the door open and regarding him with pleasure) Hello . . . (Long pause) Well come in. And please excuse everything. My mother was very upset about my letting anyone come here with the place like this.

ASAGAI' (Coming into the room) You look disturbed too ... Is something wrong?

BENEATHA (Still at the door, absently) Yes . . . we've all got acute ghetto-itus. (She smiles and comestoward him, finding a cigarette and sitting) So sit down! No! Wait! (She whips the spray gun off sofa where she had left it and puts the cushions back. At lastperches on arm of sofa. He sits) So, how was Canada?

ASAGAI (A sophisticate} Canadian.

BENEATHA (Looking at him) Asagai, I'm very glad you are back.

ASAGAI (Looking back at her in turn) Are you really?

BENEATHA Yes very.

ASAGAI Why? you were quite glad when I went .away. What happened?

BENEATHA You went away.

ASAGAI Ahhhhhhhh.

BENEATHA Before you wanted to be so serious before there was time.

ASAGAI How much time must there be before one knows what one feels?

BENEATHA (Stalling this particular conversation. Her hands pressed together, in a deliberately childish

gesture) What did you bring me?

ASAGAI (Handing her the package) Open it and see.

BENEATHA (Eagerly opening the package and drawing out some records and the colorful robes of a Nigerian woman) Oh, Asagai! . . . You got them for me! . . . How beautiful . . . and the records too! (She lifts out the robes and runs to the mirror with them and holds the drapery up in front of herself)

ASAGAI (Coming to her at the mirror) I shall have to teach you how to drape it properly. (He flings the material about her for the moment and stands back to look at her) Ah Oh-pay-gay~day, oh-gbah-mu-shay. (A Yoruba exclamation for admiration) You wear it well . . . very well . . . mutilated hair and all.

BENEATHA (Turning suddenly) My hair what's wrong with my hair?

ASAGAI (Shrugging) Were you born with it like that?

BENEATHA (Reaching up to touch it) No ... of course not. (She looks back to the mirror, disturbed)

ASAGAI (Smiling) How then?

BENEATHA You know perfectly well how ... as crinkly as yours . . . that's how.

ASAGAI And it is ugly to you that way?

BENEATHA (Quickly) Oh, no not ugly . . . (More slowly, apologetically) But it's so hard to manage when it's, well raw.

ASAGAI And so to accommodate that you mutilate it every week?

BENEATHA It's not mutilation!

ASAGAI (Laughing aloud at her seriousness) Oh ... please! I am only teasing you because you are so very serious about these things. (He stands back from her and folds his arms across his chest as he watches her pulling at her hair and frowning in the mirror) Do you remember the first time you met me at school? . . . (He laughs) You came up to me and you said and I thought you were the most serious little thing I had ever seen you said: (He imitates her) "Mr. Asagai I want very much to talk with you. About Africa. You see, Mr. Asagai, I am looking for my identity

[At this time, many African Americans were searching for their "identity" because they were American but not treated as Americans. For this reason many of them tried to understand their African roots. \(Social, Cultural, Historical\)](#)

BENEATHA (Turning to him, not laughing) Yes (Her face is quizzical, profoundly disturbed)

ASAGAI (Still teasing and reaching out and taking her face in his hands and turning her profile to him) Well . . . it is true that this is not so much a profile of a Hollywood queen as perhaps a queen of the Nile (A mock dismissal of the importance of the question) But what does it matter? Assimilationism is so popular in your country.

[This quote helps to show how many African Americans assimilated into American society even though](#)

they were not treated as equal Americans. As Asagai states “assimilationism is so popular” in America.

BENEATHA (Wheeling, passionately, sharply) I am not an assimilationist!

Beneatha conveys a rebellious attitude towards being an assimilated American because she wants to be in touch with her African roots and feels that America is not treating her as an American. She takes pride in being and individual. This somewhat portrays an attitude that various blacks had at the time. Since they were not feeling like America embraced their presence, they relied on staying in touch with their African roots as a way to achieve this feeling of belonging. (Social, Cultural)

ASAGAI (The protest hangs in the room for a moment and ASAGAI studies her, his laughter fading) Such a serious one, (There is a pause) So you like the robes? You must take excellent care of them they are from my sister's personal wardrobe.

BENEATHA (With incredulity) You you sent all the way home for me?

ASAGAI (With charm) For you I would do much more . . . Well, that is what I came for. I must go.

BENEATHA Will you call me Monday?

ASAGAI Yes . . . We have a great deal to talk about. I mean about identity and time and all that. (Social, Cultural)

BENEATHA Time?

ASAGAI Yes. About how much time one needs to know what one feels.

BENEATHA You see! You never understood that there is more than one kind of feeling which can exist between a man and a woman or, at least, there should be.

ASAGAI (Shaking his head negatively but gently) No. Between a man and a woman there need be only one kind of feeling. I have that for you . . . Now even . . . right this moment ...

BENEATHA I know and by itself it won't do. I can find that anywhere.

Beneatha yet again represents an independent and strong willed woman that feels she does not need male dominance. This attitude was only starting to appear within this time (Social, cultural)

ASAGAI For a woman it should be enough.

This quote shows that even Africans feel that women need less than men. (Social, cultural)

BENEATHA I know because that's what it says in all the novels that men write. But it isn't. Go ahead and laugh but I'm not interested in being someone's little episode in America or (With feminine vengeance) one of them! (ASAGAI has burst into laughter again) That's funny as hell, huh!

ASAGAI It's just that every American girl I have known has said that to me. White black in this you are all the same. And the same speech, too!

(Social, Historical, Cultural) Beneatha feels that by Asagai saying these romantic things to her, he is in a sense only trying to make her into his own “little episode”, however Asagai comes from a different cultural background in which his words are more than just a means to get together with a woman.

BENEATHA (Angrily) Yuk, yuk, yuk!

ASAGAI It's how you can be sure that the world's most liberated women are not liberated at all. You all talk about it too much!

Asagai is definitely a character metaphorically and literally because he is from Nigeria and is an alien to the American Society. He is unaware of the social expectations and continues to live the life he did in Nigeria. He brought with him his religion and traditions and is also courting Beneatha in his Nigerian tradition. Beneatha doesn't think too much of him other than being an interesting and intellectual person. She is also upset that he doesn't understand that women can be their own independent person. He mocks her foolish dream of being a doctor also. He also believes that he has the American Society nailed and that he knows how this country works as a whole but he fails to see it individually. This is the mistake he makes when addressing Beneatha. He makes it worse by saying the American Society is made up of assimilationist. This makes Beneatha even more upset. He doesn't understand that Beneatha is an independent person.

(MAMA enters and is immediately all social charm because of the presence of a guest)

BENEATHA Oh Mama this is Mr. Asagai.

MAMA How do you do?

Mama was interested in meeting Asagai and she finally gets the opportunities. She is trying to make a good impression because she wants to be socially accepted.

ASAGAI (Total politeness to an elder) How do you do, Mrs. Younger. Please forgive me for coming at such an outrageous hour on a Saturday.

MAMA Well, you are quite welcome. I just hope you understand that our house don't always look like this. (Chatterish) You must come again. I would love to here all about (Not sure of the name) your country. I think it's so sad the way our American Negroes don't know nothing about Africa 'cept Tarzan and all that. And all that money they pour into these churches when they ought to be helping you people over there drive out them French and Englishmen done taken away your land. (The mother flashes a slightly superior look at her daughter upon completion of the recitation)

Mama is very curious to learn about the lifestyle of this different type of colored people and tries to make it seem that she understands what is going on with him. Mama loves to meet new people and is not afraid of speaking her mind. She is a very straightforward person that won't hide the truth from anyone.

African Americans at the time were not very informed and intune with their African roots because many of their past generations moved to America quite a while ago. (Cultural)

ASAGAI (Taken aback by this sudden and acutely unrelated expression of sympathy) Yes ... yes ...

MAMA (Smiling at him suddenly and relaxing and looking him over) How many miles is it from here to where you come from?

Her curiosity escalates and this shows that she is still dying to learn about people as well as society.

ASAGAI Many thousands.

MAMA (Looking at him as she would WALTER) I bet you don't half look after yourself, being away from your mama either. I spec you better come 'round here from time to time to get yourself some decent home-cooked meals . . .

Mama again bluntly states that Asagai doesn't take care of himself as he should because he doesn't have any family. This shows that Mama is very big on family and unity because this is what brings happiness to people.

ASAGAI (Moved) Thank you. Thank you very much. (They are all quiet, then) Well ... I must go. I will call you Monday, Alaiyo.

MAMA What's that he call you?

Mama is interrogating Asagai like a criminal because she feels that if someone wants to take her daughter out that she should know a little background knowledge of the person. She is being a typical mother with Beneatha and Asagai.

ASAGAI Oh "Alaiyo." I hope you don't mind. It is what you would call a nickname, I think. It is a Yoruba word. I am a Yoruba.

MAMA (Looking at BENEATHA) I I thought he was from (Uncertain)

This shows that Mama did not have the opportunity to learn when she was younger. She had to work all her life. Just by saying that he was a Yoruba she couldn't comprehend that he was from Nigeria and simply from the tribe called Yoruba.

ASAGAI (Understanding) Nigeria is my country. Yoruba is my tribal origin

BENEATHA You didn't tell us what Alaiyo means . . . for all I know, you might be calling me Little Idiot or something . . .

ASAGAI Well . . . let me see ... I do not know how just to explain it ... The sense of a thing can be so different when it changes languages.

BENEATHA You're evading.

ASAGAI No really it is difficult . . . (Thinking) It means ... it means One for Whom Bread Food Is Not Enough. {He looks at her} Is that all right?

BENEATHA (Understanding, softly) Thank you.

MAMA (Looking from one to the other and not understanding any of it) Well , . . that's nice . . . You must come see us again Mr.

ASAGAI Ah-sah-guy * * .

MAMA Yes . . . Do come again.

ASAGAI Good-bye, (He exits)

MAMA (After him) Lord, that's a pretty thing just went out here! (Insinuatingly, to her daughter) Yes, I guess I see why we done commence to get so interested in Africa 'round here. Missionaries my aunt Jenny! (She exits)

She exhausted her anxiety of asking him questions. Mama is a very nosy person who wants to know everything that is going on, she can't be left out of any secretly, especially in the household.

BENEATHA Oh, Mama! . . .

(She picks up the Nigerian dress and holds it up to her in front of the mirror again. She sets the headdress on haphazardly and then notices her hair again and clutches at it and then replaces the headdress and frowns at herself. Then she starts to wriggle in front of the mirror as she thinks a Nigerian woman might. TRAVIS enters and stands regarding her)

TRAVIS What's the matter, girl, you cracking up?

BENEATHA Shut Up.

(She pulls the headdress off and looks at herself in the mirror and clutches at her hair again and squinches her eyes as if trying to imagine some- thing. Then, suddenly, she gets her raincoat and kerchief and hurriedly prepares for going out)

MAMA (Coming back into the room) She's resting now. Travis, baby, run next door and ask Miss Johnson to please let me have a little kitchen cleanser. This here can is empty as Jacob's kettle.

So Mrs. Johnson is referenced in the story now and Mama wants Travis to get some cleaning materials. This shows that the two must be good neighbors because they are willing to help each other without doubt. This also shows that Mama is always looking to make her house better and cleaner than it already is.

TRAVIS I just came in.

MAMA Do as you told. (He exits and she looks at her daughter) Where you going?

Again, Mama needs to know exactly what everyone is doing. However, so far in the story, she never asks what Walter is doing. Assuming that he is still at work throughout the story.

BENEATHA (Halting at the door) To become a queen of the Nile!

(She exits in a breathless blaze of glory. RUTH appears in the bedroom doorway)

MAMA Who told you to get up?

Again performing her motherly roles with Ruth. Mama took care of all the chores in Ruth's absence. Mama always needs to feel useful otherwise she doesn't feel good. Constantly cooking and cleaning throughout the story.

RUTH Ain't nothing wrong with me to be lying in no bed for. Where did Bennie go?

MAMA (Drumming her fingers) Far as I could make out to Egypt. (RUTH just looks at her) What time is it getting to?

By saying that she is as far as Egypt means that she doesn't really understand what her daughter is doing with the African. She is also anxiously waiting for the check.

RUTH Ten twenty. And the mailman going to ring that bell this morning just like he done every morning for the last umpteen years.

(TRAVIS comes in with the cleanser can)

TRAVIS She say to tell you that she don't have much.

MAMA (Angrily) Lord, some people I could name sure is tight-fisted! (Directing her grandson) Mark two cans of cleanser down on the list there. If she that hard up for kitchen cleanser, I sure don't want to forget to get her none!

Mama really needed that cleanser but Mrs. Johnson said that she didn't have enough. Mama immediately concludes that Johnson is stingy. Mama was going to help her out by getting her some also, but decides to mark it off. Mama is all about having a mutualistic relationship with people.

RUTH Lena maybe the woman is just short on cleanser

MAMA (Not listening) Much baking powder as she done borrowed from me all these years, she could of done gone into the baking business!

Mama likes to help people and truly follows the motto of "treat others the way you want to be treated" She treated Mrs. Johnson with kindness and expected help from her in return. Mama knows now that she can't trust Mrs. Johnson with anything anymore.

(The bell sounds suddenly and sharply and all three are stunned serious and silent mid-speech. In spite of all the other conversations and distractions of the morning, this is what they have been waiting for, even TRAVIS, who looks helplessly from his mother to his grandmother. RUTH is the first to come to life again)

RUTH (To TRAVIS) Get down them steps, boy!

(TRAVIS snaps to life and flies out to get the mail)

MAMA (Her eyes wide, her hand to her breast) You mean it done really come?

The day has finally come when the check was going to be delivered. Mama is still in shock that it is that they are finally going to be in good shape financially.

RUTH (Excited) Oh, Miss Lena!

MAMA (Collecting herself) Well ... I don't know what we all so excited about 'round here for. We known it was coming for months.

Mama is pretty nervous but trying to show the rest of her family that she is calm and composed.

RUTH That's a whole lot different from having it come and being able to hold it in your hands ... a piece of paper worth ten thousand dollars . . . (TRAVIS bursts back into the room. He holds the envelope high above his head, like a little dancer, his face is radiant and he is breathless. He moves to his grandmother with sudden slow ceremony and puts the envelope into her hands. She accepts it, and then merely holds it and looks at it) Come on! Open it ... Lord have mercy, I wish Walter Lee was here!

TRAVIS Open it, Grandmama!

MAMA (Staring at it) Now you all be quiet. It's just a check.

Mama doesn't want everyone to get excited about that much because she is not sure if it actually has

the money. Mama only reacts to what she feels is hundred percent right.

RUTH Open it ...

MAMA (Still staring at it) Now don't act silly ... We ain't never been no people to act silly 'bout no money
Mama takes pride in working and feels that money is necessary but we shouldn't depend on it and then taking pride in who you are and what you do is more important.

RUTH (Swiftly) We ain't never had none before OPEN IT!

(Marxist) Now that the money has come the whole family is worshipping it and feeling impatient about the whole process. They feel that now that the money has come there lives will be fulfilled and all will be right.

(MAMA finally makes a good strong tear and pulls out the thin blue slice of paper and inspects it closely. The boy and his mother study it raptly over MAMA'S shoulders)

MAMA Travis! (She is counting off with doubt) Is that the right number of zeros.

Mama is extremely happy and shocked at the same because she probably has never seen so much money in her life time.

TRAVIS Yes'm . . . ten thousand dollars. Gaalee, Grandmama, you rich.

MAMA (She holds the check away from her, still looking at it. Slowly her face sobers into a mask of unhappiness) Ten thousand dollars. (She hands it to RUTH) Put it away somewhere, Ruth. (She does not look at RUTH; her eyes seem to be seeing something somewhere very far off) Ten thousand dollars they give you. Ten thousand dollars,

Mama is still in awe from all that money that it has made her speechless.

TRAVIS (To his mother, sincerely) What's the matter with Grandmama don't she want to be rich?

RUTH (Distractedly) You go on out and play now, baby. (TRAVIS exits. MAMA starts wiping dishes absently, humming intently to herself. RUTH turns to her, with kind exasperation) You've gone and got yourself upset.

MAMA (Not looking at her) I spec if it wasn't for you all ... I would just put that money away or give it to the church or something.

This shows that Mama has too much to deal with. It also shows that she is content with the way she is right now and that she doesn't need money. Everything that she has ever done was to help her family.

RUTH Now what kind of talk is that. Mr. Younger would just be plain mad if he could hear you talking foolish like that.

MAMA (Stopping and staring off) Yes . . . he sure would. (Sighing) We got enough to do with that money, all right. (She halts then, and turns and looks at her daughter-in-law hard; RUTH avoids her eyes and MAMA wipes her hands with finality and starts to speak firmly to RUTH) Where did you go today, girl?

After thing cools downed with the money, she asked Ruth where she went; she was suspicious from the time she came back from the "doctors" now she wants to know. She feels she has the right to because

she is the head of the family.

RUTH To the doctor.

MAMA (Impatiently) Now, Ruth, . . . you know better than that. Old Doctor Jones is strange enough in his way but there ain't nothing 'bout him make somebody slip and call him "she" like you done this morning. Mama knows what goes on in the community and knows exactly what doctor and what kind of a personality. She also knows that she didn't go to the doctor and instead somewhere else.

RUTH Well, that's what happened my tongue slipped.

MAMA You went to see that woman, didn't you?

Now her assumption is confirmed because she knows that there is something wrong with Ruth.

RUTH (Defensively, giving herself away) What woman you talking about?

MAMA (Angrily) That woman who

Mama knows that she went to a women that she shouldn't have gone to. She is furious and highly disapproves what she did.

(WALTER enters in great excitement)

WALTER Did it come?

(Marxist) Without saying anything, Walter lets the excitement of money take over. Usually when someone comes back from work, people ask questions like, "How was your day?" but the first thing Walter says is about money. Walter lets money and material possessions become his priority and life.

MAMA (Quietly) Can't you give people a Christian greeting before you start asking about money?

Mama again shows her strong christian values. She always corrects people that she feels is going against the typical christian things to do. Walter should have at least said hi before he went along with asking about the money. Mama always corrects things at the spot, which correlates back to her blunt personality.

WALTER (To RUTH) Did it come? (RUTH unfolds the check and lays it quietly before him, watching him intently with thoughts of her own. WALTER sits down and grasps it close and counts off the zeros) Ten thousand dollars (He turns suddenly, frantically to his mother and draws some papers out of his breast pocket) Mama look. Old Willy Harris put everything on paper

(Marxist) After receiving the check, Walter immediately brings up the investment. This shows Walters excitement as he dreams about climbing up the social status. He does not consider what Mama wants to do with the money and focuses only on what he could do to become even more rich.

MAMA Son I think you ought to talk to your wife . . . I'll go on out and leave you alone if you want

Mama does not know what to do with the situation and simply puts it on Ruth to explain.

WALTER I can talk to her later Mama, look

MAMA Son

WALTER WILL SOMEBODY PLEASE LISTEN TO ME TODAY!

Through this quote, Walter is portrayed as pleading for more voice. He wants more power in the family household as well as in society. Many African Americans felt like Walter at the this time. (Social, Marxist)

MAMA (Quietly) I don't 'low no yellin' in this house, Walter Lee, and you know it (WALTER stares at them in frustration and starts to speak several times) And there ain't going to be no investing in no liquor stores.

Mama leads her house with firm fist and doesn't allow anyone to go against her values. She even treats her all grown up son like a kid again.

WALTER But, Mama, you ain't even looked at it.

MAMA I don't aim to have to speak on that again. (A long pause)

She has too much pride in her religion and her beliefs to let Walter go through with the liquor store idea. If she feels that it isn't appropriate she bluntly disapproves without argument

WALTER You ain't looked at it and you don't aim to have to speak on that again? You ain't even looked at it and you have decided (Crumpling his papers) Well, you tell that to my boy tonight when you put him to sleep on the living-room couch . . . (Turning to MAMA and speaking directly to her) Yeah and tell it to my wife, Mama, tomorrow when she has to go out of here to look after somebody else's kids. And tell it to me, Mama, every time we need a new pair of curtains and I have to watch you go out and work in somebody's kitchen. Yeah, you tell me then! (WALTER starts out)

This quote helps to show how the family is constantly forced to work in some kind of servitude in order to get enough money to buy something they need. This somewhat portrays how the typical African American family functioned at the time. (Social, cultural)

RUTH Where you going?

WALTER I'm going out!

RUTH Where?

WALTER Just out of this house somewhere

RUTH (Getting her coat) I'll come too.

WALTER I don't want you to come!

RUTH I got something to talk to you about, Walter.

WALTER That's too bad.

MAMA (Still quietly) Walter Lee (She waits and he finally turns and looks at her) Sit down.
She is a strong women and definitely uses that power to control her household.

WALTER I'm a grown man, Mama.

MAMA Ain't nobody said you wasn't grown. But you still in my house and my presence. And as long as you are you'll talk to your wife civil. Now sit down.

Mama acknowledges the fact that Walter is a grown man, but still feels that she is the leader of the house and that whatever she says goes. Also, she feels that women should be treated but have a limitations in society.

RUTH (Suddenly) Oh, let him go on out and drink himself to death! He makes me sick to my stomach!
(She flings her coat against him and exits to bedroom)

WALTER (Violently flinging the coat after her) And you turn mine too, baby! (The door slams behind her)
That was my biggest mistake

MAMA (Still quietly) Walter, what is the matter with you?

She sees that something is wrong with Walter mentally; she is curious person and feels that she needs to get down to the bottom of things.

WALTER Matter with me? Ain't nothing the matter with me!

MAMA Yes there is. Something eating you up like a crazy man. Something more than me not giving you this money. The past few years I been watching it happen to you. You get all nervous acting and kind of wild in the eyes (WALTER jumps up impatiently at her words) I said sit there now, I'm talking to you!

Mama has a good memory and understands that something is going on with Walter; she is pretty sure that it has something the money that she just realized. She believes that Walter is not content with his lifestyle.

This quote helps to show how a black man such as Walter can drastically change because of his desire to achieve something more in life, something that the society he lived in provided whites but not blacks. Walter, like many other black men, wanted an opportunity to perform jobs that do not involve servitude. (Social)

WALTER Mama I don't need no nagging at me today.

