

## Chapter 24 Study Questions:

For many years at a time, Paul D had been known for a man moving around constantly never having anything holding him back or holding down emotionally. Paul D had felt as if his “tobacco tin” had been closed and unexposed to anyone before Sethe because he thought “When he was drifting, thinking only about the next meal and night’s sleep, when everything was packed tight in his chest, he had no sense of failure, of things not working out. Anything that worked at all worked out.” This exemplifies that Paul D was a man who in a way just moved along life not thinking much of it. He barely scraped by providing for himself, and when he encountered Sethe he realized how much his life had changed as shown in the line, “And then [Sethe] moved him. Just when doubt, regret and every single unasked question was packed away, long after he believed he had willed himself into being, at the very time and place he wanted to take root-she moved him.” Through this line, Paul D explains his emotional turn. Before he had joined Sethe, he felt himself not truly a free man, but not necessarily a man held captive by his responsibilities for others and those around him. In the middle of the story, we learn that the love Paul D has for Sethe has become rooted, and will only grow as the story progresses as Paul D says to Sethe “I want you pregnant”. When Paul D learns of Sethe’s decision to kill her child, he is left with the inability to say anything to Sethe, and although he still feels the love for her he cannot be with a woman like her, “So he held his wrists. Passing by that woman’s life, getting in it and letting it get in him had set him up for this fall.” The fall spoken about in this line explains the lost love Paul D had for Sethe throughout the story. This closed “tobacco tin” signifies that Paul D had kept all of his feelings and emotions bundled up inside himself and the only reason that he opened this “tobacco tin” with Sethe is because he finally felt as if he had found

somewhere and someone he could trust. When he found out that even this attempt to settle down with someone he loved had been foiled he felt as if he had openly exposed of his feelings and emotions thus “wanting to live out his life with a whole new woman was new, and losing the feeling of it made him want to cry and think deep thoughts that struck nothing solid.”

Paul D has many doubts of his manhood through this chapter for various reasons. To him, he feels that because he has this specific “tobacco tin” he is less of a man than those around him such as Sixo and Halle. Because this “tobacco tin” personifies his emotions, Paul D thinks that he is the only “man” that feels these specific emotions not only toward Mr. Garner specifically, but others in general. Not only did his emotions play a role in this turmoil, but also his labeling by Mr. Garner. The ideology of the society at the time for Blacks was that slaves were labeled accordingly by their masters. Although Mr. Garner referred to Paul D as a man, Paul D always felt an internal conflict as to whether he was truly a man outside of just being referred as one by Mr. Garner as shown in the line “Oh, he did manly things, but was that Garner’s gift or his own will?” Labeled so by Mr. Garner was not enough for Paul D as he began questioning his true manhood, and he further wondered whether others outside of just Mr. Garner would see him as a man when Mr. Garner was gone as shown in the line “Suppose Garner woke up one morning and changed his mind?” Overall, Paul D wonders if, him being a black man, he truly is labeled as a man in society or he is just labeled through what his master, Mr. Garner, refers to him as.

Thirty-Mile Woman is an unofficial wife of Sixo. Because she lives in a different plantation, it was very difficult and challenging for Sixo to meet with her. However, when Mr. Gardner was alive before schoolteacher took over the plantation, Sixo was sometimes allowed to meet her. One day, Sixo and other friends from Sweet Home plan a constructive plan to escape

and achieve freedom along with pregnant Thirty-Mile Woman with Sixo's son. They are supposed to meet at the creek. Thirty-Mile Woman and Paul D arrive to the creek first. Toni Morrison, the author, describes Thirty-Mile Woman in a specific and particular way as she is patiently waiting for Sixo, "She is lit now with glowing, some shining that comes from inside her."

Morrison uses such word "shining", which has a positive connotation. Shining, in this certain fiction, represents the hope and happiness of new life as the author indicates it is "inside" her specifically. The baby represents a new life that will be born with the freedom. However, author describes that she was "a shape with dark shadow" before she knelt on creek. This indicates that even though Thirty-Mile Woman is carrying the baby, it doesn't convey that the baby will bear freedom unless the action to attain freedom is executed smoothly. When author says that "she glows with some lights", it demonstrates that the baby has finally achieved the freedom. Toni Morrison applied an in-depth analytical association to present that characters in "Beloved" actually have not attained the "real" freedom as "Seven-O" has attained. Even though the other characters "achieved" the freedom, the author did not point out that they were shining but the fetus, "baby" in the woman's womb, was shining. This implication suggests that since the baby had not been exposed to the cruelty and unrighteousness of the reality, he carries the notion of true innocence and freedom as it is evident in the book, "shining that comes from *inside* her".

The author points out a different point of view about this specific description; it has a significant importance that shows the connection between the Seven-O and Sixo. "Sixo is through with his song. He laughs. Sixo interrupts his laughter to call out, Seven-O" Sixo hysterically laughs when he gets captured by the schoolteacher. This laughter shows the cohesiveness between the son and the dad because Sixo laughs to show the happiness for his son

to attain the freedom. Before Sixo was captured, Thirty-Mile Woman thinks that Sixo is on the way to the creek; therefore, she relaxes herself and waits for him patiently. The notion that Sixo is on the way to the creek is another factor that why Thirty-Mile Woman is shining because she and the baby feel the comfort and security when Sixo is around. Therefore, the shining can be symbolized the protection in a way.

There are two different ways to incorporate why Thirty-Mile Woman “is lit with some glowing, some shining that comes from *inside* her.” This description can be either perceived as a definition of “true and pure” freedom or can be perceived as a notion of “true” protection and comfort from one significant individual.

Sixo starts singing because he wishes to exemplify his ways of never returning to becoming a slave. In order to deliver a message of resistance to Schoolteacher, Sixo opens his mouth to sing his heart out. The significance of the singing, however, is that Sixo explains to Schoolteacher and all his followers that although he may be tied down from head to toe, he will never give in to what Schoolteacher desires of him, a slave. His singing voice symbolizes an entrapped slave’s strive for freedom regardless of the conditions he is put under and that is shown through the line “This one will never be suitable. The song must have convinced him”. At first, Paul D has doubts as to exactly why Sixo had sung the song during such a strange time, but later in the chapter he is reinforced with the true reason of Sixo singing this song and that is because now that Sixo had shown his resistance to white control, Schoolteacher knew that he would be a slave unable to be sold as exemplified through the line “Who could be fooled into buying a singing nigger with a gun?”

Escaping from Sweet Home through the middle passage to gain freedom, many slaves were injured or killed. They sacrificed much to gain freedom for themselves and their children; and in this situation, for Sixo's child with the Thirty-Mile Woman to be born a free man. When the Schoolteacher went back to find the slaves, they were able to find the Thirty-Mile Woman, Sixo, and Paul D in a riverbank. They try to capture the three, and while in pursuit, they manage to capture Sixo and tie him to a tree. While he is tied up, he shouts "Seven-O! Seven-O!" before "they [shot] him to shut him up." This is to symbolize his son, which the Thirty-Mile Woman is bearing in her womb. As with kings and any royal hierarchy, after the father dies, the son usually takes the throne as the next in line for the throne. In *Beloved*, this is being compared to Sixo's succession of his own son, after the number six comes number seven, so when Sixo dies, his son becomes "Seven-O." He laughs as he calls out this name, because he feels happy that his son will not be born a slave, but also at the fact that the men are wasting their time trying to kill him, instead of going after the people that they really should be chasing, which is the Thirty-Mile Woman and their son. After the Schoolteacher shoots Sixo, he goes on to think about all of the illegal things the Garner's did for their slaves, such as "letting niggers hire out their own time to buy themselves." The Schoolteacher "...had come to put the place aright."

There are two perspectives that we can perceive from Sixo when he laughs while he is dying. It is ironic that he was laughing while being burned alive. While the Thirty-Mile Woman was able to run away successfully from the schoolteacher and attain her and her baby's freedom, Sixo had been captured. He was able to use his laughter as a way of expressing to the schoolteacher that he was still satisfied with his life and they hadn't been able to destroy him completely, although that had been their ultimate goal when they were burning him. From the schoolteacher and his pupils' perspective, Sixo was suffering while being burned alive but he