MAMA Seem like you getting to a place where you always tied up in some kind of knot about something. But if anybody ask you 'bout it you just yell at 'em and bust out the house and go out and drink somewhere. Walter Lee, people can't live with that. Ruth's a good, patient girl in her way but you getting to be too much. Boy, don't make the mistake of driving that girl away from you.

Mama is trying to understand Walter and tell him that everything is ok. Mama takes on this role unknowingly because she knows that she is the reason that this family is the way it is today, In order to maintain that she needs to talk it over with her children. her children would lose hope and continue with their own thing without using her Mama's values.

(Marxist) Money has caused Walter to become blind to the good and positive aspects of his life. Because of money, Walter cannot see the amount of love both Ruth and Mama have for him and that they always want what is best for him. He is at the point where without money he cannot survive.

WALTER Why what she do for me?

MAMA She loves you.

Mama wanted to make sure that Walter understands that Ruth really loves Walter because that might help him to get things into perspective.

WALTER Mama I'm going out. I want to go off somewhere and be by myself for a while.

MAMA I'm sorry 'bout your liquor store, son. It just wasn't the thing for us to do. That's what I want to tell you about

She knows that her son really wanted this but her values wouldn't let her son do this. She feels bad doing this because she hates to see her son sad.

WALTER I got to go out, Mama
{He rises}

MAMA It's dangerous, son.

She knows that Walter is going to do something he is going to regret. He feels strongly about the liquor store but still feels that her christian values are more important. However, she is confused at the same time and doesn't know whether she will need to reconsider her decision.

WALTER What's dangerous?

MAMA When a man goes outside his home to look for peace.

She knows that there is nothing good that can happen when a person needs to go out and relax because they usually need to use alcohol or other things relax the mind.

WALTER (Beseechingly) Then why can't there never be no peace in this house then?

MAMA You done found it in some other house?

Mama is making sure that there is nothing going on with another women; she trusts her son, but wants to confirm that way she knows exactly what is going on with him. Again, she also needs confirmation with everything before she says anything. She only says things that she absolutely knows about.

WALTER No there ain't no woman! Why do women always think there's a woman somewhere when a man gets restless. (Picks up the check) Do you know what this money means to me? Do you know what this money can do for us? (Puts it back) Mama Mama I want so many things

(Marxist) Walter seems to think that money is the one and only factor that can drastically change their lives for the better. He feels that with money, the family and him could do so much more things in life.

MAMA Yes, son

Mama understands that everything Walter wants has to deal with money and that without money, Walter is extremely depressed. Walter is a big dreamed man who really wants to get out of the situation he is in right now.

WALTER I want so many things that they are driving me kind of crazy . . . Mama look at me.

MAMA I'm looking at you. You a good-looking boy. You got a job, a nice wife, a fine boy and

Mama is trying to make Walter better about his life by describing what he has, rather than what he doesn't have. She hopes that positive reinforcement will better help Walter get over himself.

WALTER A job. (Looks at her) Mama, a job? I open and close car doors all day long. I drive a man around in his limousine and I say, "Yes, sir; no, sir; very good, sir; shall I take the Drive, sir?" Mama, that ain't no kind of job . . . that ain't nothing at all. (Very quietly) Mama, I don't know if I can make you understand.

This quote reveals Walters dissatisfaction with the life he is currently living and also portrays the typical jobs that blacks held during this time. These jobs usually included some kind of servitude to white men.

(Social, cultural)

MAMA Understand what, baby?

Mama is really trying to understand what is going in with Walter. Mama is in a puzzle and doesn't know exactly what to do yet and will make her decision after thinking because she always wants to make the right decision. This also shows that throughout the years things have not changed when it comes to money. According to some people, money defines social status and in reality it is the person and family that makes up a person. Mama is trying to get Walter to understand that concept.

WALTER (Quietly) Sometimes it's like I can see the future stretched out in front of me just plain as day. The future, Mama. Hanging over there at the edge of my days. Just waiting for me a big, looming blank space full of nothing. Just waiting for me. But it don't have to be. (Pause. Kneeling beside her chair) Mama sometimes when I'm downtown and I pass them cool, quiet-looking restaurants where them white boys are sitting back and talking 'bout things . . . sitting there turning deals worth millions of dollars . . . sometimes I see guys don't look much older than me

(Social, Historical, Cultural, Marxist) In a time where black people did not have much, it seems that they look toward "white boys" with contempt as they seem to have everything in life. Walter is bitter that he can't have what the "white boys" have, money.

MAMA Son how come you talk so much *bout money?

Mama doesn't understand it when Walter talks about money all the time because he is the only one in the family that thinks that way. For Mama, it was always more family, pride, and religion that took priority over money.

WALTER (With immense passion) Because it is life, Mama!

MAMA (Quietly) Oh (Very quietly) So now it's life. Money is life. Once upon a time freedom used to be life now it's money. I guess the world really do change . . .

Mama has lived through a lot during her lifetime and she has never understood anything that has to deal with money more than anything else. She always believed that there are better things in life. Her next goal is to change the way Walter thinks about himself. Self Confidence comes first over society. This quote helps to identify some of the problems that existed in the past for blacks. As Mama mentions, "freedom" was a previous issue that blacks had to deal with in the past. However, even after attaining this freedom, the blacks still had to adapt to a prejudice society. (Historical, Social, Cultural)

WALTER No it was always money, Mama. We just didn't know about it.

MAMA No ... something has changed. (She looks at him) You something new, boy. In my time we was worried about not being lynched and getting to the North if we could and how to stay alive and still have a pinch of dignity too . . . Now here come you and Beneatha talking 'bout things we ain't never even thought about hardly, me and your daddy. You ain't satisfied or proud of nothing we done. I mean that you had a home; that we kept you out of trouble till you was grown; that you don't have to ride to work on the back of nobody's streetcar You my children but how different we done become.

Mama feels bad because that means all the work she did raising Walter went up into smoke. She didn't sacrifice everything to hear Walter talk about money. She had bigger trouble when she was growing up. Mama feels that Walter is a selfish person.

(Historical) For blacks, it used to be only freedom that was their main concern, but after receiving it, the

next generation seems to, as Mama describes it, take it for granted.

WALTER (A long beat. He pats her hand and gets up) You just don't understand, Mama, you just don't understand.

MAMA Son do you know your wife is expecting another baby? (WALTER stands, stunned, and absorbs what his mother has said) That's what she wanted to talk to you about. (WALTER sinks down into a chair) This ain't for me to be telling but you ought to know. (She waits) I think Ruth is thinking 'bout getting rid of that child.

Mama is trying to change the subject because she knows that talking about money with Walter any longer is pointless. She also understood that she needed to tell Walter what is going on with Ruth because he doesn't understand exactly what is going through. He is still a kid.

WALTER (Slowly understanding) No no Ruth wouldn't do that.

(Social, Historical, Cultural) Abortion in those days was not a normal and as frequently done as in today's society. The issue of abortion being brought up completely surprises Walter as it is out of the norm and was not what society deemed "appropriate" at that time.

MAMA When the world gets ugly enough a woman will do anything for her family. The part that's already living.

Ruth understands that the family is in a situation that can't afford to have another baby. There is no time as well as space in the house to have another baby. Mama feels that there is a possibility that Ruth might get an abortion. Mama's understanding women plays a good role in this, otherwise there is no way of understanding the situation that Ruth is in and what she is going to do.

WALTER You don't know Ruth, Mama, if you think she would do that,

(RUTH opens the bedroom door and stands there a little limp)

RUTH (Beaten) Yes I would too, Walter. (Pause) I gave her a five-dollar down payment.

The fact that secret abortion required only a five dollar down payment hints at the time period of the story (Historical)

(There is total silence as the man stares at his wife and the mother stares at her son)

MAMA (Presently) Well (Tightly) Well son, I'm waiting to hear you say something . . . (She waits) I'm waiting to hear how you be your father's son. Be the man he was . . . (Pause. The silence shouts) Your wife say she going to destroy your child. And I'm waiting to hear you talk like him and say we a people who give children life, not who destroys them (She rises) I'm waiting to see you stand up and look like your daddy and say we done give up one baby to poverty and that we ain't going to give up nary another one . . . I'm waiting.

Mama is giving Walter a challenge because she knows that right now he is not ready to be a man and make his own decisions. He is still a child that hasn't matured and that goes back to the plant. The plant is still in its early stages. Mama wants to make sure that he understands that he is not ready to make his own decisions.

WALTER Ruth (He can say nothing)

MAMA If you a son of mine, tell her! (WALTER picks up his keys and his coat and walks out. She continues, bitterly) You . . . you are a disgrace to your father's memory. Somebody get me my hat!
Mama got really upset with Walter; she feels that all the sacrifice she made her early days came to waste with Walter because he hasn't fully matured into that person that resembles her husband. She also shows signs that she misses her husband very much because it is very hard for her to deal with this situation.

Curtain

ACT II

SCENE ONE

Time: Later the same day.

At rise: RUTH is ironing again. She has the radio going. Presently BENEATHA'S bedroom door opens and RUTH'S mouth falls and she puts down the iron in fascination.

RUTH What have we got on tonight!

BENEATHA (Emerging grandly from the doorway so that we can see her thoroughly robed in the costume Asagai brought) You are looking at what a well-dressed Nigerian woman wears (She parades for RUTH, her hair completely hidden by the headdress; she is coquettishly fanning herself with an ornate oriental fan, mistakenly more like Butterfly than any Nigerian that ever was) Isn't it beautiful? (She promenades to the radio and, with an arrogant flourish, turns off the good loud blues that is playing) Enough of this assimilationist junk! (RUTH follows her with her eyes as she goes to the phonograph and puts on a record and turns and waits ceremoniously for the music to come up. Then, with a shout) OCOMOGOSIAY!

(Historical, Cultural, Social) During this time period, assimilation towards white society was the "in" thing to do, however, Beneatha and Asagai are going against societies rules which was out of the norm.

(RUTH jumps. The music comes up, a lovely Nigerian melody. BENEATHA listens, enraptured, her eyes jar away "back to the past." She begins to dance. RUTH is dumfounded)

RUTH What kind of dance is that?

BENEATHA A folk dance.

Beneatha's dance mimics the idea brought historically by Marcus Garvey and other prominent African american advocates for a "Call Back to Africa." The idea that African Americans settled in America would reattach to their lost African heritage.

RUTH (Pearl Bailey) What kind of folks do that, honey?

BENEATHA It's from Nigeria. It's a dance of welcome.

RUTH Who you welcoming?

BENEATHA The men back to the village.

(Social, Historical) Beneatha in this one statement solidifies the social aspect of women being secondary to men. After WW2 a wave of family inspired morals enswarmed the country, women were thought to do anything to help their husband out, wether that be cooking or waiting on him hand and foot. What Beneatha is doing is contradictory to her own self. She is a strong woman, trying to educate herself to

become a doctor, an already unaccepted practice for women, and atop of that by the color of her skin makes it harder for her, but for her vast want to become above Men, she reverts to the old belief of women being second class to men only for the reason to win the heart of Asagi.

RUTH Where they been?

BENEATHA How should I know out hunting or something. Anyway, they are coming back now . . .

RUTH Well, that's good.

BENEATHA (With the record) Alundi, alundi Alundialunya Jop pu a jeepua Ang gu soooooooooo
Aiyaiyae. . . Ayehaye alundi

(Social, Cultural, Historical) Again, against the norm, Beneatha is embracing her African heritage of being inferior to men.

(WALTER comes in during this performance; he has obviously been drinking. He leans against the door heavily and watches his sister, at "first with distaste. Then his eyes look off "back to the past' as he lifts both his fists to the roof, screaming)

WALTER YEAH ... AND ETHIOPIA STRETCH FORTH HER HANDS AGAIN! . . .

RUTH (Drily, looking at him) Yes and Africa sure is claiming her own tonight. (She gives them both up and starts ironing again)

WALTER (All in a drunken, dramatic shout) Shut up! . . . I'm digging them drums . . . them drums move me! . . . (He makes his weaving way to his wife's face and leans in close to her) In my heart of hearts (He thumps his chest) I am much warrior!

RUTH (Without even looking up) In your heart of hearts you are much drunkard.

WALTER (Coming away from her and starting to wander around the room, shouting) Me and Jomo . . . (Intently, in his sister's face. She has stopped dancing to watch him in this unknown mood) That's my man, Kenyatta. (Shouting and thumping his chest) FLAMING SPEAR! HOT DAMN! (He is suddenly in possession of an imaginary spear and actively spearing enemies all over the room) OCOMOGOSIAY . . . (Cultural, Historical) Walter erratic behavior mimics the way black people felt in this time when the country was torn in half. Many a black men strove to be heard, longed for acceptance into society, and cherished the idea of being equal to white society. Walter, although he is drunk is speaking his innermost thoughts about society and how himself and black people as a whole want to be accepted.

BENEATHA (To encourage WALTER, thoroughly caught up with this side of him) OCOMOGOSIA Y, FLAMING SPEAR!

WALTER THE LION IS WAKING . . . OWIMOWEH! (He pulls his shirt open and leaps up on the table and gestures with his spear)

BENEATHA OWIMOWEH!

WALTER (On the table, very far gone, his eyes pure glass sheets. He sees what we cannot, that he is a leader of his people, a great chief, a descendant of Chaka, and that the hour to march has come) Listen,

my black brothers

(Historical) Historically speaking, Chaka or Shaka was an infamous zulu cheftan that united his people, in this case Walter is trying to unite his family for them to become closer knit and grow.

BENEATHA OCOMOGOSIAY!

WALTER Do you hear the waters rushing against the shores of the coastlands

BENEATHA OCOMOGOSIAY!

WALTER Do you hear the screeching of the cocks in yonder hills beyond where the chiefs meet in council for the coming of the mighty war

Walters thrusting of his spear also represents Shaka's *iklwa* - the Zulu thrusting spear, and the "buffalo horns" formation that he is notoriously known for in his military expenditures. In this entire scene Walter is mimicing the profound zulu warrior and chief.

BENEATHA OCOMOGOSIAY!

(And now the lighting shifts subtly to suggest the world of WALTER'S imagination, and the mood shifts from pure comedy. It is the inner WALTER speaking: the Southside chauffeur has assumed an unexpected majesty)

WALTER Do you hear the beating of the wings of the birds flying low over the mountains and the low places of our land

BENEATHA OCOMOGOSIAY!

WALTER Do you hear the singing of the women, singng the war songs of our fathers to the babies in the great houses? Singing the sweet war songs! (The door- bell rings) OH, DO YOU HEAR, MY BLACK BROTHERS!

BENEATHA (Completely gone) We hear you, Flaming Spear

(RUTH shuts off the phonograph and opens the door. GEORGE MURCHISON enters)

WALTER Telling us to prepare for the GREATNESS OF THE TIME! (Lights back to normal. He turns and sees GEORGE) Black Brother!

(Social/Historical) In this scene, Walter although drunk, is applying the feelings of the time to George. During the time where this story was taken place, the black race was striving for their rights and the freedom of equalness in the US.

(He extends his hand for the fraternal clasp)

GEORGE Black Brother, hell !

RUTH (Having had enough, and embarrassed for the family) Beneatha, you got company what's the matter with you? Walter Lee Younger, get down off that table and stop acting like a fool . . .

(WALTER comes down off the table suddenly and makes a quick exit to the bathroom)

RUTH He's had a little to drink ... I don't know what her excuse is.

GEORGE (To BENEATHA) Look honey, we're going to the theatre we're not going to be in it ... so go change, huh?

(BENEATHA looks at him and slowly, ceremoniously, lifts her hands and pulls off the headdress. Her hair is close-cropped and unstraightened. GEORGE freezes mid-sentence and RUTH'S eyes all but fall out of her head)

George is optimizing the role men have over women during the 1950's, the superiority to the other gender. Beneatha, and other women have their own personal goals, their own aspirations, their own dreams but men are the oppressing factor, the final decision maker, what men want, they get. Again it is ironic because Beneatha is studying to be independent, the exception to general perception of women during the time frame, but she is denied her personal freedom of expression and has to abide by her George, her boyfriend.

GEORGE What in the name of

RUTH (Touching BENEATHA'S hear) Girl, you done lost your natural mind!?! Look at your head!

GEORGE What have you done to your head I mean your hair!

(Historical, Social, Cultural) This is George reacting to Beneatha trying to embrace her black heritage and George is acting like a white assimilst and feels that Beneatha is being strange not conforming to society.

BENEATHA Nothing except cut it off.

RUTH Now that's the truth it's what ain't been done to it! You expect this boy to go out with you with your head all nappy like that?

(Cultural) Ruth telling Beneatha about her hair being nappy is a culturally percieved notion for the African American race, an association amongst black people. It is quite funny because Walter is trying to unite his family, he has a strong black voice that longs to be heard, Beneatha is trying to be an exception in society by being a doctor but Ruth still has to time to have a little fun and criticize Ruth about a common black characteristic.

BENEATHA (Looking at GEORGE) That' s up to George. If he's ashamed of his heritage

GEORGE Oh, don't be so proud of yourself, Bennie just because you look eccentric.

BENEATHA How can something that's natural be eccentric?

GEORGE Thas what being eccentric means being natural. Get dressed.

(Socially) George is patronizing Beneatha, a common social attitude amongst men toward women during the 1950's. Men are superior and are absolute.

BENEATHA I don't like that, George.

RUTH Why must you and your brother make an argument out of everything people say?

BENEATHA Because I hate assimilationist Negroes!

(Social, Cultural) Beneatha is fighting against the assimilating nature of George and basically all of society who tells her to act and be a certain way.

RUTH Will somebody please tell me what assimila-who- ever means!

(Socially) Ruth optimizes the general notion that most women during this time period were not educated, they didn't need to be educated because they were meant to do housework and cook.

GEORGE Oh, it's just a college girl's way of calling people Uncle Toms but that isn't what it means at all. (Historically) Uncle Toms Cabin is an anti-slavery novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe published in 1852. The Book helped lay the foundation for the civil war. The book is about a long-suffering black slave and the reality of being oppressed by a whiter slave owner during the 19th century. This allude to this novel mirrors the situation of the Youngers but in the 1950s.

RUTH Well, what does it mean?

BENEATHA (Cutting GEORGE off and staring at him as she replies to RUTH) It means someone who is willing to give up his own culture and submerge himself completely in the dominant, and in this case oppressive culture!

GEORGE Oh, dear, dear, dear! Here we go! A lecture on the African past! On our Great West African Heritage! In one second we will hear all about the great Ashanti empires; the great Songhay civilizations; and the great sculpture of Benin and then some poetry in the Bantu and the whole monologue will end with the word heritage! (Nastily!) Let's face it, baby, your heritage is nothing but a bunch of raggedyassed spirituals and some grass huts!

(Socially) George like the rest of the men within the United States after WW2 believed women were inferior, second class and for that nothing they said logically or that was of some knowledge could be taken seriously.

BENEATHA GRASS HUTS! (RUTH crosses to her and forcibly pushes her toward the bedroom) See there . . . you are standing there in your splendid ignorance talking about people who were the first to smelt iron on the face of the earth! (RUTH is pushing her through the door) The Ashanti were performing surgical operations when the English (RUTH pulls the door to, with BENEATHA on the other side, and smiles graciously at GEORGE. BENEATHA opens the door and shouts the end of the sentence defiantly at GEORGE) were still tatooing themselves with blue dragons! (She goes back inside) (Culturally) Beneatha like a small majority of African Americans in the United States became infatuated with the idea of the idea of assimilating back into the culture and practices of Africans. Beneatha's schooling class, African American studies depicts the growing interest in a look back into black heritage and the wanting to embrace their old culture.

RUTH Have a seat, George (They both sit. RUTH folds her hands rather primly on her lap, determined to demonstrate the civilization of the family) Warm, ain't it? I mean for September. (Pause) Just like they always say about Chicago weather: If it's too hot or cold for you, just wait a minute and it'll change. (She smiles happily at this cliché of clichés) Everybody say it's got to do with them bombs and things they keep setting off. (Pause) Would you like a nice cold beer?

(Historically) The reference to bombs being tested is an allude to the nuclear testing labeled Operation Upshot-Knothole of 1953, Operation Castle of 1954 and Operation Teapot of 1955, where 11, 6 and 14 nuclear weapons were tested respectively.

GEORGE No, thank you. I don't care for beer. (He looks at his watch) I hope she hurries up.

RUTH What time is the show?

GEORGE It's an eight-thirty curtain. That's just Chicago, though. In New York standard curtain time is eight forty.

(He is rather proud of this knowledge)

RUTH (Properly appreciating it) You get to New York a lot?

GEORGE (Offhand) Few times a year.

RUTH Oh that's nice. I've never been to New York.

(WALTER enters. We feel he has relieved himself, but the edge of unreality is still with him)

WALTER New York ain't got nothing Chicago ain't. Just a bunch of hustling people all squeezed up together being "Eastern."

(He turns his face into a screw of displeasure)

GEORGE Oh you've been?

WALTER Plenty of times.

RUTH (Shocked at the lie) Walter Lee Younger!

WALTER (Staring her down) Plenty! (Pause) What we got to drink in this house? Why don't you offer this man some refreshment. (To GEORGE) They don't know how to entertain people in this house, man.

GEORGE Thank you I don't really care for anything.

WALTER (Feeling his head; sobriety coming) Where's Mama?

RUTH She ain't come back yet.

WALTER (Looking MURCHISON over from head to toe, scrutinizing his carefully casual tweed sports jacket over cashmere V-neck sweater over soft eyelet shirt and tie, and soft slacks, finished off with white buckskin shoes) Why all you college boys wear them faggoty-looking white shoes?

(Socially) During this time period being gay was an abolishment and highly resented as we can see through the profane usage of the word faggot and the hateful demeanor that comes through the tone Walter uses this word toward George and his white buckskin shoes.

RUTH Walter Lee!

(GEORGE MURCHISON ignores the remark)

WALTER (To RUTH) Well, they look crazy as hell white shoes, cold as it is.

RUTH (Crushed) You have to excuse him

WALTER No he don't! Excuse me for what? What you always excusing me for! I'll excuse myself when I needs to be excused! (A pause) They look as funny as them black knee socks Beneatha wears out of here all the time.

RUTH It's the college style, Walter.

WALTER Style, hell. She looks like she got burnt legs or something!