knew himself that his Thirty-Mile Woman and their child was able to escape safely as exemplified in the line “because his Thirty-Mile Woman got away with his blossoming seed.” Knowing that his child was free forever from being captured and abused was enough for him to die without regret. Another reason as to why Sixo was laughing while he was being killed was his way of continuing to fool the schoolteacher and his pupils and to keep them confused and believe that he was literally crazy in the head so that his Thirty-Mile Woman and the baby could run away safely. For example, schoolteacher and the pupils had waited to kill Sixo because “All the whitemen have to do is wait. For his song, perhaps, to end?” and this shows that the song had indeed distracted the men from taking any action at the particular moment, proving Sixo’s intention successful. While Sixo was being burned alive, he was shouting “Seven-O! Seven-O!” because his Thirty-Mile Woman had gotten away with his baby inside of her. Sixo’s laughter while he is dying is significant because it was the first and final time that Paul D had ever heard of his laughter.

## Chapter 25 Study Questions:

The tone between Stamp Paid and the man who asks about Judy is very distinct and varying throughout the conversation. At first, when the man approaches Stamp, he is shown in a “superior” stance as he is atop of a steed, while Stamp Paid is sitting on the dirty ground. This personifies the stature difference of the white man and Stamp Paid, and automatically puts a tone of pride in the white man’s diction towards both Stamp Paid and Paul D. Furthermore, Stamp Paid, in order to show a sense of ignorance, also tells the white man that he does not know where Judy is although he truly does know who and where Judy is as shown in the line “I’m looking for a gal name of Judy. Works over by the slaughterhouse. Don’t believe I know her. No, sir.”

Another example of the white man shown his superiority over both Paul D and Stamp Paid is exemplified through the line “Look here, he said to Paul D. There’s a cross up there, so I guess this here’s a church or used to be. Seems to me like you ought to show it some respect, you follow me?” This line explains that because the white man feels superior to the two black men he can tell them exactly what he feels should be proper etiquette. The white man at first did not get the satisfaction of showing his power over blacks the first time when he asked Stamp Paid if he knows Judy and for that very reason, he decides to change “his mind and come back” to try to portray his power over another being, in this case, Paul D. In a way the tone of the conversation is shown as one of a master talking to his slave, trying to exert his true power over the actions and words of his slaves, who, in this case, would be Paul D and Stamp Paid. This experience with this white man correlates to how Stamp felt about his wife Vashti. In order to avoid an experience such as that felt with Vashti and his previous master, a feeling of being powerless, Stamp shows his “ignorance” to the white man avoiding having to “cooperate” and succumb to the power of the white man. Stamp feels as if Vashti had experienced enough misery for the both of them and that is why he had changed his name from “Joshua” to “Stamp Paid”. His name, “Stamp Paid” symbolized that not only had Vashti gone through enough suffering for her own life, but she had furthermore suffered enough for the both of them meaning Joshua had ultimately had his “stamp paid” for by Vashti. For that very reason, Stamp had wanted to kill Vashti, not because he was upset with her for sleeping with his “young master”, but because he wanted to put her out of her misery, however, he was unable to allow himself to do so. He decided to change his name, to personify not only a rebirth for himself, but to also show that his dues to his owner had been paid by his own wife.

As Stamp Paid and Paul D talk about Sethe's past sin, Paul D confesses that Sethe's murder of her child gives him the chills. But although this is a big factor in why Paul D left, Paul D's fear of Beloved also contributed to his departure from house 124. This is shown when Paul D admits that the "girl in the house scares [him] the most". Confused about the new stranger in Sethe's house, Stamp Paid questions where Beloved actually came from. This is where the conversation suddenly switches about Beloved and her sudden appearance after the August carnival. Paul D admits to Stamp Paid that he has no information about Beloved's past life or origin. He tells Stamp Paid that Beloved had told him that she did not know where her parents were. But we can see a little doubt in Paul D's words when he says that "she don't know, or says she don't". He recalls that the only thing he has ever heard her say was "about stealing her clothes and living on a bridge." Claiming that he knows all the bridges around the area also stating that no one lives on these bridges, Stamp Paid is very suspicious of Beloved's sudden appearance. He seems to see Beloved as a fraud that just lives off of Sethe. His suspicion of Beloved is heightened when he finds out that she came on the Day of the Carnival. He says "That's a bad sign". He says this because he recalls a story where "a girl locked up in the house with a whiteman over by Deer Creek." After the winter, they found him dead and the girl gone. She had killed the man and escaped. Story goes that she was kept in captivity since she was a little girl. Stamp Paid tries to imply that this girl who had killed that white man back in Deer Creek could be Beloved running from the law. Although he does not have hard evidence of this, Stamp Paid seems to be convinced that Beloved is the young murderer. And because he assumes this, we can infer that he believes that she is an evil spirit upon them that gives a bad sign. Rather than thinking that Beloved is a reincarnation of Sethe's murdered child, Stamp Paid believes that Beloved is an actual living person, motivated by her own self interest. After discussing their