RUTH Oh, Walter

WALTER (An irritable mimic) Oh, Walter! Oh, Walter! (To MURCHISON) How's your old man making out? I understand you all going to buy that big hotel on the Drive? (He finds a beer in the refrigerator, wanders over to MURCHISON, sipping and wiping his lips with the back of his hand, and straddling a chair backwards to talk to the other man) Shrewd move. Your old man is all right, man. (Tapping his head and half winking for emphasis) I mean he knows how to operate. I mean he thinks big, you know what I mean, I mean for a home, you know? But I think he's kind of running out of ideas now. I'd like to talk to him. Listen, man, I got some plans that could turn this city upside down. I mean think like he does. Big. Invest big, gamble big, hell, lose big if you have to, you know what I mean. It's hard to find a man on this whole Southside who understands my kind of thinking you dig? (He scrutinizes MURCHISON again, drinks his beer, squints his eyes and leans in close, confidential, man to man) Me and you ought to sit down and talk sometimes, man. Man, I got me some ideas . . .

(Socially/Historical) Walter explicitly states that people don't understand him, he feels isolated. Walter's emotions is a common feeling amongst the black people during this time frame as well as being hindered by a borderline mid-life crisis, Walter optimizes the black race as a whole.

MURCHISON (With boredom) Yeah sometimes we'll have to do that, Walter.

WALTER (Understanding the indifference, and offended) Yeah well, when you get the time, man. I know you a busy little boy.

RUTH Walter, please

WALTER (Bitterly, hurt) I know ain't nothing in this world as busy as you colored college boys with your fraternity pins and white shoes . . .

RUTH (Covering her face with humiliation) Oh, Walter Lee

WALTER I see you all all the time with the books tucked under your arms going to your (British A a mimic) "clahsses." And for what! What the hell you learning over there? Filling up your heads (Counting off on his fingers) with the sociology and the psychology but they teaching you how to be a man? How to take

over and run the world? They teaching you how to run a rubber plantation or a steel mill? Naw just to talk proper and read books and wear them faggoty-looking white shoes . . .

(Socially/Historically/Marxist) Walter is speaking on the behalf of the black race and he is criticizing the schooling system which all comes back to the resentment toward the white man, and there overzealous attempt to undermine and weaken the black race. Because the schooling system is run by the government and the government is a metaphor for the overwhelming power of white society Walter sees schools and brain washing and not allowing for the black man to prosper in society, only to become something he is not, educated. To become a treasure commodity to the white man, like a monkey, just a fathom of their imagination they have created to play with the black society and show their ever, powerful strength over blacks.

GEORGE (Looking at him with distaste, a little above it all) You're all wacked up with bitterness, man.

WALTER (Intently, almost quietly, between the teeth, glaring at the boy) And you ain't you bitter, man? Ain't you just about had it yet? Don't you see no stars gleaming that you can't reach out and grab? You happy? You contented son-of-a-bitch you happy? You got it made? Bitter? Man, I'm a volcano. Bitter? Here I am a giant surrounded by ants! Ants who can't even understand what it is the giant is talking about.

(Socially) Walter is fed up with the system, a system that continuously challenges blacks, a system not intended for the black man to win.

RUTH (Passionately and suddenly) Oh, Walter ain't you with nobody!

WALTER (Violently) No! 'Cause ain't nobody with me! Not even my own mother!

RUTH Walter, that's a terrible thing to say!

(BENEATHA enters, dressed for the evening in a cocktail dress and earrings, hair natural)

GEORGE Well hey (Crosses to BENEATHA; thoughtful, with emphasis, since this is a reversal) You look great!

WALTER (Seeing his sister's hair for the first time) What's the matter with your head?

BENEATHA (Tired of the jokes now) I cut it off, Brother.

WALTER (Coming close to inspect it and walking around her) Well, Til be damned. So that's what they mean by the African bush . . .

BENEATHA Ha ha. Let's go, George.

GEORGE (Looking at her) You know something? I like it. It's sharp. I mean it really is. (Helps her into her wrap)

(Social) Beneatha has changed her whole wardrobe in order to appease to the standards of George. This is the general outlook for women during the 1950's, to appease to the confidements the man set for them.

RUTH Yes I think so, too. (She goes to the mirror and starts to clutch at her hair)

WALTER Oh no! You leave yours alone, baby. You might turn out to have a pin-shaped head or something!

BENEATHA See you all later.

RUTH Have a nice time.

GEORGE Thanks. Good night. (Half out the door, he re- opens it. To WALTER) Good night, Prometheus! (Historically/Social) In Greek mythology, Prometheus is a Titan, the son of Iapetus and Themis, He was a champion of mankind, known for his wily intelligence, who stole fire from Zeus and gave it to mortals. Zeus then punished him for his crime by having him bound to a rock while a great eagle ate his liver every day only to have it grow back to be eaten again the next day-Wikipedia.org. This inference to Prometheus mirrors the life of George and Beneatha, two educated black people who are ridiculed by white society everyday for their education, even though they are just trying to better themselves and their race.

(BENEATHA and GEORGE exit)

WALTER (To RUTH) Who is Prometheus?

RUTH I don't know. Don't worry about it.

WALTER (In fury, pointing after GEORGE) See there they get to a point where they can't insult you man to man they got to go talk about something ain't nobody never heard of!

RUTH How do you know it was an insult? (To humor him) Maybe Prometheus is a nice fellow.

WALTER Prometheus! I bet there ain't even no such thing! I bet that simple-minded clown

RUTH Walter

(She stops what she is doing and looks at him)

WALTER (Yelling) Don't start!

RUTH Start what?

WALTER Your nagging! Where was I? Who was I with? How much money did I spend?

RUTH (Plaintively) Walter Lee why don't we just try to talk about it ...

WALTER (Not listening) I been out talking with people who understand me. People who care about the things I got on my mind.

RUTH (Wearily) I guess that means people like Willy Harris.

WALTER Yes, people like Willy Harris.

RUTH (With a sudden flash of impatience) Why don't you all just hurry up and go into the banking business and stop talking about it!

(Marxist) Ruth tells her husband Walter to just start working in the banking business and all their problems will be solved. She infers that money will solve all problems and their life will return to normal, return to happiness and bliss in which they have longed for since the death of Walter Sr.

WALTER Why? You want to know why? 'Cause we all tied up in a race of people that don't know how to do nothing but moan, pray and have babies!

(The line is too bitter even for him and he looks at her and sits down)

RUTH Oh, Walter . . . (Softly) Honey, why can't you stop fighting me?

WALTER (Without thinking) Who's fighting you? Who even cares about you?

(This line begins the retardation of his mood)

RUTH Well (She waits a long time, and then with resignation starts to put away her things) I guess I might as well go on to bed . . . (More or less to herself) I don't know where we lost it ... but we have . . . (Then, to him) I'm sorry about this new baby, Walter. I guess maybe I better go on and do what I started ... I guess I just didn't realize how bad things was with us ... I guess I just didn't really realize (She starts out to the bedroom and stops) You want some hot milk?

WALTER Hot milk?

RUTH Yes hot milk*

WALTER Why hot milk?

RUTH 'Cause after all that liquor you come home with you ought to have something hot in your stomach. (Socially) Ruth, even though bad mouthed, put down , and made to feel like crap still portrays the image that women are there to wait hand and foot on men no matter the situation that has arisen.

WALTER I don't want no milk.

RUTH You want some coffee then?

WALTER No, I don't want no coffee. I don't want nothing hot to drink. (Almost plaintively) Why you always trying to give me something to eat?

RUTH (Standing and looking at him helplessly) What else can I give you, Walter Lee Younger? (She stands and looks at him and presently turns to go out again. He lifts his head and watches her going away from him in a new mood which began to emerge when he asked her "Who cares about you)

WALTER It's been rough, ain't it, baby? (She hears and stops but does not turn around and he continues to her back) I guess between two people there ain't never as much understood as folks generally thinks there is. I mean like between me and you (She turns to face him) How we gets to the place where we

scared to talk softness to each other. (He waits, thinking hard himself) Why you think it got to be like that? (He is thoughtful, almost as a child would be) Ruth, what is it gets into people ought to be close?

RUTH I don't know, honey. I think about it a lot.

WALTER On account of you and me, you mean? The way things are with us. The way something done come down between us.

RUTH There ain't so much between us, Walter . . . Not when you come to me and try to talk to me. Try to be with me ... a little even.

WALTER (Total honesty) Sometimes . . . sometimes . . . I don't even know how to try.

RUTH Walter

WALTER Yes?

RUTH (Coming to him, gently and with misgiving, but coming to him) Honey . . . life don't have to be like this. I mean sometimes people can do things so that things are better . . . You remember how we used to talk when Travis was born . . . about the way we were going to live . . . the kind of house . . . (She is stroking his head) Well, it's all starting to slip away from us ...

(Socially/Historically) Like most black families, they have goals, dreams, aspirations that they strive for, that they long for. Ruth and Walter are no different. Back when Travis was born they dreamt of a life in which they had solace. But obstacles and difficulties have arisen, either it be racially or within the family that has pushed these dreams into the darkness and almost forgotten. They have been oppressed for so long they have forgotten their most pure thought.

(He turns her to him and they look at each other and kiss, tenderly and hungrily. The door opens and MAMA enters WALTER breaks away and jumps up. A beat)

WALTER Mama, where have you been?

MAMA My them steps is longer than they used to be. Whew! (She sits down and ignores him) How you feeling this evening, Ruth?

Mama has just come home from work. She is aged, and worn. The steps to the apartment used to be easily to walk up after a day at work, but now she struggles and is out of breath. Even so she still have enough motherly adherence to ask Ruth how she has been, but she does ignore her son.

(RUTH shrugs, disturbed at having been interrupted and watching her husband knowingly)

WALTER Mama, where have you been all day?

MAMA (Still ignoring him and leaning on the table and changing to more comfortable shoes) Where's Travis?

Mama is tired, and has long overwaited a retirement, but still, even though overwhelmed with fatigue, still asks about whats going on in the house. She is forever working, either as a maid for a prominent upper-class white family, or taking care of her own back at the weathering apartment.

RUTH I let him go out earlier and he ain't come back yet. Boy, is he going to get it!

WALTER Mama!

MAMA (As if she has heard him for the first time) Yes, son?

Mama finally responds to her nagging son, Walter.

WALTER Where did you go this afternoon?

MAMA I went downtown to tend to some business that I had to tend to.

Mama is the eldest in the family, but she is still the backbone of the family. She still tends to the family's most important issues and make the final decisions, alone. She is a strong-willed woman, who after the death of her husband, Walter Sr. she has had to become the prominent keeper of the family due to the immaturity of her son, Walter Jr. We can infer that she was a very loving mother when her husband was alive, cooking, cleaning, and helping the kids out, but with the passing of him she has had to become the man in the family.

WALTER What kind of business?

MAMA You know better than to question me like a child, Brother.

Mama doesn't have to answer to anyone, her decision is absolute, final. This shows a contradictory perception of women in the late 50's. Women were supposed to be second to men, an aid to their husbands, but as can be seen in Shiloh, Mama has had to become the man in the family.

WALTER (Rising and bending over the table) Where were you, Mama? (Bringing his fists down and shouting) Mama, you didn't go do something with that insurance money, something crazy?

(The front door opens slowly, interrupting him, and TRAVIS peeks his head in, less than hopefully)

TRAVIS (To his mother) Mama, I

RUTH "Mama I" nothing! You're going to get it, boy! Get on in that bedroom and get yourself ready!

TRAVIS But I

MAMA Why don't you all never let the child explain himself.

Mama is a little hypocritical in the quote. She says to Ruth to let Travis explain himself but when Mama and Walter were talking, she decided she wasn't going to explain herself to him. What Mama also says also adds to the idea that Mama is continuously trying to help out and make everything peaceful within the family.

RUTH Keep out of it now, Lena.

(MAMA clamps her lips together, and RUTH advances toward her son menacingly)

RUTH A thousand times I have told you not to go off like that

MAMA (Holding out her arms to her grandson) Well at least let me tell him something. I want him to be the first one to hear . . . Come here, Travis. (The boy obeys, gladly) Travis (She takes him by the shoulder and looks into his face) you know that money we got in the mail this morning?

Mama, being a typical grandmother loves to spoil her grandson; we can see this earlier in the story when she folds up Travis's bedding and Ruth says that she spoils him. And in this fashion, Mama spoils Travis and tells him what she has done with the money.

TRAVIS Yes'm

(Historically/Socially) The way Travis responds to Mama's question, the diction used lets us understand the lack of education the grandson has. Black people during the 19th century, especially in the South as slaves, education was not provided for the black people and therefore their English was slurred and homemade.

MAMA Well what you think your grandmama gone and done with that money?

Mama is creating anticipation by asking another question, fully aware that the whole family has been wrapped up entirely by the check and what is going to be done with the 10,00 dollars.

TRAVIS I don't know, Grandmama.

MAMA (Putting her finger on his nose for emphasis) She went out and she bought you a house! (The explosion comes from WALTER at the end of the revelation and he jumps up and turns away from all of them in a fury. MAMA continues, to TRAVIS) You glad about the house? It's going to be yours when you get to be a man.

Mama decides to buy a house for the family, a place of their own. A place for Travis to grow up proper, a place that the whole family can enjoy. No more will they have to live in the small, decrepit apartment that they call home, no more sharing bedrooms and dirty floors and endless disputes. Mama did what she thought was the best for the family, she was thinking in the long run, not with Walter and his get rich schemes.

TRAVIS Yeah I always wanted to live in a house.

MAMA All right, gimme some sugar then (TRAVIS puts his arms around her neck as she watches her son over the boy's shoulder. Then, to TRAVIS, after the embrace) Now when you say your prayers tonight, you thank God and your grandfather 'cause it was him who give you the house in his way.

In this time of great joy, we can see her strong religious perspective. She tells Travis to firstly thank god, and then his grandfather. Mama is a devout Christian and the Heavenly Father is first and foremost and without him, nothing can happen.

RUTH (Taking the boy from MAMA and pushing him toward the bedroom) Now you get out of here and get ready for your beating.

TRAVIS Aw, Mama

RUTH Get on in there (Closing the door behind him and turning radiantly to her mother-in-law) So you went and did it!.

MAMA (Quietly, looking at her son with pain) Yes, I did.

Mama was fully aware of what the mood was going to turn to, she fully understood that by buying a house instead of investing in her sons ventures that she was going to feel regret and be hated by her son. But she did what was best for the entire family, not just a singular entity.

RUTH (Raising both arms classically) PRAISE GOD! (Looks at WALTER a moment, -who says nothing. She crosses rapidly to her husband) Please, honey let me be glad . . . you be glad too. (She has laid her hands on his shoulders, but he shakes himself free of her roughly, without turning to face her) Oh, Walter . . . a home . . . a home. (She comes back to MAMA) Well where is it? How big is it? How much it going to cost?

MAMA Well

Mama is overwhelmed by Ruth's ecstasy toward the new good news of owning a house. Also we can tell that Mama wants to keep the finances a secret because we can infer that the house is expensive and she doesn't want the family to worry about finances and cost of living in a house.

RUTH When we moving?

MAMA (Smiling at her) First of the month.

Mama is smiling, for once she feels that her choice of buying a house was a good idea.

RUTH (Throwing back her head with jubilation) Praise God!

MAMA (Tentatively, still looking at her son's back turned against her and RUTH) It's it's a nice house too ... (She cannot help speaking directly to him. An imploring quality in her voice, her manner, makes her almost like a girl now) Three bedrooms nice big one for you and Ruth. , . . Me and Beneatha still have to share our room, but Travis have one of his own and (With difficulty) I figure if the new baby is a boy, we could get one of them double-decker outfits . . . And there's a yard with a little patch of dirt where I could maybe get to grow me a few flowers . . . , And a nice big basement . . .

Even though Mama already made the decision, there is still a felling in the back of head that she wants Walter's approval. Then Mama looks back to Ruth and realizes and becomes filled with jubilation after realizing that they have a house of their own for once. We can tell that this is a dream Mama has been having for a long time because when she starts to describe the house she becomes overly ecstatic and starts to talk faster, telling Ruth about everything that's going to happen. with all her years of maturity and wisdom, Mama reverts back to pure childish bliss.

RUTH Walter honey, be glad

MAMA (Still to his back, fingering things on the table) 'Course I don't want to make it sound fancier than it is ... It's just a plain little old house but it's made good and solid and it will be ours. Walter Lee it makes a difference in a man when he can walk on floors that belong to him . . .

Mama tries to ease the tension in the air and tells Walter about the positives of a man owning a house. She is trying to make her son of the happy in late of the circumstances.

RUTH Where is it?

MAMA (Frightened at this telling) Well well it's out there in Clybourne Park

Mama tenderly, reveals the location of the newly acquired house. She knows that the location of the house is going to shock the family.

(Socially/Marxist) Mama decides to buy a house in an all white neighborhood, signifying that she is

sticking it to the man, no longer will they hold her down. She is barred from their reign of oppression, she is her own woman. Black society is growing in pride and resentment toward white society and the civil rights movement is arising and growing exponentially in strength with everyday passing.

(RUTH'S radiance jades abruptly, and WALTER finally turns slowly to face his mother with incredulity and hostility)

RUTH Where?

MAMA (Matter-of-factly) Four o six Clybourne Street, Clybourne Park.

Four is an archetype for unity and togetherness, and with the advent of the new house, the family will be complete.

RUTH Clybourne Park? Mama, there ain't no colored people living in Clybourne Park.

MAMA (Almost idiotically) Well, I guess there's going to be some now.

Mama is always optimistic, she doesn't care about the location of the house. She bought the best house for the least amount of money, and if that house is in an all white neighborhood then o well....nothing is going to stop Mama. This shows the social attitudes during the 1960's toward African American in the United States. But due to the growing feminist, and civil rights movement, Mama is un-phased.

WALTER (Bitterly) So that's the peace and comfort you went out and bought for us today!

MAMA (Raising her eyes to meet his finally) Son I just tried to find the nicest place for the least amount of money for my family.

Mama finally decides to make eye contact with her son, and tells him that she was just trying to do the best thing possible for the family that she could think of.

RUTH (Trying to recover from the shock) Well well 'course I ain't one never been 'fraid of no crackers, mind you but well, wasn't there no other houses nowhere?

(Socially) Ruth's language toward white people shows us the audience, her view and thoughts about white people. Historically speaking black people use the word cracker to describe white people, and Ruth's statement just solidifies this idea.

MAMA Them houses they put up for colored in them areas way out all seem to cost twice as much as other houses. I did the best I could.

What Mama says highlights the social criticisms of the day. The social injustices Mama describes is the basis why she chose a house in the all white neighborhood. Black people are ridiculed and taken advantage of and she is not going to stand for that anymore. She doesn't want her family to go through the racism that she had to go through when she was their age.

(Socially) This shows the social injustice of the time and the way black people were treated because of the color of their skin. They were undermined, taken advantage of and believed to be inferior to other races.

RUTH (Struck senseless with the news, in its various degrees of goodness and trouble, she sits a moment, her fists propping her chin in thought, and then she starts to rise, bringing her fists down with vigor, the radiance spreading from cheek to cheek again) Well well! All I can say is if this is my time in life MY TIME to say good-bye (And she builds with momentum as she starts to circle the room with an exuberant,

almost tearfully happy release) to these Goddamned cracking walls! (She pounds the walls) and these marching roaches! (She wipes at an imaginary army of marching roaches) and this cramped little closet which ain't now or never was no kitchen! . . . then I say it loud and good, HALLELUJAH! AND GOOD-BYE MISERY ... I DON'T NEVER WANT TO SEE YOUR UGLY FACE AGAIN! (She laughs joyously, having practically destroyed the apartment, and flings her arms up and lets them come down happily, slowly, reflectively, over her abdomen, aware for the first time perhaps that the life therein pulses with happiness and not despair) Lena?

Socially speaking Ruth feels like she's made it, a small group of Black people that have fulfilled their dreams, like Beneatha in her schooling, an exception to the general belief and attitudes of the black society.

MAMA (Moved, watching her happiness) Yes, honey?

Mama is moved by Ruth's joy.

RUTH (Looking off) Is there is there a whole lot of sunlight?

MAMA (Understanding) Yes, child, there's a whole lot of sunlight.

Mama alludes to sunlight being good. For once in their life God has given them a break, life is going to be a little easier for them, and Ruth and the family can finally live in peace. Not having to worry about sharing the only bathroom with the rest of the residents on the apartment floor, never again will they have to cook in a small, ugly kitchen. They have made it, after years of working tirelessly and raising the children they finally has something they can call their own.

RUTH (Collecting herself and going to the door of the room TRAVIS is in) Well I guess I better see 'bout Travis. (To MAMA) Lord, I sure don't feel like whipping nobody today! (She exits)

(Cultural) In the African American community whipping their children to engrave the idea of obedience and the right thing to do is widely accepted. Unlike white society, culturally speaking this is a practice performed by the majority of the African American community both in the past and presently.

MAMA (The mother and son are left alone now and the mother waits a long time, considering deeply, before she speaks) Son you you understand what I done, don't you? (WALTER is silent and sullen) I I just seen my family falling apart today . . . just falling to pieces in front of my eyes . . . We couldn't of gone on like we was today. We was going backwards 'stead of forwards talking 'bout killing babies and wishing each other was dead . . . When it gets like that in life you just got to do something different, push on out and do something bigger . . . (She waits) I wish you say something, son ... I wish you'd say how deep inside you you think I done the right thing

Mama is trying to find acceptance in her son, in her first born child. Even though Mama pretends to think Walter's opinion isn't important, it is actually only his that she tries to please. With the passing of her husband, Walter Jr. in a way had become like his father. The person that Mama confides in tries to please.

(Socially) We can infer that the practice of aborting was well frowned upon, something that during that time was a "no-no". Something that was shameful and sinister. This gives us an insight into the cultural tendencies of the 1950's.

WALTER (Crossing slowly to his bedroom door and finally turning there and speaking measuredly) What you need me to say you done right for? You the head of this family. You run our lives like you want to. It was your money and you did what you wanted with it. So what you need for me to say it was all right for? (Bitterly, to hurt her as deeply as he knows is possible) So you butchered up a dream of mine you who

always talking 'bout your children's dreams . . .

(Marxist) Walter is forever infatuated with money and it is an ever important aspect in his life. His life revolves around “making-it” around proving to his family and white society that black men, black society for that matter is equal, maybe even better to white society and the social institutions of the US that blacks are excluded from. This is Walter’s way to solve his mid-life crisis, to solve the “mid-life” crisis of African Americans within the country. This is their way to finally prove that they can make it. And Mama’s distrust in her son, only proves the fact that blacks will forever, no matter how much luck or wit, or knowledge, as in Beneatha’s case, is on their side that they will be oppressed, eternally tied down.

MAMA Walter Lee

Mama doesn't know what to say to her husband, she is dumbfounded by Walter's reaction.

(He just closes the door behind him. MAMA sits alone, thinking heavily)

Curtain

ACT 2

SCENE TWO

Time: Friday night. A few weeks later.

At rise: Packing crates mark the intention of the family to move. BENEATHA and GEORGE come in, presumably from an evening out again.

GEORGE O.K. . . . O.K., whatever you say ... (They both sit on the couch. He tries to kiss her. She moves away) Look, we've had a nice evening; let's not spoil it, huh? . . .

(He again turns her head and tries to nuzzle in and she turns away from him, not with distaste but with momentary lack of interest; in a mood to pursue what they were talking about)

BENEATHA I'm trying to talk to you.

GEORGE We always talk.

BENEATHA Yes and I love to talk.

GEORGE (Exasperated; rising) I know it and I don't mind it sometimes ... I want you to cut it out, see. The moody stuff, I mean. I don't like it. You're a nice looking girl ... all over. That's all you need, honey, forget the atmosphere. Guys aren't going to go for the atmosphere they're going to go for what they see. Be glad for that. Drop the Garbo routine. It doesn't go with you. As for myself, I want a nice (Groping) simple (Thoughtfully) sophisticated girl . . . not a poet O.K.?

(He starts to kiss her, she rebuffs him again and he jumps up)

(Socially/Historically) George is proving the fact that men only see women as possessions, innate of being smart, only prized for their beauty, a "trophy wife". He only wants a woman who can cook and clean, not think.

BENEATHA Why are you angry, George?

GEORGE Because this is stupid! I don't go out with you to discuss the nature of "quiet desperation" or to hear all about your thoughts because the world will go on thinking what it thinks regardless

BENEATHA Then why read books? Why go to school?

GEORGE (With artificial patience, counting on his fingers) It's simple. You read books to learn facts to get grades to pass the course to get a degree. That's all it has nothing to do with thoughts. (A long pause)

(Socially) Within this statement George is living up to the idea that schooling and education is useless. It is only something created by the White Man to keep appearances up with the black community that there is still a way for them to rise out of persecution, but we see that this is to be

true. By Walter's standard there is only one way to get yourself out, to have vast amounts of money.

BENEATHA I see. (He starts to sit) Good night, George. (GEORGE looks at her a little oddly, and starts to exit. He meets MAMA coming in)

GEORGE Oh hello, Mrs. Younger.

MAMA Hello, George, how you feeling?

Again Mama is overly motherly. That is also because of the social tendencies of the day, to be courteous and kind and the way a guest is supposed to be treated.

GEORGE Fine fine, how are you?

MAMA Oh, a little tired. You know them steps can get you after a day's work. You all have a nice time tonight?

Mama again tells us of her personal battle she has with the stairs due to her aging body. This also mimics her struggle within her family. At the end of the tunnel there will be light, the house, but for now she is climbing stairs, awaiting challenges to be overcome so she can get to that final door, the final resting place of peace, the house.

GEORGE Yes a fine time. A fine time.

MAMA Well, good night.

Again reflects upon the social tendencies of the time period toward a house guest and the respect that comes with their presence.

GEORGE Good night. (He exits. MAMA closes the door behind her) Hello, honey. What you sitting like that for?

BENEATHA I'm just sitting.

MAMA Didn't you have a nice time?

Mama asks if her daughter had a good time, but we know Beneatha did not. Mama, for once, is unaware of the problems her daughter is suffering from and the prejudices for being a man Beneatha encounters on a daily basis from George and students at the University.

BENEATHA No.

MAMA No? What's the matter?

Mama's motherly attitude arises and tries to get to the bottom of the circumstances, trying to make her daughter feel better.

BENEATHA Mama, George is a fool honest. (She rises)

MAMA (Hustling around unloading the packages she has entered with. She stops) Is he, baby?

Mama is caught off guard, she didn't expect Beneatha to feel this way about George. She stops everything she's doing and talks to Beneatha. Even though Mama is busy and tired from walking up the steps with those boxes, she puts her children first, and herself last.

BENEATHA Yes. (BENEATHA makes up TRAVIS' bed as she talks)

MAMA You sure?

BENEATHA Yes.

MAMA Well I guess you better not waste your time with no fools. (BENEATHA looks up at her mother, watching her put groceries in the refrigerator. Finally she gathers up her things and starts into the bedroom. At the door she stops and looks back at her mother)

Mama gives her daughter advice on what to do due to the attitude Beneatha has toward George. She has a feminine inspired solution to her problem, leave him, try something else.

(Social) Mama is saying an underlying truth that all black people have been living up to. No matter the circumstances, you can never give up, you have to push through the obstacles, push through the barriers that limit you. Generally speaking, black society, even though confronted with obstacles and challenges must overcome them.

BENEATHA Mama

MAMA Yes, baby

BENEATHA Thank you.

MAMA For what?

Mama is taken surprise. From the statements below from Beneatha we can infer that Mama usually doesn't understand where shes is coming from, but maybe because of her husband late departing and her new found control of the family that she has become more understanding, more adaptive to modern times.

BENEATHA For understanding me this time. (She exits quickly and the mother stands, smiling a little, looking at the place where BENEATHA just stood. RUTH enters)

RUTH Now don't you fool with any of this stuff, Lena

MAMA Oh, I just thought I'd sort a few things out. Is Brother here?

RUTH Yes.

MAMA (With concern) Is he?

RUTH (Reading her eyes) Yes. (MAMA is silent and someone knocks on the door. MAMA and RUTH exchange 'weary and knowing glances and RUTH opens it to admit the neighbor, MRS. JOHNSON,* who is a rather squeaky wide-eyed lady of no particular age, with a newspaper under her arm)

MAMA (Changing her expression to acute delight and a ringing cheerful greeting) Oh hello there, Johnson.

Mama is acutely happy with seeing Ms. Johnson, an old time neighbor who frequently visits the house.

JOHNSON (This is a woman who decided long ago to be enthusiastic about EVERYTHING in life and she is inclined to wave her wrist vigorously at the height of her exclamatory comments')Hello there, yourself! H'you this evening, Ruth?

Mama already doesn't like Mrs. Johnson already because she didn't let her borrow the cleanser earlier; so Mama already doesn't trust Mrs. Johnson.

RUTH (Not much of a deceptive type) Fine, Mis* Johnson, h'you?

JOHNSON Fine. (Reaching out quickly, playfully, and patting RUTH'S stomach") Ain't you starting to poke out none yet! (She mugs with delight at the over-familiar remark and her eyes dart around looking at the crates and packing preparation; MAMA'S face is a cold sheet of endurance) Oh, ain't we getting ready round here, though! Yessir! Lookathere! I'm telling you the Youngers is really getting ready to "move on up a little higher!" Bless God!

She can't believe that the younger are actually moving to a different and bigger house, while she is stuck in the same area. She basically feed off Mama's hospitality and so she is going to miss out on that. She is being sarcastic in this statement; she wants to hide her actual emotions. She is jealous.

(Social/Cultural) This reference Ms Johnson states "move on up a little higher," even though in the context of the conversation she is being sarcastic; but if you take the quote as a singular entity, this is symbolic of black society's longing of "Making it". She also states "Bless God" which magnifies the idea that during this time, many black people were very religious and confided in God greatly.

MAMA (A little drily, doubting the total sincerity of the Blesser) Bless God.

We can infer that Mama doesn't really trust Ms Johnson, for that is why she doubts the sincerity of the praise. This is the first time in which Mama is less polite with a guest than she usually is, signifying the disassociation she has between Ms Johnson

JOHNSON He's good, ain't He?

Johnson sounds very concern and trying to kind and as compassionate as possible. This shows that she has a fake personality and that she is very selfish because she loves to feed off of Mama.

MAMA Oh yes, He's good.

It appears that Mama is insincere with her remarks to Ms Johnson. Although Mama is very religious she doesn't like Ms Johnson. We can tell this because anytime their is a house guest or anytime she talks to a family member, Mama is always constructive in talking, but now, with Ms Johnson present, Mama is answering in short statements, and not asking a question in return like she usually does.

JOHNSON I mean sometimes He works in mysterious ways . . . but He works, don't He!

This shows that Johnson is also very religious and that is one thing that Mama can relate with. Johnson is trying to continue the conversation with Mama even though Mama is replying in short blunt sentences.

MAMA (The same) Yes, he does.

Emphasizes the point that Mama really doesn't want to talk to Ms Johnson and is being blunt as possible so that Ms Johnson will stop talking and leave Ruth and herself to continue their discussion.

JOHNSON I'm just soooooo happy for y'all. And this here child (About RUTH) looks like she could just pop open with happiness, don't she. Where's all the rest of the family?

Johnson continues the conversation; she talks about Ruth seeing that there is something wrong with her,

but still says that she looks like she is going to pop open with happiness.

MAMA Bonnie's gone to bed

Mama has completely checked out of the conversation, she is done talking to Ms Johnson. We can see that Mama really truly dislikes Ms Johnson over what she had done to her grandson when Travis asked for cleanser but Ms Johnson said she didn't have enough even though Mama always help her out by giving her baking soda.

JOHNSON Ain't no . . . (The implication is pregnancy) sickness done hit you I hope . . . ?

Johnson suspects that is a Ruth is pregnan. Going back to her description saying she is going to open with happiness that she is going to pop out a baby. This shows that Johnson is very experienced just like Mama and is able to figure things that women have to deal with.

(Historical) It is generally acknowledged that when a women becomes pregnant she may go threw a symptom called morning sickness. This usually occurs around the 4th and 8th week after conception.

MAMA No she just tired. She was out this evening.

Even though Ruth is rite next to her at the door, Mama answers for her, trying to expedite this already over prolonged conversation.

JOHNSON (All is a coo, an emphatic coo) Aw ain't that lovely. She still going out with the little Murchison boy?

Johnson is still trying to prolong the conversation that is going on with Mama. Johnson is very nosy and trying to figure out is going with the Youngers.

MAMA (Drily) Ummmm huh.

Mama has even used words in hope to disinterest Ms Johnson and help her to leave.

JOHNSON That's lovely. You sure got lovely children, Younger. Me and Isaiah talks all the time 'bout what fine children you was blessed with. We sure do.

MAMA Ruth, give Mis' Johnson a piece of sweet potato pie and some milk.

Mama tries another one of her techniques to try and get Ms Johnson to leave. Mama decides to try and bribe her with a piece of sweet potato pie and milk, but this doesn't work and Ms Johnson continues to stay and prolong the agonizing conversation.

JOHNSON Oh honey, I can't stay hardly a minute I just dropped in to see if there was anything I could do. (Accepting the food easily) I guess y'all seen the news what's all over the colored paper this week . . . Johnson is trying to be nice and them immediately changes the subject and talks about the news.

MAMA No didn't get mine yet this week.

Mama continues to answer Ms Johnson's questions directly.

JOHNSON (Lifting her head and blinking with the spirit of catastrophe) You mean you ain't read 'bout them colored people that was bombed out their place out there? (RUTH straightens with concern and takes the paper and reads it. JOHNSON notices her and feeds commentary)

Johnson is now scaring the Youngers from moving into their new house by showing that if they moved into a predominantly white community that they would be treated brutally. This shows that Johnson is devious because whatever she does she is doing it for herself.

(Historical) During the early 1950's there were frequent attacks by the KKK dealing with the bombing of several black families. Especially in 1951 and 1952 the Southern regional Council of Atlanta published a report in which they stated 40 black families had been bombed within their state-Wikipedia.org

JOHNSON Ain't it something how bad these here white folks is getting here in Chicago! Lord, getting so you think you right down in Mississippi! (With a tremendous and rather insincere sense of melodrama)'Course I thinks it's wonderful how our folks keeps on pushing out. You hear some of these Negroes round here talking 'bout how they don't go where they ain't wanted and all that but not me, honey! (This is a lie) Wilhemenia Othella Johnson goes anywhere, any time she feels like it! (With head movement for emphasis) Yes I do! Why if we left it up to these here crackers, the poor niggers wouldn't have nothing (She clasps her hand over her mouth) Oh, I always forgets you don't 'low that word in your house.

(Historical) During the 1950's there was tremendous hatred and racism in the South, predominantly in the Mississippi delta area; Mississippi, Georgia, and Alabama, and black people knew this and generally Northern blacks refrained from traveling down South to avoid confrontation and lynching.

MAMA (Quietly, looking at her) No I don't 'low it.

Mama doesn't like the use of the word nigger to be used in her house, and ritefully so. Mama has been through a lot in her life and that word symbolizes pure hate toward her and everything wrong with society. We can infer that she thinks that this word should never be used, it is a word that symbolizes oppression and rage toward her people.

JOHNSON (Vigorously again) Me neither! I was just telling Isaiah yesterday when he come using it in front of me I said, "Isaiah, it's just like Mis' Younger says all the time "

MAMA Don't you want some more pie?

Mama is politely trying to get Ms Johnson out of the house. Even though she truly dislikes Othella, she is still courteous.

JOHNSON No no thank you; this was lovely. I got to get on over home and have my midnight coffee. I hear some people say it don't let them sleep but I finds I can't close my eyes right lessen I done had that laaaast cup of coffee . . . (She waits. A beat. Undaunted) My Good-night coffee, I calls it!

MAMA (With much eye-rolling and communication between herself and RUTH) Ruth, why don't you give Mis' Johnson some coffee. (RUTH gives MAMA an unpleasant look for her kindness)

This is comedical, an ironic sarcasm. Mama, perplexed with how she was raised to tend to guests and her true feelings toward Ms Johnson. But like usual Mamas friendly appearance tells Ruth to get Ms Johnson some coffee.

(Social) Mama's politeness toward Ms. Johnson, a house guest, reflects the social tendencies of the time and the respect that magnituded in the presence of company.

JOHNSON (Accepting the coffee) Where's Brother tonight?

MAMA He's lying down.

Mama reverts back again to short simple statements to try and persuade Ms Johnson to leave.

JOHNSON MMmmmmm, he sure gets his beauty rest, don't he? Good-looking man. Sure is a good-looking man! (Reaching out to pat RUTH'S stomach again) I guess that's how come we keep on having

babies around here. (She winks at MAMA) One thing 'bout Brother, he always know how to have a good time. And soooooo ambitious! I bet it was his idea y'all moving out to Clybourne Park. Lord I bet this time next month y'all's names will have been in the papers plenty (Holding up her hands to mark off each word of the headline she can see in front of her) "NEGROES INVADE CLYBOURNE PARK BOMBED!" (Social) It was generally perceived because the man was the head of the household that it was he who proposed the idea of moving to an all white society, and sticking it to the man. We know as the audience that this was Mama's idea, but because of the time period everything is given credit to the man.

MAMA (She and RUTH look at the woman in amazement) We ain't exactly moving out there to get bombed.

Both Mama and Ruth are caught off guard, amazed at the radical statement they have just heard. Mama becomes a little defensive when she hears that.

JOHNSON Oh, honey you know I'm praying to God every day that don't nothing like that happen! But you have to think of life like it is and these here Chicago peckerwoods is some baaaad peckerwoods. (Historical) Peckerwood is a racial slur 19th century southern Black Americans used to describe poor whites. They considered them loud and troublesome like the bird, and sometimes with red hair like the woodpecker's head plumes. -Wikipedia.org. Ms Johnson is referring to one of the numerous slang words adapted to white society to relieve the frustration amongst the black community.

MAMA (Wearily) We done thought about all that Mis' Johnson.

Mama tells Ms Johnson that she has already thought about everything that is going to happen.

(BENEATHA comes out of the bedroom in her robe and passes through to the bathroom. MRS. JOHNSON turns)

JOHNSON Hello there, Bennie !

Now she has her attention on Bennie because she wants understand what is going on with Bennie.

BENEATHA (Crisply) Hello, Mrs. Johnson.

JOHNSON How is school?

Johnson and Mama are foils because they both have the same religious values and morals but they have different personalities. Mama is very polite and generous, while Johnson is fake and devious behind the scenes. Johnson is very selfish and does not understand that helping people actually pay off in the long run.

BENEATHA (Crisply) Fine, thank you. (She goes out.)

JOHNSON (Insulted) Getting so she don't have much to say to nobody.

Johnson gets the feeling that the younger thinks they are better than her now because they are moving and have a daughter that is working on her way to become a doctor.

MAMA The child was on her way to the bathroom.

Mama defend her daughter when Ms Johnson calls Beneatha rude. Mamas tone has changed from slightly pleasant, to politely trying to persuade Ms Johnson to leave to don being protective of herself

and of her family. Firsts Ms Johnson says that her family is going to be killed by a bomb, and out of shock Mama refutes the statement and now Ms Johnson is calling her daughter disrespectful. No Mama is becoming defensive.

JOHNSON I know but sometimes she act like ain't got time to pass the time of day with nobody ain't been to college. Oh I ain't criticizing her none. It's just you know how some of our young people gets when they get a little education. (MAMA and RUTH say nothing, just look at her) Yes well. Well, I guess I better get on home. (Unmoving) 'Course I can understand how she must be proud and everything being the only one in the family to make something of herself. I know just being a chauffeur ain't never satisfied Brother none. He shouldn't feel like that, though. Ain't nothing wrong with being a chauffeur. Johnson is jealous and offended by Beneatha and her possible success. It can be inferred that Johnson that wasn't educated when she was young and worked most of her life. That is why she acknowledges that Walter is fine in society being a chauffeur. It is normal for Walter to be worker, but it is abnormal for Beneatha to be a doctor.

(Social) During the time frame of the early 1950s' the general perception of blacks is that they were dumb, incoherent and never ever should they go to college. They were an inferior people, meant only to serve. This became the basis for the civil rights movement and led to the eventual passing of the the civil right s act under President Lyndon B Johnson.

MAMA There's plenty wrong with it.

Ms Johnson is now criticizing not only Mama, but her son, Walter. This scene is building up to a climactic confrontation between the two women.

JOHNSON What?

Ms Johnson is shocked when Mama reacted the way she did because it was normal for colored folk to be working as a server.

MAMA Plenty. My husband always said being any kind of a servant wasn't a fit thing for a man to have to be. He always said a man's hands was made to make things, or to turn the earth with not to drive nobody's car for 'em or (She looks at her own hands) carry they slop jars. And my boy is just like him he wasn't meant to wait on nobody.

Mama reflects on her son and his job, and says he could be doing so much more. His hands were built for progression , to make things, to be somebody, not drive people around. Mama seems a little disappointed by her son in these last few sentences. We are reeled in by the emotional tenderness this subject brings to such a strong willed woman, and when she becomes weak, when she becomes saddened by her son, in light of the circumstances, we symphasize with her.

(Social/Cultural) Mama, is speaking on the behalf of the black community and she is contradicting the belief of whites, she in fact is saying we as a people are proud and we are just as good as you. A profound belief in herself and the black race comes through in the first lines of her dialogue and we can tell that even though she is older that she strives for equality.

JOHNSON (Rising, somewhat offended) Mmmmmmmmm The Youngers is too much for me! (She looks around) You sure one proud-acting bunch of colored folks. Well I always thinks like Booker T. Washington said that time "Education has spoiled many a good plow hand"

Johnson is very jealous of the younger family and also criticizes that her family is prideful. She believes in work over education, Mama use to believe in that but is slowly changed her mindset towards education. Colored people performing tough labor is socially accepted but education, especially for women is not acceptable. (social)

(Social/Cultural) During the time period, black families that strove for excellence, that wanted to be the exception to the norm were looked down upon.

MAMA Is that what old Booker T. said?

(Historical) Booker T Washington was a prominent African American abolitionist and advocate of equality. His general ideas embraced the idea that education was key to rise above the social injustices of the time. Beneatha embodies this idea.

JOHNSON He sure did.

She feels proud that she used a profound person in rebuttal to Mama's beliefs.

MAMA Well, it sounds just like him. The fool.

Mama verbally states that Washington was a bad guy by he is just a symbol for Ms Johnson. And Mama's ability to talk poorly about Washington is just a polite way to talk about Ms. Johnson.

JOHNSON (Indignantly) Well he was one of our great men.

She is trying to back up her statement before

MAMA Who said so?

Mama is at the point where a fight might arise. There is such anger and rage and frustration the the air that Mama, is not only defensive but is about to become offensive and say something about Ms Johnson she mite regret.

JOHNSON (Nonplussed) You know, me and you ain't never agreed about some things, Lena Younger. I guess I better be going

This line is a prime example why Mama and Johnson are character foils. Everything that they discussed; they had contradicting views in everything from education to working as well as society.

RUTH (Quickly) Good night.

JOHNSON Good night. Oh (Thrusting it at her) You can keep the paper! (With a trill) 'Night.

John feels that she hasn't succeeded in convincing the youngers in staying.

MAMA Good night, Mis' Johnson. (MRS. JOHNSON exits)

Ms Johnson sees this hint from Mama and decides to leave, and the problem is avoided.

RUTH If ignorance was gold * . ,

MAMA Shush. Don't talk about folks behind their backs.

Mama even though we can tell she is angered tells her daughter Beneatha to refrain from talking about someone behind their backs. Even though Mama does this sometimes, she is the eldest and therefore can get away with slipping away from the rules once in a while.

(Social) Mama's manners describe the way guests were treated in the early 1950's, with class and respect. Even if you may disagree with someone or their beliefs, you always maintain at courteous tone.

RUTH You do.

MAMA I'm old and corrupted. (BENEATHA enters') You was rude to Mis' Johnson, Beneatha, and I don't

like it at all.

Mama tells Beneatha that she was rude to Ms Johnson and that she doesn't like the way she was toward her. Even though you may not like a person Mama tells Beneatha that she has to keep appearances up and be nice.

BENEATHA (At her door) Mama, if there are two things we, as a people, have got to overcome, one is the Ku Klux Klan and the other is Mrs. Johnson. (She exits)

(Historical) The Ku Klux Klan, or KKK is a group consisting of white members who advocated the idea of white supremacy and white nationalism. The first Klan flourished in the South in the 1860s, then died out by the early 1870s. Their iconic white costumes consisted of robes, masks, and conical hat. The second KKK flourished nationwide in the early and mid 1920s, and adopted the fantastic costumes and code words of the first Klan; while introducing cross burnings. The third KKK emerged after World War II-Wikipedia. KKK in America targeted blacks and other immigrant races and scared many blacks

MAMA Smart aleck.

Mama agrees with Beneatha. Her statement is quite funny cause we as the audience know that Mama really doesn't like Ms Johnson and even her daughter can see that and is satirical toward her. Mama even though she is trying to refrain from slipping anything out and trying to teach her daughter proper mannerisms, she cant help to laugh.

(The phone rings)

RUTH I'll get it.

MAMA Lord, ain't this a popular place tonight.

Mama changes her mood from angry when Ms Johnson was there to a slight cheerful mood thanks to her daughter lightening the mood. Mama is being sarcastic in this statement.

RUTH (At the phone) Hello Just a minute. (Goes to door) Walter, it's Mrs. Arnold. (Waits. Goes back to the phone. Tense) Hello. Yes, this is his wife speaking . . . He's lying down now. Yes . . . well, he'll be in tomorrow. He's been very sick. Yes I know we should have called, but we were so sure he'd be able to come in today. Yes yes, I'm very sorry. Yes . . . Thank you very much. (She hangs up. WALTER is standing in the doorway of the bedroom behind her) That was Mrs. Arnold.

WALTER (Indifferently) Was it?

RUTH She said if you don't come in tomorrow that they are getting a new man . .

WALTER Ain't that sad ain't that crying sad.

RUTH She said Mr. Arnold has had to take a cab for three days . . . Walter, you ain't been to work for three days! (This is a revelation to her) Where you been, Walter Lee Younger? (WALTER looks at her and starts to laugh) You're going to lose your job.

WALTER That's right . . . (He turns on the radio)

RUTH Oh, Walter, and with your mother working like a dog every day
(A steamy, deep blues pours into the room)

WALTER That's sad too Everything is sad.

MAMA What you been doing for these three days, son?

From this statement we can infer that Mama has disassociated from her son. Mama would never allow for her son to leave for 3 days without calling him every day or asking something about him to Ruth, her motherly instinct is too strong, to overbearing. I think Mama has come to the conclusion that Walter just needed some time alone, time to think about things and to come to his own conclusions. To start making his own decisions.

WALTER Mama you don't know all the things a man what got leisure can find to do in this city . . . What's this Friday night? Well Wednesday I borrowed Willy Harris* car and I went for a drive . . . just meant myself and I drove and drove . . . Way out . . . way past South Chicago, and I parked the car and I sat and looked at the steel mills all day long. I just sat in the car and looked at them big black chimneys for hours. Then I drove back and I went to the Green Hat. (Pause) And Thursday Thursday I borrowed the car again and I got in it and I pointed it the other way and I drove the other way for hours way, way up to Wisconsin, and I looked at the farms. I just drove and looked at the farms. Then I drove back and I went to the Green Hat. (Pause) And today today I didn't get the car. Today I just walked. All over the Southside. And I looked at the Negroes and they looked at me and finally I just sat down on the curb at Thirty-ninth and South Parkway and I just sat there and watched the Negroes go by. And then I went to the Green Hat. You all sad? You all depressed? And you know where I am going right now (RUTH goes out quietly)

MAMA Oh, Big Walter, is this the harvest of our days?

Mama is reflecting on what is happening. She doesn't know what to do, for once in her life she doesn't know how to fix the situation. She tries to confide in Walter Sr. but is given no answer.

WALTER You know what I like about the Green Hat? I like this little cat they got there who blows a sax . . . He blows. He talks to me. He ain't but 'bout five feet tall and he's got a conked head and his eyes is always closed and he's all music

MAMA (Rising and getting some papers out of her handbag) Walter

Mama is trying to talk to Walter but she can't get through to him. This is ironic because in Scene 1 of Act 2 Walter was trying to talk to Mama but she wouldn't listen. Now the tables are turned and mama doesn't know what to do.

WALTER And there's this other guy who plays the piano . . . and they got a sound. I mean they can work on some music . . . They got the best little combo in the world in the Green Hat . . . You can just sit there and drink and listen to them three men play and you realize that don't nothing matter worth a damn, but just being there.

(Historical) During the 1950's a new style of jazz erupted throughout the east coast of the United States, Cool Jazz. By the end of the 1940s, the nervous energy and tension of bebop was replaced with a tendency towards calm and smoothness, with the sounds of cool jazz, which favoured long, linear melodic lines. It emerged in New York City, as a result of the mixture of the styles of predominantly white jazz musicians and black bebop musicians, and it dominated jazz in the first half of the 1950s. The starting point were a series of singles on Capitol Records in 1949 and 1950 with Miles Davis- [Wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org)

MAMA I've helped do it to you, haven't I, son? Walter I been wrong.

Mama with her motherly instinct and the realization she has come to blames herself partly for the way her son has been acting. Mama is trying like usual to fix the situation.

WALTER Naw you ain't never been wrong about nothing, Mama.

MAMA Listen to me, now. I say I been wrong, son. That I been doing to you what the rest of the world been doing to you. (She turns off the radio) Walter (She stops and he looks up slowly at her and she meets his eyes pleadingly) What you ain't never understood is that I ain't got nothing, don't own nothing, ain't never really wanted nothing that wasn't for you. There ain't nothing as precious to me . . . There ain't nothing worth holding on to, money, dreams, nothing else if it means if it means it's going to destroy my boy. (She takes an envelope out of her handbag and puts it in front of him and he watches her without speaking or moving) I paid the man thirty-five hundred dollars down on the house. That leaves sixty-five hundred dollars. Monday morning I want you to take this money and take three thousand dollars and put it in a savings account for Beneatha's medical schooling. The rest you put in a checking account with your name on it. And from now on any penny that come out of it or that go in it is for you to look after. For you to decide. (She drops her hands a little helplessly) It ain't much, but it's all I got in the world and I'm putting it in your hands. I'm telling you to be the head of this family from now on like you supposed to be.

Mama tells Walter her innermost feelings toward him, that everything she does is for him. Without the approval and consent from him everything means nothing to her. So she gives the money to Walter and says she trusts him. She says everything she has ever done has been to make him happy, all the long hours worked, and all those overtime errands and the long tireless days have been for her first born son. She tells him that she is giving him 3500 dollars to do with as he pleases. She says that is all the money she has but that she is giving it to him, to make him happy, with no regard to her own happiness or personal wants because at the end of the day she loves her children more than she loves herself, without her children she wouldn't know what to do.

WALTER (Stares at the money) You trust me like that. Mama?

MAMA I ain't never stop trusting you. Like I ain't never stop loving you.

(She goes out, and WALTER sits looking at the money on the table. Finally, in a decisive gesture, he gets up, and, in mingled joy and desperation, picks up the money. At the same moment, TRAVIS enters for bed)

Mama says that she has never stopped loving her son no matter what has happened and for that reason she gives the money to her son, for his happiness.

TRAVIS What's the matter, Daddy? You drunk?

WALTER (Sweetly, more sweetly than we have ever known him) No, Daddy ain't drunk. Daddy ain't going to never be drunk again

TRAVIS Well, good night, Daddy.

(The FATHER has come from behind the couch and leans over, embracing his son)

WALTER Son, I feel like talking to you tonight.

TRAVIS About what?

WALTER Oh, about a lot of things. About you and what kind of man you going to be when you grow up. ... Son son, what do you want to be when you grow up?

TRAVIS A bus driver.

WALTER (Laughing a little) A what? Man, that ain't nothing to want to be!

(Social) Walter, like most black families during the 1950's told their children to strive to be the best, be better than they were and challenge the traditional roles of American society.

TRAVIS Why not?

WALTER 'Cause, man it ain't big enough you know what I mean.

TRAVIS I don't know then. I can't make up my mind. Sometimes Mama asks me that too. And sometimes when I tell her I just want to be like you she says she don't want me to be like that and sometimes she says she does. . . .

WALTER (Gathering him up in his arms) You know what, Travis? In seven years you going to be seventeen years old. And things is going to be very different with us in seven years, Travis. . . . One day when you are seventeen I'll come home from my office downtown somewhere.

(Historical) Walter unknowingly is alluding to what is going to happen in America concerning civil rights. The year is around 1955 and 7 years from then is going to be in the height of the civil rights movement.

TRAVIS You don't work in no office, Daddy.

WALTER No but after tonight. After what your daddy gonna do tonight, there's going to be offices a whole lot of offices. . . .

TRAVIS What you gonna do tonight, Daddy?

WALTER You wouldn't understand yet, son, but your daddy's gonna make a transaction ... a business transaction that's going to change our lives. . . . That's how come one day when you 'bout seventeen years old I'll come home and I'll be pretty tired, you know what I mean, after a day of conferences and secretaries getting things wrong the way they do ... 'cause an executive's life is hell, man (The more he talks the farther away he gets) And I'll pull the car up on the driveway . . . just a plain black Chrysler, I think, with white walls no black tires. More elegant. Rich people don't have to be flashy . . . though I'll have to get something a little sportier for Ruth maybe a Cadillac convertible to do her shopping in. ... And I'll come tip the steps to the house and the gardener will be clipping away at the hedges and he'll say, "Good evening, Mr. Younger." And I'll say, "Hello, Jefferson, how are you this evening?" And I'll go inside and Ruth will come downstairs and meet me at the door and we'll kiss each other and she'll take my arm and we'll go up to your room to see you sitting on the floor with the catalogues of all the great schools in America around you. . . . All the great schools in the world! And I'll say, all right son it's your seventeenth birthday, what is it you've decided? . . . Just tell me where you want to go to school and you'll go. Just tell me, what it is you want to be and you'll be it. , - . Whatever you want to be Yessir! (He holds his arms open for TRAVIS) You just name it, son . . . (TRAVIS leaps into them) and I hand you the world! (WALTER'S voice has risen in pitch and hysterical promise and on the last line he lifts TRAVIS high)

(Blackout)

ACT 2

SCENE THREE

Time: Saturday, moving day, one week later.

Before the curtain rises, RUTH'S voice, a strident, dramatic church alto, cuts through the silence. It is, in the darkness, a triumphant surge, a penetrating statement of expectation: "Oh, Lord, I don't feel no ways tired! Children, oh, glory hallelujah! 9 ' As the curtain rises we see that RUTH is alone in the living room, finishing up the family's packing. It is moving day. She is nailing crates and tying cartons. Beneatha enters, carrying a guitar case, and watches her exuberant sister-in-law.

RUTH Hey!

BENEATHA (Putting away the case) Hi.

RUTH (Pointing at a package) Honey look in that package there and see what I found on sale this morning at the South Center. (RUTH gets up and moves to the package and draws out some curtains) Look ahere hand-turned hems!

(Historical) The fact that the family uses hand-turned hems helps to show the time period the family was living in. In current society, it is rare that people used hand-turned hems, but in the 1950s, hand-turned hems were very popular among families.

BENEATHA How do you know the window size out there?

RUTH (Who hadn't thought of that) Oh Well, they bound to fit something in the whole house. Anyhow, they was too good a bargain to pass up. (RUTH slaps her head, suddenly remembering something) Oh, Ben- nie I meant to put a special note on that carton over there. That's your mama's good china and she wants 5 em to be very careful with it.

BENEATHA I'll do it

(BENEATHA finds a piece of paper and starts to draw large letters on it)

RUTH You know what I'm going to do soon as I get in that new house?

BENEATHA What?

RUTH Honey I'm going to run me a tub of water up to here . . . (With her fingers practically up to her nostrils) And I'm going to get in it and I am going to sit ... and sit ... and sit in that hot water and the first person who knocks to tell me to hurry up and come out

BENEATHA Gets shot at sunrise.

RUTH (Laughing happily) You said it, sister! (Noticing how large BENEATHA is absent-mindedly making the note) Honey, they ain't going to read that from no airplane.

BENEATHA (Laughing herself) I guess I always think things have more emphasis if they are big, somehow.

RUTH (Looking up at her and smiling) You and your brother seem to have that as a philosophy of life. Lord, that man done changed so 'round here. You know you know what we did last night? Me and Walter Lee?

BENEATHA What?

RUTH (Smiling to herself) We went to the movies. (Looking at BENEATHA to see if she understands) We went to the movies. You know the last time me and Walter went to the movies together?

BENEATHA No.

RUTH Me neither. That's how long it been. (Smiling again) But we went last night. The picture wasn't much good, but that didn't seem to matter. We went and we held hands.

BENEATHA Oh, Lord!

RUTH We held hands and you know what?

BENEATHA What?

RUTH When we come out of the show it was late and dark and all the stores and things was closed up ... and it was kind of chilly and there wasn't many people on the streets . . . and we was still holding hands, me and Walter.

BENEATHA You're killing me.

(WALTER enters with a large package. His happiness is deep in him; he cannot keep still with his new-found exuberance. He is singing and wiggling and snapping his fingers. He puts his package in a corner and puts a phonograph record, which he has brought in with him, on the record player. As the music, soulful and sensuous, comes up he dances over to RUTH and tries to get her to dance with him. She gives in at last to his raunchiness and in a fit of giggling allows herself to be drawn into his mood. They dip and she melts into his arms in a classic, body-melding "slow drag")

(Historical) The fact that Walter still uses a phonograph record helps to reveal the time period.

BENEATHA (Regarding them a long time as they dance, then drawing in her breath for a deeply exaggerated comment which she does not particularly mean) Talk about oldddddddddd-fashionedddddddd Negroes!

WALTER (Stopping momentarily) What kind of Negroes? (He says this in fun. He is not angry with her today, nor with anyone. He starts to dance with his wife again)

(Marxist) Walter is in such a good mood because deep inside he feels accomplished because of his ability to invest. It seems as though his happiness was ultimately rooted in the fact that his Mama gave him money.

BENEATHA Old-fashioned.

WALTER (As he dances with RUTH) You know, when these New Negroes have their convention (Pointing at his sister) that is going to be the chairman of the Committee on Unending Agitation. (He goes on dancing, then stops) Race, race, race! . . . , Girl, I do believe you are the first person in the history of the entire human race to successfully brainwash yourself. (BENEATHA breaks up and he goes on dancing. He stops again, enjoying his tease) Damn, even the N double A C P takes a holiday sometimes! (BENEATHA and RUTH laugh. He dances with RUTH some more and starts to laugh and stops and pantomimes someone over an operating table) I can just see that chick someday looking down at some poor cat on an operating table and before she starts to slice him, she says . . . (Pulling his sleeves back maliciously) "By the way, what are your views on civil rights down there? . . ."

(Historical) Walter mentions the "convention" that the "New Negroes" were holding and alludes to the "N double A C P". By doing so, we are given some insight to the status of black rights within that time period. These allusions help to emphasize the struggle that the plot has to offer.

(He laughs at her again and starts to dance happily. The bell sounds)

BENEATHA Sticks and stones may break my bones but . . . words will never hurt me!

(BENEATHA goes to the door and opens it as WALTER and RUTH go on with the clowning. BENEATHA is somewhat surprised to see a quiet-looking middle-aged white man in a business suit holding his hat and a briefcase in his hand and consulting a small piece of paper)

MAN Uh how do you do, miss. I am looking for a Mrs. (He looks at the slip of paper) Mrs. Lena Younger?

(He stops short, struck dumb at the sight of the oblivious WALTER and RUTH)

This is the first showing of Mr. Linder. He is a white businessman who looks like he works for the community around the Younger's new house. He is very polite and shows no signs of racism or hostility thus far. His appearance startles the Youngers because they just entered the house and they are already faced with a presence of a white man in their house.

(Social) A white person appearing in a business suit helps to hint at the social class that white people were living in at the time compared to blacks. The business suit is somewhat symbolic for a higher social and working status.

BENEATHA (Smoothing her hair with slight embarrassment) Oh yes, that's my mother. Excuse me (She closes the door and turns to quiet the other two) Ruth! Brother! (Enunciating precisely but soundlessly: "There's a white man at the door") They stop dancing, RUTH cuts off the phonograph, BENEATHA opens the door. The man casts a curious quick glance at all of them) Uh come in please.

(Social, cultural) The fact that a white person entering the house makes the whole family uncomfortable comes to show some of the social attitudes that black people had against whites. They were always skeptical and never trusting of white people at the time. Something bad always seemed to happen to black people when a white person comes into play.

MAN {Coming in} Thank you.

BENEATHA My mother isn't here just now. Is it business?

MAN Yes . . . well, of a sort.

The man or Mr. Linder is at their house because there seems to be some sort of issue dealing with money or the house. Mama isn't around also; so one of the children must step up and take charge. Mr. Linder stays polite and kind throughout the greeting thus far.

WALTER (Freely, the Man of the House) Have a seat. I'm Mrs. Younger's son. I look after most of her business matters.

(RUTH and BENEATHA exchange amused glances)

MAN (Regarding WALTER, and sitting) Well My name is Karl Lindner . . .

Linder now knows that he is dealing with the right person. Linder is the first white person that has been very kind so far to the colored family. He is a true businessman because he needs something of the family and its only possible if he stays nice and kind.

WALTER (Stretching out his hand) Walter Younger. This is my wife (RUTH nods politely) and my sister.

LINDNER How do you do.

Linder is a patient man also. He greeted the family three times already hasn't been able to say exactly what he is there for also. The younger family actually follows in Mama's footsteps by greeting their guests, good or bad, nicely and christian like.

WALTER (Amiably, as he sits himself easily on a chair, leaning forward on his knees with interest and looking expectantly into the newcomer's face) What can we do for you, Mr. Lindner!

LINDNER (Some minor shuffling of the hat and briefcase on his knees) Well I am a representative of the Clybourne Park Improvement Association

Linder now introduces himself after a long greeting. He is nervous because he took a long time to get his point across and also shuffles a little bit.

WALTER (Pointing) Why don't you sit your things on the floor?

LINDNER Oh yes. Thank you. (He slides the briefcase and hat under the chair) And as I was saying I am from the Clybourne Park Improvement Association and we have had it brought to our attention at the last meet ing that you people or at least your mother has bought a piece of residential property at (He digs for the slip of paper again) four o six Clybourne Street . . .

Linder now explains that there is a situation with the house that Mama just bought. Clybourne Park is predominantly white. Linder continues to be nice the entire time.

(Social, Cultural, Historical) Mr. Lindner refers to the family as "you people" which helps to reveal the disunity between blacks and whites at the time. Although blacks have gained their freedom by this time, there still existed lots of prejudice against colored people.

WALTER That's right. Care for something to drink? Ruth, get Mr. Lindner a beer.

(Social, cultural) Walter is somewhat trying to gain acceptance from Mr. Lindner and trying to impress him by providing him a beer. You could tell that Walter is being over courteous and tries to fit in by being generous with a beer. This helps to convey the perception that blacks were always working to gain a good impression from white people at the time.

LINDNER (Upset for some reason) Oh no, really. I mean thank you very much, but no thank you.

Linder doesn't want to get distracted; he wants to go straight to the point he doesn't want anything to stop from getting his job done. Younger's continue to lag the time that he gets his point across; Linder sees that they are being distracting and politely decline all offerings.

RUTH (Innocently) Some coffee?

LINDNER Thank you, nothing at all.

Linder has finally stopped all possible distractions and is now ready to get to his point.

(BENEATHA is watching the man carefully)

LINDNER Well, I don't know how much you folks know about our organization. (He is a gentle man; thoughtful and somewhat labored in his manner) It is one of these community organizations set up to look after oh, you know, things like black upkeep and special projects and we also have what we call our New Neighbors Orientation Committee . . .

Linder is giving a little introduction before he gets to the point. He is building suspense. The youngers are nervous now because they aren't sure what is going to happen with their investment. Linder is going through the steps in a very business like manner.

BENEATHA (Drily) Yes and what do they do?

LINDNER (Turning a little to her and then returning the main force to WALTER) Well it's what you might call a sort of welcoming committee, I guess. I mean they, we I'm the chairman of the committee go around and see the new people who move into the neighborhood and sort of give them the lowdown on the way we do things out in Clybourne Park.

Linder is talking a lot and in control now of the conversation; he has the Younger's attention and shows that there is something wrong with them being colored in the white community. He is trying to state that explicitly but that is what he is trying to say.

BENEATHA (With appreciation of the two meanings, which escape RUTH and WALTER) Un-huh.

LINDNER And we also have the category of what the association calls (He looks elsewhere) uh special community problems . . .

Again Linder, tries to state the problem explicitly without hurting the Younger's feelings in any way. He needs to get his deal across. Linder is nervous because he doesn't know exactly how they are going to react. This shows that Linder has nothing against the colored folk personally and that he is simply doing his job.

(Social, cultural) Mr. Lindner within this quote is inferring that the family moving in is considered one of the "special community problems" that he addresses. This comes to show that whites were still uncomfortable and prejudice with blacks in their communities.

BENEATHA Yes and what are some of those?

WALTER Girl, let the man talk.

LINDNER (With understated relief) Thank you. I would sort of like to explain this thing in my own way. I mean I want to explain to you in a certain way.

Linder is nervous because the Younger's didn't understand the way he said it earlier. He doesn't want trouble personally; he wants to get the point across and leave. He is has to spend more time explaining the situation.

WALTER Go ahead.

LINDNER Yes. Well. I'm going to try to get right to the point. I'm sure we'll all appreciate that in the long run.

Linder realized that what he said before didn't work so he is going to have say it straightforward. He wanted to avoid this method but has no choice now.

BENEATHA Yes.

WALTER Be still now!

LINDNER Well

He is going to start explain the situation directly.

RUTH (Still innocently) Would you like another chair you don't look comfortable.

LINDNER (More frustrated than annoyed) No, thank you very much. Please. Well to get right to the point I (A great breath, and he is off at last) I am sure you people must be aware of some of the incidents which have happened in various parts of the city when colored people have moved into certain areas (BENEATHA exhales heavily and starts tossing a piece of fruit up and down in the air) Well because we have what I think is going to be a unique type of organization in American community life not only do we deplore that kind of thing but we are trying to do something about it. (BENEATHA stops tossing and turns with a new and quizzical interest to the man) We feel (gaining confidence in his mission because of the interest in the faces of the people he is talking to) we feel that most of the trouble in this world, when you come right down to it (He hits his knee for emphasis) most of the trouble exists because people just don't sit down and talk to each other.

Lindner is beating around the bush again even though he said he was going to straight to the point. He does this because he wants to see what the Younger's reaction to this statement. If they understand the situation without him saying anything that might offend; he would be happy. He is also trying to act as business like as possible, by getting rid of his personal opinion and simply stating facts that might help his case.

(Historical, Social, Cultural) Mr. Lindner identifies some of the the "incidents...when colored people have moved into certain areas". These "incidents" help to reveal some background into the chaotic relationship between whites and blacks at the time.

RUTH (Nodding as she might in church, pleased with the remark) You can say that again, mister.

LINDNER (More encouraged by such affirmation) That we don't try hard enough in this world to understand the other fellow's problem. The other guy's point of view.

He finally made a connection with the Younger's emotionally and feels better about the situation.

RUTH Now that's right.

(BENEATHA and WALTER merely watch and listen with genuine interest)

LINDNER Yes that's the way we feel out in Clybourne Park. And that's why I was elected to come here this afternoon and talk to you people. Friendly like, you know, the way people should talk to each other and see if we couldn't find some way to work this thing out. As I say, the whole business is a matter of caring about the other fellow. Anybody can see that you are a nice family of folks, hard working and

honest I'm sure. (BENEATHA frowns slightly, quizzically, her head tilted regarding him) Today everybody knows what it means to be on the outside of something. And of course, there is always somebody who is out to take advantage of people who don't always understand.

Linder believes that the Younger already understood what he was talking about, but in reality they are just listening and didn't understand that Linder wanted the Youngers not to come to Clybourne park.

WALTER What do you mean?

LINDNER Well you see our community is made up of people who've worked hard as the dickens for years to build up that little community. They're not rich and fancy people; just hard-working, honest people who don't really have much but those little homes and a dream of the kind of community they want to raise their children in. Now, I don't say we are perfect and there is a lot wrong in some of the things they want. But you've got to admit that a man, right or wrong, has the right to want to have the neighborhood he lives in a certain kind of way. And at the moment the overwhelming majority of our people out there feel that people get along better, take more of a common interest in the life of the community, when they share a common background. I want you to believe me when I tell you that race prejudice simply doesn't enter into it. It is a matter of the people of Clybourne Park believing, rightly or wrongly, as I say, that for the happiness of all concerned that our Negro families are happier when they live in their own communities.

He never said the word white, and instead said hard working people. He directly says that Negro people are going to feel left out in the area and might have to deal with some racial prejudice. He is also saying that in order to avoid that the Younger should reconsider the investment. Linder wanted to avoid this way of saying but they left him with no choice.

(Social, Cultural, Historical) Through this quote we can tell that whites during this time period were still uncomfortable living with blacks in the same community. Mr. Lindner tries to tell the family to go back to their "own communities" which actually reveals a sense of "racial prejudice" even though he says that is not so.

BENEATHA (With a grand and bitter gesture) This, friends, is the Welcoming Committee!

WALTER (Dumjounded, looking at LINDNER) Is this what you came marching all the way over here to tell us?

LINDNER Well, now we've been having a fine conversation. I hope you'll hear me all the way through.

Linder felt like he has made his point and feels that he should leave before it gets worse for him personally.

WALTER (Tightly) Go ahead, man.

LINDNER You see in the face of all the things I have said, we are prepared to make your family a very generous offer . . .

Linder is trying to lighten the mood up, by saying that they are going to make a generous offer. Lindner doesn't want to be in a situation that harm is life also. He is trying make sure that the Youngers are composed.

BENEATHA Thirty pieces and not a coin less!

WALTER Yeah?

LINDNER (Putting on his glasses and drawing a form out of the briefcase) Our association is prepared, through the collective effort of our people, to buy the house from you at a financial gain to your family.

Lindner feels accomplish that he finally got through the Youngers. He wants to leave as soon as possible now because he feels that he accomplished his job. Lindner is all about his job and makes sure that he leaves all personal opinions and morals out on the side.

(Social, cultural, historical) The white community does not want a black family moving into their neighborhood so much that they are willing to buy the house from the family. This just emphasizes the amount of prejudice whites still had at the time.

RUTH Lord have mercy, ain't this the living gall!

WALTER All right, you through?

LINDNER Well, I want to give you the exact terms of the financial arrangement

Lindner wants to make sure that all specifics is given before he leaves. This shows his patience again; he wants to leave so he could avoid any confrontation but makes sure that his job is completely done.

WALTER We don't want to hear no exact terms of no arrangements. I want to know if you got any more to tell us 'bout getting together?

LINDNER (Taking off his glasses) Well I don't suppose that you feel . . .

Lindner is trying to feel understanding, that way he leaves a good imprint of him to the Youngers but it doesn't work as well as he imagined it would.

WALTER Never mind how I feel you got any more to say 'bout how people ought to sit down and talk to each other? . . . Get out of my house, man.

(He turns his back and walks to the door)

LINDNER (Looking around at the hostile faces and reaching and assembling his hat and briefcase) Well I don't understand why you people are reacting this way. What do you think you are going to gain by moving into a neighborhood where you just aren't wanted and where some elements well people can get awful worked up when they feel that their whole way of life and everything they've ever worked for is threatened.

Lindner loses it and avoids his usual business like conduct, by being rude when things didn't go his way. Lindner leaves with a negative thought of him in the Youngers. If he was more kind and understanding of the situation, the Youngers would have been more likely to consider the offer. Linder becomes an antagonist.

(Social) This quote provides significant insight to the thoughts of a typical white person regarding blacks living in the same community as whites. Whites felt that blacks were a threat to the society they had worked so hard to create and they feel that blacks should live in separate neighborhoods.

WALTER Get out.

LINDNER (At the door, holding a small card) Well I'm sorry it went like this.

He realizes that he made a mistake, but feels that he did all he could.

WALTER Get out.

LINDNER (Almost sadly regarding WALTER) You just can't force people to change their hearts, son. He now believes that the Youngers are foolish to not have taken the proposal. He believes that the proposal actually favored the Youngers. This was also a turning point for Mama's children. Their maturity is growing.

(Social) This quote reiterates the fact that whites were unyielding in their beliefs that blacks did not belong in the same neighborhood as whites.

(He turns and put his card on a table and exits. WALTER pushes the door to with stinging hatred, and stands looking at it. RUTH just sits and BENEATHA just stands. They say nothing. MAMA and TRAVIS enter)

MAMA Well this all the packing got done since I left out of here this morning. I testify before God that my children got all the energy of the dead. What time the moving men due?

Mama is being sarcastic. On a day in which the family is moving and is suppose to be a such joyous occasion, everyone has the energy of someone who is dead.

BENEATHA Four o'clock. You had a caller, Mama. (She is smiling, teasingly)

MAMA Sure enough who?

Mama had a caller from the Welcoming Committee from the new community. The time in which Mama received is an archatype for unity and completeness.

BENEATHA (Her arms folded saucily) The Welcoming Committee.

(WALTER and RUTH giggle)

MAMA (Innocently) Who?

Mama is perplexed but the caller. Never has their been a Welcoming Committee for any place where she has been , most definently not at the old apartment.

BENEATHA The Welcoming Committee. They said they're sure going to be glad to see you when you get there.

WALTER (Devilishly) Yeah, they said they can't hardly wait to see your face. (Laughter)

MAMA (Sensing their facetiousness) What's the matter with you all?

Mama sees the sarcasm in the faces and tries to figure out the problem. she is unaware of the true intention of the Welcoming Committee.

WALTER Ain't nothing the matter with us. We just telling you 'bout the gentleman who came to see you this afternoon. From the Clybourne Park Improvement Association.

MAMA What he want?

Mama asks her children what the man wanted.

RUTH (In the same mood as BENEATHA and WALTER) To welcome you, honey.

WALTER He said they can't hardly wait. He said the one thing they don't have, that they just dying to have out there is a fine family of fine colored people! (To RUTH and BENEATHA) Ain't that right!

RUTH (Mockingly) Yeah! He left his card

BENEATHA (Handing card to MAMA) In case.

(MAMA reads and throws it on the floor understanding and looking off as she draws her chair up to the table on which she has put her plant and some sticks and some cord)

MAMA Father, give us strength. (Knowingly and without fun) Did he threaten us?

Mama aware of the possible circumstances that could arise due to their recent advent in to the neighborhood calls but her faith to guide them through the darkness. Then becomes defensive when she ask if he threatened us.

BENEATHA Oh Mama they don't do it like that any more. He talked Brotherhood. He said everybody ought to learn how to sit down and hate each other with good Christian fellowship.

(She and WALTER shake hands to ridicule the remark)

(Social, Historical) Through this quote Beneatha helps to reveal the change of dynamics in the ways whites tried to expel blacks from their communities. The days of racial violence was beginning to end but racial prejudice still existed.

MAMA (Sadly) Lord, protect us . . .

Mama sees that this could possibly become ugly and ask the Lord to watch over herself and her family.

RUTH You should hear the money those folks raised to buy the house from us. All we paid and then some.

BENEATHA What they think we going to do eat 'em?

RUTH No, honey, many 'em.

MAMA (Shaking her head) Lord, Lord, Lord . . .

RUTH Well that's the way the crackers crumble. (A beat) Joke.

(Social) This quote provides an example of reverse racial prejudice. Some blacks were also prejudice against whites because of the way whites initially treated whites.

BENEATHA (Laughingly noticing what her mother is doing) Mama, what are you doing?

MAMA Fixing my plant so it won't get hurt none on the way . . .

Mama is fixing her long lived plant, this plant mimics the family in every aspect. The plant withers and almost dies and fluxuates in shape, sometimes is straighter than others and other times its limp, just as the family, somedays are better than others and somedays things aren't going good for the family. AS in the case of this day, the plant is a little withered but Mama is going to give it some water so it wont die. This is going to be the same approach that the Younger family takes to deal with the Mr. Linder, welcoming Committee problem. The family right now is weathered but they are going to come together, unify and fend off Mr Linder's proposal.

BENEATHA Mama, you going to take that to the new house?

MAMA Uh-huh

Mama, since the plant mimics the family is going to take the plant to the new house. If the family moves the plant moves, if the family is struggling, the plant struggles for survival.

BENEATHA That raggedy-looking old thing?

MAMA (Stopping and looking at her) It expresses ME!

This is the point in which Mama specifically states that the plant is just like her. It goes through the same obstacles and challenges in life and also goes through the same joyful, happy times as Lena goes through.

RUTH (With delight, to BENEATHA) So there, Miss Thing!

(WALTER comes to MAMA suddenly and bends down behind her and squeezes her in his arms with all his strength. She is overwhelmed by the suddenness of it and, though delighted, her manner is like that of RUTH and TRAVIS)

MAMA Look out now, boy! You make me mess up my thing here!

Mama is happy that her son has come full circle and is embracing his mom with love again, a much awaited feeling for Lena.

WALTER (His face lit, he slips down on his knees beside her, his arms still about her) Mama . . . you know what it means to climb up in the chariot?

(Marxist) "To climb up in the chariot" basically meant climbing up the social ladder. Walter feels excited that he will finally be able to do this because of the money Mama has given him to invest. He uses a rhetorical question to help convey a sense of excitement that he will be able to finally have power.

MAMA (Gruffly, very happy) Get on away from me now . . .

Mama is happy, excited. She tells Walter to get away so they can continue unpacking and moving, so they can start their new life over in the new house.

RUTH (Near the gift-wrapped package, trying to catch WALTER'S eye) Psst

WALTER What the old song say, Mama . . .

RUTH Walter Now?

(She is pointing at the package)

WALTER (Speaking the lines, sweetly, playfully, in his mother's face) I got wings . . . you got wings . . . All God's Children got wings . . .

(Marxist) Again, Walter says this because he is excited that he will finally be rich and powerful. This idea ultimately makes him feel like he "got wings".

MAMA Boy get out of my face and do some work . . .

Again Mama tells her son to get out of her way so they can finish unpacking.

WALTER When I get to heaven gonna put on my wings, Gonna fly all over God's heaven . . .
(Marxist) This quote emphasizes the amount of joy that the possibility of being rich has provided him. He begins talking about heaven because that is the only thing he could parallel his happiness to.

BENEATHA (Teasingly, from across the room) Everybody talking 'bout heaven ain't going there!

WALTER (To RUTH, who is carrying the box across to them) I don't know, you think we ought to give her that . . . Seems to me she ain't been very appreciative around here.

MAMA (Eying the box, which is obviously a gift) What is that?

Mama is given a present from the family. Walter gives her the present and watches the happiness on his mothers face lite up.

WALTER (Taking it from RUTH and putting it on the table in front of MAMA) Well what you all think? Should we give it to her?

RUTH Oh she was pretty good today.

MAMA I'll good you

(She turns her eyes to the box again)

BENEATHA Open it. Mama.

(She stands up, looks at it, turns and looks at all of them, and then presses her hands together and does not open the package)

WALTER (Sweetly) Open it, Mama. It's for you. (MAMA looks in his eyes. It is the first present in her life without its being Christmas. Slowly she opens her package and lifts out, one by one, a brand-new sparkling set of gardening tools. WALTER continues, prodding) Ruth made up the note read it ...

MAMA (Picking up the card and adjusting her glasses) "To our own Mrs. Miniver Love from Brother, Ruth and Beneatha." Ain't that lovely . . .

She is sincerely happy with the gift, this is her first time ever that she has gotten a present that wasn't on Christmas. She is awestruck.

TRAVIS (Tugging at his father's sleeve) Daddy, can I give her mine now?

WALTER All right, son. (TRAVIS flies to get his gift)

MAMA Now I don't have to use my knives and forks no more . . .

This statement goes all along with the address of the house being a 4 and the unity and completeness it brings with it. She is complete, she has all the things she needs in life, a loving family, a new house, and new tools for her long awaited garden.

WALTER Travis didn't want to go in with the rest of us, Mama. He got his own. (Somewhat amused) We don't know what it is ...

TRAVIS (Racing back in the room with a large hatbox and putting it in front of his grandmother) Here!

MAMA Lord have mercy, baby. You done gone and bought your grandmother a hat?

This is the most inspiring present to her, because she loves her grandson with tremendous passion, she makes his bed for him everyday, he is the first one she tells that she is buying a house, this present is most special to her.

TRAVIS (Very proud) Open it !

(She does and lifts out an elaborate, but very elaborate, wide gardening hat, and all the adults break up at the sight of it)

RUTH Travis, honey, what is that?

TRAVIS (Who thinks it is beautiful and appropriate) It's a gardening hat! Like the ladies always have on in the magazines when they work in their gardens.

(Social) The fact that Travis buys Mama a hat that he saw from a magazine helps to portray the amount of influence magazines had on the world at the time. Magazines were beginning to become really popular and even children like Travis were influenced by it. Most of the Ladies on the magazines were white, so in a sense, a white ladies fashion sense was greatly influential.

BENEATHA (Giggling fiercely) Travis we were trying to make Mama Mrs. Miniver not Scarlett O'Hara!

(Historical) This quote brings in two historical figures within the story that help to convey some of the social aspects within the period. Mrs. Miniver was a fictional character that portrayed the typical English housewife who had a large garden (which Mama wanted) while Scarlett O'Hara was a character in the novel "Gone with the Wind" that portrayed a person that had no morality (which was opposite of what Mama was).

MAMA (Indignantly) What's the matter with you all!

Mama is referred to Mrs. Miniver, a pre-WW2 film that depicted a woman's infatuation with gardening, and how Mama has always longed to have her own niche, her own personal garden.

This here is a beautiful hat! (Absurdly) I always wanted me one just like it! (She pops it on her head to prove it to her grand- son, and the hat is ludicrous and considerably oversized)

RUTH Hot dog! Go, Mama!

WALTER (Doubled over with laughter) I'm sorry, Mama but you look like you ready to go out and chop you some cotton sure enough!

(Historical) This quote provides an allusion to slavery when Walter mentions Mama looks like she is ready to "chop you some cotton". Slaves in the past were forced to work on cotton farms.

(They all laugh except MAMA, out of deference to TRAVIS' feelings)

MAMA (Gathering the boy up to her) Bless your heart this is the prettiest hat I ever owned (WALTER, RUTH and BENEATHA chime in noisily, festively and insincerely congratulating TRAVIS on his gift) What are we all standing around here for? We ain't finished packin' yet. Bennie, you ain't packed one book. (The bell rings)

Mama thanks Travis for his heartfelt gift. Then in her motherly instinct says we still have a lot of work to

due, lets get back to work.

BENEATHA That couldn't be the movers . . . it's not hardly two good yet

(BENEATHA goes into her room. MAMA starts for door)

WALTER (Turning, stiffening) Wait wait I'll get it. (He stands and looks at the door)

MAMA You expecting company, son?

This shows Mamas forever attention to every aspect of her family's life.

WALTER (Just looking at the door) Yeah yeah . . .

(MAMA looks at RUTH, and they exchange innocent and unfrightened glances')

MAMA (Not understanding) Well, let them in, son*

Mama is in too much of a happy mood, so she welcomes her sons friends to come on inside.

BENEATHA (From her room) We need some more string.

MAMA Travis you run to the hardware and get me some string cord.

This shows Mama's fatherly role in the family, as well as being the one that holds the family together the one that is there when everyone in need, she can also be demanding and is the sole provider for the family.

(MAMA goes out and WALTER turns and looks at RUTH. TRAVIS goes to a dish for money)

RUTH Why don't you answer the door, man?

WALTER (Suddenly bounding across the floor to embrace her) 'Cause sometimes it hard to let the future begin! (Stooping down in her face) I got wings! You got wings! All God's children got wings! (He crosses to the door and throws it open. Standing there is a very slight little man in a not too prosperous business suit and with haunted frightened eyes and a hat pulled down tightly, brim up, around his forehead.

TRAVIS passes between the men and exits. WALTER leans deep in the man's face, still in his jubilation)

When I get to heaven gonna put on my wings, Gonna fly all over God's heaven . . . (The little man just stares at him) Heaven (Suddenly he stops and looks past the little man into the empty hallway) Where's Willy, man?

(Marxist) This quote helps to portray how the possibility of become rich can empower a person. Walter, with the thought of becoming rich, suddenly feels like he has wings and will "fly over God's heaven". Money ultimately has the ability to sway his mood.

BOBO He ain't with me.

WALTER (Not disturbed) Oh come on in. You know my wife.

BOBO (Dumbly, taking off his hat) Yes h'you, Miss Ruth.

RUTH (Quietly, a mood apart from her husband already, seeing BOBO) Hello, Bobo.

WALTER You right on time today . . . Right on time. That's the way! (He slaps BOBO on his back) Sit down . . . lemme hear.

(RUTH stands stiffly and quietly in back of them, as though somehow she senses death, her eyes fixed on her husband)

BOBO (His frightened eyes on the floor, his hat in his hands) Could I please get a drink of water, before I tell you about it, Walter Lee?

(WALTER does not take his eyes off the man. RUTH goes blindly to the tap and gets a glass of water and brings it to BOBO)

WALTER There ain't nothing wrong, is there?

BOBO Lemme tell you

WALTER Man didn't nothing go wrong?

BOBO Lemme tell you Walter Lee. (Looking at RUTH and talking to her more than to WALTER) You know how it was. I got to tell you how it was. I mean first I got to tell you how it was all the way ... I mean about the money I put in, Walter Lee . . .

WALTER (With taut agitation now) What about the money you put in?

BOBO Well it wasn't much as we told you me and Willy (He stops) I'm sorry, Walter. I got a bad feeling about it. I got a real bad feeling about it ...

WALTER Man, what you telling me about all this for? . . . Tell me what happened in Springfield . .

BOBO Springfield.

RUTH (Like a dead woman) What was supposed to happen in Springfield?

BOBO (To her) This deal that me and Walter went into with Willy Me and Willy was going to go down to Springfield and spread some money 'round so's we wouldn't have to wait so long for the liquor license . . . That's what we were going to do. Everybody said that was the way you had to do, you understand, Miss Ruth?

WALTER Man what happened down there?

BOBO (A pitiful man, near tears) I'm trying to tell you, Walter.

WALTER (Screaming at him suddenly) THEN TELL ME, GODDAMMIT . . . WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?

BOBO Man ... I didn't go to no Springfield, yesterday.

WALTER (Halted, life hanging in the moment) Why not?

BOBO (The long way, the hard way to tell) 'Cause I didn't have no reasons to ...

WALTER Man, what are you talking about!

BOBO I'm talking about the fact that when I got to the train station yesterday morning eight o'clock like we planned . . . Man Willie didn't never show up.

WALTER Why . . . where was he ... where is he?

BOBO That's what I'm trying to tell you ... I don't know ... I waited six hours ... I called his house . . . and I waited ... six hours ... I waited in that train station six hours . . . (Breaking into tears) That was all the extra money I had in the world . . . (Looking up at WALTER with the tears running down his face) Man, Willy is gone.

WALTER Gone, what you mean Willy is gone? Gone where? You mean he went by himself. You mean he went off to Springfield by himself to take care of get ting the license (Turns and looks anxiously at RUTH) You mean maybe he didn't want too many people in on the business down there? (Looks to RUTH again, as before) You know Willy got his own ways. (Looks back to BOBO) Maybe you was late yesterday and he just went on down there without you. Maybe maybe he's been callin' you at home tryin' to tell you what happened or something. Maybe maybe he just got sick. He's somewhere he's got to be somewhere. We just got to find him me and you got to find him. (Grabs BOBO senselessly by the collar and starts to shake him) We got to!

(Marxist) The fact that Willy takes the money for himself drives Walter nuts. Walter becomes very paranoid at the thought of losing his money and tries to make excuses to avoid that thought. This quote helps to portray the huge consequences that occur from losing money. Without that money, Walter is unable to fulfill his dreams and becomes a bitter person later on.

BOBO (In sudden angry, frightened agony) What's the matter with you, Walter! When a cat take off with your money he don't leave you no road maps!

WALTER (Turning madly, as though he is looking for WILLY in the very room) Willy! . . . Willy . . . don't do it . . . Please don't do it ... Man, not with that money * . . Man, please, not with that money . . . Oh, God . . . , Don't let it be true . . . (He is wandering around, crying out for WILLY and looking for him or perhaps for help from God) Man ... I trusted you . . . Man, I put my life in your hands . . . * (He starts to crumple down on the floor as RUTH just covers her face in horror. MAMA opens the door and comes into the room, with BENEATHA behind her) Man . . . (He starts to pound the floor with his fists, sobbing wildly) THAT MONEY IS MADE OUT OF MY FATHER'S FLESH

(Marxist) The money to Walter was everything and now that it is gone Walter sees the true value of the money. It was just any type of money; it was the overall accumulation of the blood, sweat, and tears of his father's hard work throughout his life time.

BOBO (Standing over him helplessly) I'm sorry, Walter . . . (Only WALTER'S sobs reply. BOBO puts on his hat) I had my life staked on this deal, too ... (He exits)

MAMA (To WALTER) Son (She goes to him, bends down to him, talks to his bent head) Son ... Is it gone? Son, I gave you sixty-five hundred dollars. Is it gone? All of it? Beneatha's money too?

Mama doesn't know what is happening, an unfathomable situation for her to render in her head.

WALTER (Lifting his head slowly) Mama , , , I never . . . went to the bank at all ...

MAMA (Not wanting to believe him) You mean . . . your sister's school money . . . you used that too ... Walter? . . .

Mama is coming to the realization that her son, Walter had lost all the money. He has lost the family's future, Beneatha's schooling money, and the money for the new house, its all gone. All of her life savings, all her hard work, gone.

WALTER Yessss! All of it ... It's all gone . . .

(There is total silence. RUTH stands with her face covered with her hands; BENEATHA leans forlornly against a wall, fingering a piece of red ribbon from the mother's gift. MAMA stops and looks at her son without recognition and then, quite without thinking about it, starts to beat him senselessly in the face. BENEATHA goes to them and stops it)

BENEATHA Mama!

(MAMA stops and looks at both of her children and rises slowly and wanders vaguely, aimlessly away from them)

MAMA I seen . . . him . . . night after night . . . come in ... and look at that rug ... and then look at me . . . the red showing in his eyes . . . the veins moving in his head ... I seen him grow thin and old before he was forty . . . working and working and working like somebody's old horse . . . killing himself . . . and you give it all away in a day (She raises her arms to strike him again)

Mama is in bit of trouble because she doesn't know what to do whether to go against her morals or help her son out in something that she feels is not reasonable. Mama senses disturbance in Walters head but doesn't know what will get him out of the slump. She wishes to use the money that he husband blessed them with in some other fashion.

(Social, Cultural) This quote helps to show how hard a black man had to work to provide for his family. Mama mentions that Big Walter had to keep "working and working and working like somebody's old horse." This shows how blacks like Big Walter had to always work in a state of servitude for the majority of their lives.

BENEATHA Mama

MAMA Oh, God . . . (She looks up to Him) Look down here and show me the strength.

In her time of need, in a time of unfathomable circumstances, she can only do one thing, call upon the the strength of the Lord to give her strength. This shows her tremendous belief in God, and the idea that everything happens for a reason, and that the Lord has planned everything out for Lena.

BENEATHA Mam

MAMA (Folding over) Strength . . .

She is coming to the realization of the severity of the situation. Lena doesn't know what to do, she is trying to keep herself together for the sake of the family but in lite of the horrendous news she is

struggling with her emotions.

BENEATHA (Plaintively) Mama . . .

MAMA Strength!

Mama is losing the battle with her emotions. The finality of what her son has done has just hit her, dead in the face. It is all gone.

Curtain

ACT III

An hour later.

At curtain, there is a sullen light of gloom in the living room, gray light not unlike that which began the first scene of Act One. At left we can see WALTER within his room, alone with himself. He is stretched out on the bed, his shirt out and open, his arms under his head. He does not smoke, he does not cry out, he merely lies there, looking up at the ceiling, much as if he were alone in the world.

In the living room BENEATHA sits at the table, still surrounded by the now almost ominous packing crates. She sits looking off. We feel that this is a mood struck perhaps an hour before, and it lingers now, full of the empty sound of profound disappointment. We see on a line from her brother's bedroom the sameness of their attitudes. Presently the bell rings and BENEATHA rises without ambition or interest in answering. It is ASAGAI, smiling broadly, striding into the room with energy and happy expectation and conversation.

ASAGAI I came over ... I had some free time. I thought I might help with the packing. Ah, I like the look of packing crates! A household in preparation for a journey! It depresses some people . . . but for me ... it is another feeling. Something full of the flow of life, do you understand? Movement, progress ... It makes me think of Africa.

BENEATHA Africa!

ASAGAI What kind of a mood is this? Have I told you how deeply you move me?

BENEATHA He gave away the money, Asagai . . .

ASAGAI Who gave away what money?

BENEATHA The insurance money. My brother gave it away.

ASAGAI Gave it away?

BENEATHA He made an investment! With a man even Travis wouldn't have trusted with his most worn-out marbles.

ASAGAI And it's gone?

BENEATHA Gone!

ASAGAI I'm very sorry . . . And you, now?

BENEATHA Me? . . . Me? . . . Me, I'm nothing . . . Me. When I was very small ... we used to take our sleds out in the wintertime and the only hills we had were the ice-covered stone steps of some houses down

the street. And we used to fill them in with snow and make them smooth and slide down them all day . . . and it was very dangerous, you know ... far too steep . . . and sure enough one day a kid named Rufus came down too fast and hit the sidewalk and we saw his face just split open right there in front of us ... And I remember standing there looking at his bloody open face thinking that was the end of Rufus. But the ambulance came and they took him to the hospital and they fixed the broken bones and they sewed it all up ... and the next time I saw Rufus he just had a little line down the middle of his face ... I never got over that . . .

(Marxist) Beneatha who was supposed to be the one above money and material possession now faced with the loss of money she feels devastated. This goes only to show how much money has a hold on this family. In a sense, they are overreacting as they managed to live without this money, however now that the money is gone they feel as if they have lost everything.

ASAGAI What?

BENEATHA That that was what one person could do for another, fix him up sew up the problem, make him all right again. That was the most marvelous thing in the world ... I wanted to do that. I always thought it was the one concrete thing in the world that a human being could do. Fix up the sick, you know and make them whole again. This was truly being God . . .

ASAGAI You wanted to be God?

BENEATHA No I wanted to cure. It used to be so important to me. I wanted to cure. It used to matter. I used to care. I mean about people and how their bodies hurt . . .

ASAGAI And you've stopped caring?

BENEATHA Yes I think so.

ASAGAI Why?

BENEATHA (Bitterly) Because it doesn't seem deep enough, close enough to what ails mankind! It was a child's way of seeing things or an idealist's.

ASAGAI Children see things very well sometimes and idealists even better.

BENEATHA I know that's what you think. Because you are still where I left off. You with all your talk and dreams about Africa! You still think you can patch up the world. Cure the Great Sore of Colonialism (Loftily, mocking it) with the Penicillin of Independence !

ASAGAI Yes!

BENEATHA Independence and then what? What about all the crooks and thieves and just plain idiots who will come into power and steal and plunder the same as before only now they will be black and do it in the name of the new Independence WHAT ABOUT THEM?!

ASAGAI That will be the problem for another time. First we must get there.

BENEATHA And where does it end?

ASAGAI End? Who even spoke of an end? To life? To living?

BENEATHA An end to misery! To stupidity! Don't you see there isn't any real progress, Asagai, there is only one large circle that we march in, around and around, each of us with our own little picture in front of us our own little mirage that we think is the future.

ASAGAI That is the mistake.

BENEATHA What?

ASAGAI What you just said about the circle. It isn't a circle it is simply a long line as in geometry, you know, one that reaches into infinity. And because we cannot see the end we also cannot see how it changes. And it is very odd but those who see the changes who dream, who will not give up are called idealists . . . and those who see only the circle we call them the "realists"!

BENEATHA Asagai, while I was sleeping in that bed in there, people went out and took the future right out of my hands! And nobody asked me, nobody consulted me they just went out and changed my life!

ASAGAI Was it your money?

BENEATHA What?

ASAGAI Was it your money he gave away?

BENEATHA It belonged to all of us.

ASAGAI But did you earn it? Would you have had it at all if your father had not died?

BENEATHA No.

ASAGAI Then isn't there something wrong in a house in a world where all dreams, good or bad, must depend on the death of a man? I never thought to see you like this, Alaiyo. You! Your brother made a mistake and you are grateful to him so that now you can give up the ailing human race on account of it! You talk about what good is struggle, what good is anything! Where are we all going and why are we bothering!

(Marxist) Again, Beneatha feels that after money that originally did not belong her is all gone her life is over and she gives up her long held dreams and ambitions of becoming a doctor. Asagai made a good point in bringing up that the hopes of the household depended on the death of a family. This shows that the sadness that the economic force of money is dictating the happiness of the Younger family.

BENEATHA AND YOU CANNOT ANSWER IT!

ASAGAI (Shouting over her) I LIVE THE ANSWER! (Pause) In my village at home it is the exceptional man who can even read a newspaper ... or who ever sees a book at all. I will go home and much of what I will have to say will seem strange to the people of my village. But I will teach and work and things will happen, slowly and swiftly. At times it will seem that nothing changes at all ... and then again the sudden

dramatic events which make history leap into the future. And then quiet again. Retrogression even. Guns, murder, revolution. And I even will have moments when I wonder if the quiet was not better than all that death and hatred. But I will look about my village at the illiteracy and disease and ignorance and I will not wonder long. And perhaps . . . perhaps I will be a great man ... I mean perhaps I will hold on to the substance of truth and find my way always with the right course . . . and perhaps for it I will be butchered in my bed some night by the servants of empire . . .

BENEATHA The martyr!

ASAGAI (He smiles) ... or perhaps I shall live to be a very old man, respected and esteemed in my new nation . . . And perhaps I shall hold office and this is what I'm trying to tell .you, Alaiyo: Perhaps the things I believe now for my country will be wrong and outmoded, and I will not understand and do terrible things to have things my way or merely to keep my power. Don't you see that there will be young men and women not British soldiers then, but my own black countrymen to step out of the shadows some evening and slit my then useless throat? Don't you see they have always been there . . . that they always will be. And that such a thing as my own death will be an advance? They who might kill me even . . . actually replenish all that I was.

BENEATHA Oh, Asagai, I know all that.

ASAGAI Good! Then stop moaning and groaning and tell me what you plan to do.

BENEATHA Do?

ASAGAI I have a bit of a suggestion.

BENEATHA What?

ASAGAI (Rather quietly for him) That when it is all over that you come home with me

BENEATHA (Staring at him and crossing away with exasperation) Oh Asagai at this moment you decide to be romantic!

ASAGAI (Quickly understanding the misunderstanding) My dear, young creature of the New World I do not mean across the city I mean across the ocean: home to Africa.

BENEATHA (Slowly understanding and turning to him with murmured amazement) To Africa?

ASAGAI Yes! . . . (Smiling and lifting his arms playfully) Three hundred years later the African Prince rose up out of the seas and swept the maiden back across the middle passage over which her ancestors had come

BENEATHA (Unable to play) To to Nigeria?

ASAGIA Nigeria. Home. (Coming to her with genuine romantic flippancy) I will show you our mountains and our stars; and give you cool drinks from gourds and teach you the old songs and the ways of our people and, in time, we will pretend that (Very Softly) you have only been away for a day. Say that you'll

come (He swings her around and takes her full in his arms in a kiss which proceeds to passion)

BENEATHA (Pulling away suddenly) You're getting me all mixed up

ASAGAI Why?

BENEATHA Too many things too many things have happened today. I must sit down and think. I don't know what I feel about anything right this minute.

(She promptly sits down and props her chin on her fist)

ASAGAI (Charmed) All right, I shall leave you. No don't get up. (Touching her, gently, sweetly) Just sit awhile and think . . . Never be afraid to sit awhile and think. (He goes to door and looks at her) How often I have looked at you and said, "Ah so this is what the New World hath finally wrought . . ."

(He exits. BENEATHA sits on alone. Presently

WALTER enters from his room and starts to rummage through things, feverishly looking for something. She looks up and turns in her seat)

BENEATHA (Hissingly) Yes just look at what the New World hath wrought! . . . Just look! (She gestures with bitter disgust) There he is! Monsieur le petit bourgeois noir himself! There he is Symbol of a Rising Class! Entrepreneur! Titan of the system! (WALTER ignores her completely and continues frantically and destructively looking for something and hurling things to floor and tearing things out of their place in his search. BENEATHA ignores the eccentricity of his actions and goes on with the monologue of insult) Did you dream of yachts on Lake Michigan, Brother? Did you see yourself on that Great Day sitting down at the Conference Table, surrounded by all the mighty bald-headed men in America? AH halted, waiting, breathless, waiting for your pronouncements on industry? Waiting for you Chairman of the Board! (WALTER finds what he is looking for a small piece of white paper and pushes it in his pocket and puts on his coat and rushes out without ever having looked at her. She shouts after him} I look at you and I see the final triumph of stupidity in the world!

(Marxist) Beneatha, a woman who is usually bright and full of hope, is bitter and full of contempt towards her brother who lost the money. Money has blinded her of the situation, no matter how much ad long she criticizes Walter for losing the money it will never return.

(The door slams and she returns to just sitting again. RUTH comes quickly out of MAMA'S room)

RUTH Who was that?

BENEATHA Your husband.

RUTH Where did he go?

BENEATHA Who knows maybe he has an appointment at U.S. Steel.

RUTH (Anxiously, with frightened eyes) You didn't say nothing bad to him, did you?

BENEATHA Bad? Say anything bad to him? No I told him he was a sweet boy and full of dreams and everything is strictly peachy keen, as the ofay kids say!

(MAMA enters from her bedroom. She is lost, vague, trying to catch hold, to make some sense of her former command of the world, but it still eludes her. A sense of waste overwhelms her gait; a measure of apology rides on her shoulders. She goes to her plant, which has remained on the table, looks at it, picks it up and takes it to the window sill and sits it outside, and she stands and looks at it a long moment. Then she closes the window, straightens her body with effort and turns around to her children)

MAMA Well ain't it a mess in here, though? (A false cheerfulness, a beginning of something) I guess we all better stop moping around and get some work done. All this unpacking and everything we got to do. (RUTH raises her head slowly in response to the sense of the line; and BENEATHA in similar manner turns very slowly to look at her mother} One of you all better call the moving people and tell 'em not to come.

You can tell from this quote that Mama is a very strong woman that is willing to deal with bad situations in an optimistic manner. Deep inside, she is very sad but for the sake of the family she tries to make the most of the situation they are in.

RUTH Tell 'em not to come?

MAMA Of course, baby. Ain't no need in 'em coming all the way here and having to go back. They charges for that too. (She sits down, fingers to her brow, thinking) Lord, ever since I was a little girl, I always remembers people saying, "Lena Lena Eggleston, you aims too high all the time. You needs to slow down and see life a little more like it is. Just slow down some." That's what they always used to say down home "Lord, that Lena Eggleston is a high-minded thing. She'll get her due one day!"

In this quote, Mama tries to accept the fact that the family is not moving and that her dreams of having a better house is gone. Also, you can tell that throughout her life, Mama has always been too optimistic and "aims high all the time" but this time, she tries to be realistic. She feels as if she is getting "her due" because of all the times she dreamed for something bigger.

RUTH No, Lena ...

MAMA Me and Big Walter just didn't never learn right.

In this quote, Mama is somewhat blaming herself for trying to fulfill her dreams. She is basically saying that Big Walter and her were wrong in believing they could live a better life.

RUTH Lena, no! We gotta go. Bennie tell her ... (She rises and crosses to BENEATHA with her arms outstretched. BENEATHA doesn't respond) Tell her we can still move . . . the notes ain't but a hundred and twenty-five a month. We got four grown people in this house we can work

MAMA (To herself) Just aimed too high all the time

This quote reiterates Mama's hopelessness. She is emphasizing that her past optimism was not realistic and never will be.

RUTH (Turning and going to MAMA fast the words pouring out with urgency and desperation)
Lena Til work . . . I'll work twenty hours a day in all the kitchens in Chicago , . . Fill strap my baby on my back if I have to and scrub all the floors in America and wash all the sheets in America if I have to but we

got to MOVE! We got to get OUT OF HERE!!

(MAMA reaches out absently and pats RUTH'S hand)

MAMA No I sees things differently now. Been thinking 'bout some of the things we could do to fix this place up some. I seen a second-hand bureau over on Maxwell Street just the other day that could fit right there. (She points to where the new furniture might go. RUTH wanders away from her) Would need some new handles on it and then a little varnish and it look like something brand-new. And we can put up them new curtains in the kitchen . . . Why this place be looking fine. Cheer us all up so that we forget trouble ever come . . . (To RUTH) And you could get some nice screens to put up in your room round the baby's bassinet . . . * (She looks at both of them, pleadingly) Sometimes you just got to know when to give up some things . . . and hold on to what you got. . . .

Through this quote, we can tell that Mama is a very strong person that is trying to make the most of an unfortunate situation. Although her dreams of having a better home were crushed, she still tries to look on the brighter side and "hold on to what [she] got". She talks about all the things the family could do to improve the house as a way to make the situation more bearable.

(WALTER enters from the outside, looking spent and leaning against the door, his coat hanging from him)

MAMA Where you been, son?

Mama still has a sense of caring for her son even though he crushed her dreams by losing her money.

WALTER (Breathing hard) Made a call

MAMA To who, son?

WALTER To The Man. (He heads for his room)

MAMA What man, baby?

WALTER (Stops in the door) The Man, Mama. Don't you know who The Man is? (Social, Historical) In terms of historical, The Man is white as they are the dictators of society making all of societies rules and regulations in which everyone else has to follow. Walter is just showing his bitterness and sarcasm.

RUTH Walter Lee?

WALTER The Man. Like the guys in the streets say The Man. Captain Boss Mistuh Charley . . . Old Cap'n Please Mr. Bossman . . .

BENEATHA (Suddenly) Lindner!

WALTER That's right! That's good. I told him to come right over.

BENEATHA (Fiercely, understanding) For what? What do you want to see him for!

WALTER (Looking at his sister) We going to do business with him.

MAMA What you talking 'bout, son?

WALTER Talking 'bout life, Mama. You all always telling me to see life like it is. Well I laid in there on my back today . . . and I figured it out. Life just like it is. Who gets and who don't get. (He sits down with his coat on and laughs) Mama, you know it's all divided up. Life is. Sure enough. Between the takers and the "tooken." (He laughs) I've figured it out finally. (He looks around at them) Yeah. Some of us always getting "tooken." (He laughs) People like Willy Harris, they don't never get "tooken." And you know why the rest of us do? 'Cause we all mixed up. Mixed up bad. We get to looking 'round for the right and the wrong; and we worry about it and cry about it and stay up nights trying to figure out 'bout the wrong and the right of things all the time . . . And all the time, man, them takers is out there operating, just taking and taking. Willy Harris? Shoot Willy Harris don't even count. He don't even count in the big scheme of things. But I'll say one thing for old Willy Harris . . . he's taught me something. He's taught me to keep my eye on what counts in this world. Yeah (Shouting out a little) Thanks, Willy!

(Marxist) Walter feels that powerless after being scammed by Willie and feels that the only way to survive in this world is to become a taker and not let your self be "tooken". Through his encounter with Willie, he believes that power is what a person needs to be successful.

RUTH What did you call that man for, Walter Lee?

WALTER Called him to tell him to come on over to the show. Gonna put on a show for the man. Just what he wants to see. You see, Mama, the man came here today and he told us that them people out there where you want us to move well they so upset they willing to pay us not to move! (He laughs again) And and oh, Mama you would of been proud of the way me and Ruth and Bennie acted. We told him to get out . . . Lord have mercy! We told the man to get out! Oh, we was some proud folks this afternoon, yeah. (He lights a cigarette) We were still full of that old-time stuff . . .

RUTH {Coming toward him slowly} You talking 'bout taking them people's money to keep us from moving in that house?

WALTER I ain't just talking 'bout it, baby I'm telling you that's what's going to happen!

BENEATHA Oh, God! Where is the bottom! Where is the real honest-to-God bottom so he can't go any father!

WALTER See that's the old stuff. You and that boy that was here today. You all want everybody to carry a flag and a spear and sing some marching songs, huh? You wanna spend your life looking into things and trying to find the right and the wrong part, huh? Yeah. You know what's going to happen to that boy someday he'll find himself sitting in a dungeon, locked in forever and the takers will have the key! Forget it, baby! There ain't no causes there ain't nothing but taking in this world, and he who takes most is smartest and it don't make a damn bit of difference how.

MAMA You making something inside me cry, son. Some awful pain inside me.

The "awful pain" inside her portrays that Mama is heartbroken from Walter's actions and the man he has become. Mama had not raised Walter in this manner and is ashamed that he has begun to justify "taking in this world".

WALTER Don't cry, Mama. Understand. That white man is going to walk in that door able to write checks for more money than we ever had. It's important to him and I'm going to help him . . . I'm going to put on the show, Mama.

MAMA Son I come from five generations of people who was slaves and sharecroppers but ain't nobody in my family never let nobody pay 'em no money that was a way of telling us we wasn't fit to walk the earth. We ain't never been that poor. (Raising her eyes and looking at him) We ain't never been that dead inside.

In this quote, Mama is portrayed as a woman that has strong morals. She gives a little background into their ancestors and how they had strong sense of pride and morals. Mama is basically saying that Walter is the first person in her family that is willing to give up his pride for money. She feels that not having money is not the only way to be poor. Mama feels that giving up a persons pride and morality for money is a way to become "dead inside".

(Marxist) This quote helps to portray a sense of power despite money. Mama tries to convey that pride is more powerful than money. (Historical) Also, by mentioning that her ancestors were "slaves and sharecroppers", Mama is giving us a historical account of a black family.

BENEATHA Well we are dead now. All the talk about dreams and sunlight that goes on in this house. It's all dead now.

WALTER What's the matter with you all! I didn't make this world! It was give to me this way! Hell, yes, I want me some yachts someday! Yes, I want to hang some real pearls 'round my wife's neck. Ain't she supposed to wear no pearls? Somebody tell me tell me, who decides which women is suppose to wear pearls in this world. I tell you I am a man and I think my wife should wear some pearls in this world!

(Marxist) Money still has the biggest influence for Walter and after his incident with Willie, he becomes even more blinded by money and believes only money will make his life complete.

(This last line hangs a good while and WALTER begins to move about the room. The word "Man" has penetrated his consciousness; he mumbles it to himself repeatedly between strange agitated pauses as he moves about)

MAMA Baby, how you going to feel on the inside?

Mama is trying to prevent Walter to stop acting the way he is right now because she feels that he is losing his morals by doing so.

WALTER Fine! . . . Going to feel fine . . . a man . . .

MAMA You won't have nothing left then, Walter Lee.

Mama reiterates the fact that a man that loses his morals and money for money is a person that loses everything.

WALTER (Coming to her) I'm going to feel fine, Mama. I'm going to look that son-of-a-bitch in the eyes and say (He falters) and say, "All right, Mr. Lindner (He falters even more) that's your neighborhood out there! You got the right to keep it like you want! You got the right to have it like you want! Just write the check and the house is yours." And and I am going to say (His voice almost breaks) "And you you people just put the money in my hand and you won't have to live next to this bunch of stinking niggers! . . ." (He straightens up and moves away from his mother, walking around the room) And maybe maybe I'll just get down on my black knees . . . (He does so; RUTH and BENNIE and MAMA watch him in frozen horror) "Captain, Mistuh, Bossman (Groveling and grinning and wringing his hands in profoundly anguished imitation of the slow-witted movie stereotype) A-hee-hee-hee! Oh, yassuh boss! Yassssuh! Great white (Voice breaking, he forces himself to go on) Father, just gi' ussen de money, fo' God's sake, and we's ain't gwine come out deh and dirty up yo* white folks neighborhood . . ." (He breaks down completely)

And I'll feel fine! Fine! FINE! (He gets up and goes into the bedroom)

(Historical, Social, Cultural) Using the words "Captain, Mistuh, Bossman" shows the social and cultural background during this time period in which he uses words of higher ranks to describe a white man. Even though, many civil rights laws have been passed by this time many blacks were still living an oppressed life.

BENEATHA That is not a man. That is nothing but a toothless rat.

MAMA Yes death done come in this here house. (She is nodding, slowly, reflectively) Done come walking in my house on the lips of my children. You what supposed to be my beginning again. You what supposed to be my harvest. (To BENEATHA) You you mourning your brother?

Mama feels like she is mourning the death of her boy because Walter is not acting the way Mama has raised him to act. Mama is very disappointed and sad because she feels like she has no more "harvest" or "beginning again". Her children were supposed to represent her but she realizes that Walter is not a reflection of herself.

BENEATHA He's no brother of mine.

MAMA What you say?

BENEATHA I said that that individual in that room is no brother of mine.

MAMA That's what I thought you said. You feeling like you better than he is today? (BENEATHA does not answer) Yes? What you tell him a minute ago? That he wasn't a man? Yes? You give him up for me? You done wrote his epitaph too like the rest of the world? Well, who give you the privilege?

Mama uses a list of rhetorical questions to convey the point that Beneatha had no right to say what she said. Even though Walter had disappointed Mama, Mama still feels that Walter should be treated with respect from Beneatha. This helps to show that Mama is a woman with strong morals and respect

BENEATHA Be on my side for once! You saw what he just did, Mama! You saw him down on his knees. Wasn't it you who taught me to despise any man who would do that? Do what he's going to do?

MAMA Yes I taught you that. Me and your daddy. But I thought I taught you something else too ... I thought I taught you to love him.

Mama values love very much. She feels that despite all the bad actions that Walter has done, he still deserves to be treated with love by his own family. You can tell that Mama is very caring and forgiving within this quote.

BENEATHA Love him? There is nothing left to love.

MAMA There is always something left to love. And if you ain't learned that, you ain't learned nothing. (Looking at her) Have you cried for that boy today? I don't mean for yourself and for the family 'cause we lost the money. I mean for him: what he been through and what it done to him. Child, when do you think is the time to love somebody the most? When they done good and made things easy for everybody? Well then, you ain't through learning because that ain't the time at all. It's when he's at his lowest and can't believe in himself 'cause the world done whipped him so! When you starts measuring somebody, measure him right, child, measure him right. Make sure you done taken into account what hills and valleys he come through before he got to wherever he is.

This quote is a very important quote that helps to reveal Mama's character. You can tell that she is very

wise and that understanding is an important aspect of life for her. Mama tells Beneatha to have empathy for her brother and that love comes when a person is “at his lowest” like Walter right now. By Mama saying that “there is always something left to love” we can see her optimistic and loving personality.

(TRAVIS bursts into the room at the end of the speech, leaving the door open)

TRAVIS Grandmama the moving men are downstairs! The truck just pulled up.

MAMA (Turning and looking at him) Are they, baby? They downstairs?

(She sighs and sits. LINDNER appears in the doorway. He peers in and knocks lightly, to gain attention, and comes in. All turn to look at him)

LINDNER (Hat and briefcase in hand) Uh hello . . . (RUTH crosses mechanically to the bedroom door and opens it and lets it swing open freely and slowly as the lights come up on WALTER within, still in his coat, sitting at the far corner of the room. He looks up and out through the room to LINDNER)

RUTH He's here.

(A long minute passes and WALTER slowly gets up)

LINDNER (Coming to the table with efficiency, putting his briefcase on the table and starting to unfold papers and unscrew fountain pens) Well, I certainly was glad to hear from you people. (WALTER has begun the trek out of the room, slowly and awkwardly, rather like a small boy, passing the back of his sleeve across his mouth from time to time) Life can really be so much simpler than people let it be most of the time. Well with whom do I negotiate? You, Mrs. Younger, or your son here? (MAMA sits with her hands folded on her lap and her eyes closed as WALTER advances. TRAVIS goes closer to LINDNER and looks at the papers curiously) Just some official papers, sonny.

Lindner is very proud that his mediocre attempt to persuade the Youngers earlier paid off. He feels happy that he has accomplished his job earlier. He brings back his business like politeness again. However, you could tell that there is more personal feelings involved this time during the story. There is also a powerful quote of also that may not seem as profound for Lindner but for the younger family. Mama is faced with a difficult decision of letting her son take care of the business. If she does let him, it will show that he has matured into a grown plant.

RUTH Travis, you go downstairs

MAMA (Opening her eyes and looking into WALTER'S) No. Travis, you stay right here. And you make him understand what you doing, Walter Lee. You teach him good. Like Willy Harris taught you. You show where our five generations done come to. (WALTER looks from her to the boy, who grins at him innocently) Go ahead, son (She folds her hands and closes her eyes) Go ahead.

Mama makes Travis listen to the conversation that Walter is about to have with Mr. Lindner because she wants Walter to admit how he is about to lose his pride in front of his son. Mama is somewhat using Travis as a way to deter Walter away from what he is about to do.

WALTER (At last crosses to LINDNER, who is reviewing the contract) Well, Mr. Lindner. (BENEATHA turns away) We called you (There is a profound, simple groping quality in his speech) because, well, me and my family (He looks around and shifts from one foot to the other) Well we are very plain people . . .

LINDNER Yes

Lindner could care less about what Walter is saying; he just wants to see what they say about the offer and leave. Lindner is still trying to maintain his composure.

WALTER I mean I have worked as a chauffeur most of my life and my wife here, she does domestic work in people's kitchens. So does my mother. I mean we are plain people . . .

LINDNER Yes, Mr. Younger

Lindner is giving brief statements in response to Walter because he wants this conversation to end as fast as possible. By giving responses, he will prolong the conversation.

WALTER (Really like a small boy, looking down at his shoes and then up at the man) And uh well, my father, well, he was a laborer most of his life. . . .

LINDNER (Absolutely confused) Uh, yes yes, I understand. (He turns back to the contract)

He does not know what is going with the conversation because Walter unnecessarily talks about his life and what he has accomplished so far. Lindner has not made any efforts to stop the conversation and this shows his patient side again.

WALTER (A beat; staring at him) And my father (With sudden intensity) My father almost beat a man to death once because this man called him a bad name or something, you know what I mean?

LINDNER (Looking up, frozen) No, no, I'm afraid I don't

Lindner is still very patient with the situation but a little confused as to where Walter is coming from.

WALTER (A beat. The tension hangs; then WALTER steps back from it) Yeah. Well what I mean is that we come from people who had a lot of pride. I mean we are very proud people. And that's my sister over there and she's going to be a doctor and we are very proud

LINDNER Well I am sure that is very nice, but

Lindner now has had enough with the conversations and is making an effort to change the subject and go on with the business. Lindner also realizes that this meeting has gone bad for him now.

WALTER What I am telling you is that we called you over here to tell you that we are very proud and that this (Signaling to TRAVIS) Travis, come here. (TRAVIS crosses and WALTER draws him before him facing the man) This is my son, and he makes the sixth generation our family in this country. And we have all thought about your offer

LINDNER Well, good . . . good

WALTER And we have decided to move into our house because my father my father he earned it for us brick by brick. (MAMA has her eyes closed and is rocking back and forth as though she were in church, with her head nodding the Amen yes) We don't want to make no trouble for nobody or fight no causes, and we will try to be good neighbors. And that's all we got to say about that. (He looks the man absolutely in the eyes) We don't want your money. (He turns and walks away)

(Social, Cultural, Historical) Walter has made a huge decision, black people usually lived in separates parts from white people to prevent trouble. With the Youngers moving in, there is the possibility of persecution and a definite discrimination from the neighbors.

(Marxist) Walter has let his pride, greed, and lust for money and power no longer blind him and he

made a decision in which he can truly be called a man.

LINDNER (Looking around at all of them) I take it then that you have decided to occupy . . .
He is shocked that they are actually making the decision to go through with buying the house.

BENEATHA That's what the man said.
This is important because this is the first time Walter is referred as a man. Also, it is more profound because it is coming from Beneatha also.

LINDNER (To MAMA in her reverie) Then I would like to appeal to you, Mrs. Younger. You are older and wiser and understand things better I am sure . . .
Lindner still does not take Walter seriously because to him he is still a little kid. He goes to Mama because he feels that there is something wrong that this can't be happening.

MAMA I am afraid you don't understand. My son said we was going to move and there ain't nothing left for me to say, (Briskly) You know how these young folks is nowadays, mister. Can't do a thing with 'em! (As he opens his mouth, she rises) Good-bye.
You can tell that Mama is very proud of her son for the way he had just acted. She fully supports her son and defends him when Mr. Lindner tries to convince her otherwise.

LINDNER (Folding up his materials) Well if you are that final about it - . . . there is nothing left for me to say. (He finishes, almost ignored by the family, who are concentrating on WALTER LEE. At the door LINDNER halts and looks around) I sure hope you people know what you're getting into.
Lindner is extremely disappointed with what is happening and tries to maintain his composure. His personal opinions as well as the fact that he was unable to complete the job is bundled up inside Lindner. He has exhausted all efforts to persuade the Youngers to go the other directions.

(He shakes his head and exits)

RUTH (Looking around and coming to life) Well, for God's sake if the moving men are here LETS GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!

MAMA (Into action) Ain't it the truth! Look at all this here mess. Ruth, put Travis' good jacket on him . . . Walter Lee, fix your tie and tuck your shirt in, you look like somebody's hoodlum! Lord have mercy, where is my plant? (She flies to get it amid the general bustling of the family, who are deliberately trying to ignore the nobility of the past moment) You all start on down . . . Travis child, don't go empty-handed . . . Ruth, where did I put that box with my skillet in it? I want to be in charge of it myself . . . I'm going to make us the biggest dinner we ever ate tonight . . . Beneatha, what's the matter with them stockings? Pull them things up, girl . . . (The family starts to file out as two moving men appear and begin to carry out the heavier pieces of furniture, bumping into the family as they move about)
This quote helps to show how happy Mama is that Walter acted the way he did. She says that she is going to make the "biggest dinner we ever ate tonight" which reveals her desire to celebrate. However, even though she is extremely happy and excited, Mama tries to keep order in her household. For example, she tells Walter to fix his tie and for Beneatha to pull her stockings up despite her feelings to just scream and shout out of joy.

BENEATHA Mama, Asagai asked me to marry him today and go to Africa

MAMA (In the middle of her getting-ready activity) He did? You ain't old enough to marry nobody (Seeing the moving men lifting one of her chairs precariously) Darling, that ain't no bale of cotton, please handle it so we can sit in it again! I had that chair twenty-five years . . .

This quote helps to show Mamas emotional attachment to the old furniture. She still wants to keep the items she has had for “twenty-five years”.

(The movers sigh with exasperation and go on with their work}

BENEATHA (Girlishly and unreasonably trying to pursue the conversation) To go to Africa, Mama be a doctor in Africa . . .

MAMA (Distracted) Yes, baby

WALTER Africa! What he want you to go to Africa for? BENEATHA To practice there . . .

WALTER Girl, if you don't get all them silly ideas out your head! You better marry yourself a man with some loot . . .

BENEATHA (Angrily, precisely as in the first scene of the play) What have you got to do with who I marry!

WALTER Plenty. Now I think George Murchison

BENEATHA George Murchison! I wouldn't marry him if he was Adam and I was Eve!
(WALTER and BENEATHA go out yelling at each other vigorously and the anger is loud and real till their voices diminish. RUTH stands at the door and turns to MAMA and smiles knowingly)

MAMA (Fixing her hat at last) Yeah they something all right, my children . . .

Through this quote, we can tell that Mama is very proud of her children and feels that they have done her right. There is a cheerful tone to her voice.

RUTH Yeah they're something. Let's go, Lena.

MAMA (Stalling, starting to look around at the house) Yes I'm coming. Ruth

It feels somewhat surreal for Mama that her dream of finding a better home is finally happening. She looks around the house and stalls to make the most of the emotions she is feeling right now.

RUTH Yes?

MAMA (Quietly, woman to woman) He finally come into his manhood today, didn't he? Kind of like a rainbow after the rain . . .

This quote helps to reiterate the proud feeling that Mama has for Walter. She feels that Walter has finally become a man despite all the difficult obstacles and that her job as a mother has finally proved to be successful.

RUTH (Biting her lip lest her own pride explode in front of MAMA) Yes, Lena.

(WALTER'S voice calls for them raucously)

WALTER (Off stage) Y'all come on! These people charges by the hour, you know!

MAMA (Waving RUTH out vaguely) All right, honey go on down. I be down directly.

(RUTH hesitates, then exits. MAMA stands, at last alone in the living room, her plant on the table before her as the lights start to come down. She looks around at all the walls and ceilings and suddenly, despite herself, while the children call below, a great heaving thing rises in her and she puts her fist to her mouth to stifle it, takes a final desperate look, pulls her coat about her, pats her hat and goes out. The lights dim down. The door opens and she comes back in, grabs her plant, and goes out for the last time)
Mama feels unbelievably happy that her dream is finally coming true. She leaves the house without any regret and looks towards a better future.

Curtain

Book Questions 3 and 6

Question 3

One important conflict in the story is the arrival of the check. The family never dealt with so much money at one time and it causes a conflict on what to do with the money. Walter makes it an even bigger deal because he really wants to invest in a liquor store but doing so would go against Mama's Christian values. This ultimately causes distress in the family because Walter is very depressed that his own Mother is not letting him go on with his own decisions. He is a 35 year old boy to his Mama. Mama debates whether she should let Walter use the money for his own investment. She doesn't trust him completely yet. The matters get even worse when Mama tells the family that she bought a house with the money. Walter actually runs away like a little boy. This causes instability within the family. This is all begins because of the check and in broader perspective money. Walter feels that "Money is life..." while Mama believes that it is about pride and family that makes life and family. Money is a huge problem for the family except Mama. Mama says that if she didn't have a family that she would just give the money up. "I specific it wasn't for you all ... I would just put that money away or give it to the church or something." The check causes the family to fight and disrespect each other. Another main conflict is the communication within the family. The story opens up with an argument with Walter and Ruth. "That's what you mad about, ain't it? The things I want to talk about with my friends just couldn't be important in your mind, could they?" This shows that the family loves each other but have a lot of conflicting beliefs. Mama is the head of the family and tries really hard to keep her family together. She makes sure that her Christian and social values are intact in each member of her family. At the same time, she tries to raise her children, even though they are all grown up. To her they are still children because they lack the maturity of a regular adult. Mama does not trust Walter with the money and in response Walter whines like a little boy in order to get what he wants. This kind of behavior is expected of a 5 year old not a 35 year old boy. If the family was mature in the beginning, then this whole story would have been avoided .Mama continues to keep the family together by helping Ruth in her time of need. Ruth is pregnant and feels that she should have an abortion. Mama makes sure that she doesn't think of anything like that and allows Ruth to take a rest from her routine house hold duties. Throughout the story, Mama tends her children like she does to her plant. She waits for the perfect time before she actually trusts them to be on their own. Mama finally believes that her family has grown up at the end when she allows Walter to make the decision of staying or moving in the house. "You teach him good. Like Willy Harris taught you. You show where our five generations done come to. (WALTER looks from her to the boy, who grins at him innocently) Go ahead, son(She folds her hands and closes her eyes) Go ahead." To summarize, the two conflicts are money and the communication and maturity of the family with one another.

Question 6

The first important stage prop is the plant. The plant is barely referenced in the story but still significant enough to be considered a major prop in the story. Mama really wants a garden that she could have as her own, but she has no room in the apartment that she lives in. "But Lord, child, you should know all the dreams I had 'bout buying that house and fixing it up and making me a little garden in the back (She waits and stops smiling) And didn't none of it happen." At first, the plant is wilting away because it hasn't received the right amount of nutrients and sunlight. This plant is a symbol of the Younger Family. The Youngers especially the adults in the family lack the maturity that a regular adult has. Throughout the story, Walter and Beneatha act like little kids; always arguing about what is going on whether it is money or family issues. Mama is referenced throughout the story of watering the plant. Every time she waters the plant it is seen as an improvement in the family's overall behavior. This also correlates with the family's last name of Younger. They and the plant start off as "younger" in the beginning in the story and grow older at the end of the story. The wilting plant in the beginning represents that Mama has a lot of work to do. "My children and they temper. Lord, if this little old plants don't get more sun than it's been getting it ain't never going to see spring again." The other prop that is used in the story is the house overall. The house holds a different meaning to the people in the house. Walter hates the house so much and even tells Ruth in the beginning that this house is "dumb", he wants to be able to show that he has a high social status. "You tired, ain't you? Tired of everything. Me, the boy, the way we live- this beat-up hole- every..." A house represents more than just shelter; it also represents social status and how society viewed an individual. By getting another house, it showed that the Younger family is improving their social status because they now have more than money than they did before. The only reason that Walter did not like the investment is that he did not get what he wanted which is shown when he embraced the new house at the end of the story when he made the decision of moving houses even though they did have the money or the check anymore. And we have decided to move into our house because my father my father he earned it for us brick by brick. (MAMA has her eyes closed and is rocking back and forth as though she were in church, with her head nodding the Amen yes) We don't want to make no trouble for nobody or fight no causes, and we will try to be good neighbors. And that's all we got to say about that. (He looks the man absolutely in the eyes) We don't want your money. (He turns and walks away)" That also shows that the shift between houses also represents the Younger family's maturity; they are now older. Mama and Travis are the only characters that truly appreciate the house for what it's worth. Mama and Travis adjusted to the lifestyle of living in a cramped area. Ruth, Walter, and Beneatha all complain about living in the house. When Ruth told the family that she was pregnant; Beneatha starting complaining about how there is no room for the baby in the house. "It is my business where is he going to live, on the roof?" Travis accepted their way of living. Also, he never complains that he had to sleep in the couch. The plant and the house are both symbols of the Younger family's maturity.

Elements: Theme and Meaning

The overall meaning of *A Raisin in the Sun* can be seen in the plant raised and nurtured by Mamma. The plant is the representation of the family and the significance of Mamma always looking after the plant is that she is trying to make sure her family stays on a righteous path. The plant is first introduced when Mamma brings in a “feeble plant growing doggedly in a small pot”. This “feebleness” of the plant represents the initial state of the family. Walter is clouded by his greed and pursuit of money, Beneatha has strayed away from the religious followings of Mamma, and Ruth is considering abortion of her baby. The family is in a state of turmoil and chaos and the only one who can “nurture” and allow the “plant” which is the family to grow is Mamma. Throughout the story, Mamma frequently checks on her plant. For example in Act 2 scene 3, Mama goes to “[fix her] plant so it won't get hurt none on the way.” This means that she wants to protect her family from harm's way and give it the right nutrients to grow and prosper. Mamma is always trying to look for the best interest of the family. Just like she is watering the plants, she is providing nutrients for her family to grow. For example, with the ten-thousand dollars she inherits from her husband's insurance, she uses the money to buy a house for the family. With a new house, the family does not need worry about space it has “Three bedrooms nice big one for [Walter] and Ruth. . . [Mamma] and Beneatha still have to share [a] room, but Travis will have one of his own.” Also with the more space, Beneatha's earlier concern about not having anywhere for the Ruth's future newborn baby to be can now be put to rest. She also realizes that after years of living in a rented apartment that for Walter to feel like a man he needs to be able to “walk on floors that belong to him”. All these things she does to help her family and nurture the “plant”. The conflict of the money, Walter's greed, and the new house are settled through Mama's guidance, understanding, and love. In the end of the story, when Mama is all alone in the house taking one last thoughtful look at the house, takes the plant on the table, and leaves, which signifies that no matter what home and where they are Mama will continue watering and nurturing the family.

Another important meaning in this story is the title. Without reading the story people are often confused to what this title means. The plant can also be the “Raisin.” A raisin starts off as a regular fruit and then it becomes a grape when it dries up. That is why raisins are considered dry fruits. The family as well as the plant is raisins. The family is a raisin because it is dried up because of all the obstacles that they are facing. The plant is a raisin because it is drying up and not able bloom. As the story goes along the family is no longer a raisin and becoming a fruit which correlates back to the plant which becomes fully grown and healthy. This is all thanks to the head of the family, Mama, which takes care both the family as well as the plant. This story is basically a story of how a family of children basically become adults. It also correlates back to the transformation of the plant; throughout the story the plant grows bigger. At the end, it becomes a fully sprouted and a healthy plant. Sun represent Mama because the Sun is used to provide nutrients to the plant the same way Mama gives nutrients and nourished her children.