assumptions of where Beloved came from, Stamp Paid asks if Beloved was the reason why Paul D left house 124. Seeing that he was unable to answer, we are able to interpret his loss for words as fear of Beloved and see it as a big reason why he left.

Toni Morrison used repetition to describe the profound notion of emotional pain that Paul D is suffering. "Tell me this one thing. How much is a nigger supposed to take?" Paul D asks. "All he can, all he can..." Stamp answers. This dialogue represents the full responsibility of men and their understanding of core humanity in their nature. As the fiction progresses, the characters like Paul D and Stamp Paid develop the notion that they cannot alter or terminate certain issues, such as their race and individual's duties. By writing "why why...", we can able to perceive that Paul D has many complaints in regards to his duties and sufferings. However, there are several insights that Toni Morrison intended to present by writing such repetition, "Why why why why why."

Stamp Paid's experience of his accomplished responsibilities and duties of himself and his family leads Paul D to question why his life has to be so miserable and has to experience such harsh sufferings. However, Stamp Paid tells Paul D, "I decided to break it. You know, like a twig- just snap it. I been low but that was as low as I ever got." Stamp Paid meant to say that although all the pain he went through, with the white man taking advantage of his wife, he did not let go of himself, yet found an alternative to deal with his problem. The reference to his own experience foretells why he merely responds "all he can." In order to suppress himself from murdering the white man who took his wife from him, Stamp Paid dealt with the issue by renaming himself. By doing this, he only displays how slavery had affected him, yet he surpasses the obstacle in respects to his wife by retaining himself from attacking. Stamp Paid continues to overcome that experience when telling Paul D to endure "all he can."

Sixo's execution serves as another example of undergoing suffering. Sixo's execution being burnt at the stake allowed his wife and unborn child a ticket to freedom. While intaking the pain, rather than trying to escape, Sixo represents a symbolic figure of strength as he continues to burn in the fire. "Smoky, stubborn fire. They shoot him to shut him up. Have to." The whitmen's action shows that Sixo's continuous efforts to yell out his final words displays his perseverance in order to express what his whole journey was about, the freedom of his family. Sixo was obligated to suffer pain in place of his family which explains Stamp Paid's response.

One of the reason why Paul said "Why why why why why" was the new experience that Paul D faced, which was the new family relationship with a strange appearance of Beloved. The tremendous responsibilities put upon Paul D made him feel very repressed with his duties and made him complain about his life which leads to self-isolation. The appearance of Beloved was very unusual, but at the time there was stronger relationship that was building between Beloved and Sethe. Paul D took this as a negative influence in his life because he felt neglected. This is significant in the novel because it illustrates the frustration of Paul D with his life and his surroundings. It shows how much the environment can influence someone. Paul D said "why why..." to present his complaints as to why all these events happened that made him feel so confused. Therefore, Stamp Paid's experience and Sixo's sacrifice for his family are there to assist Paul D to understand those responsibilities and support him in order for him to wake up and continue with his life.

The repetition that Toni Morrison used was to point out Paul D's understanding of the responsibilities and sufferings that he faced in his life so far. It is evident that Paul D complains about his life and new occurrences that confront him because he claims, "why is there so much?"

to Stamp Paid. “Why why why why why” signifies the importance of one’s duties and it also portrays how can our surroundings influence us either in negative way or positive way. The notion that Paul D uses to complain about his life represents the current understanding of Paul D about his duties and his responsibilities but yet to be change soon.

## Chapter 26 Study Questions:

Since Beloved appeared in Sethe’s life, Sethe has shifted all her care to Beloved. Feeling guilty for killing Beloved, she tries to earn Beloved’s forgiveness through paying close attention on Beloved and trying to satisfy her as Sethe claims that “the best thing she was, was her children” but specifically it was Beloved. When Sethe spends thirty-eight dollars on expensive food and colorful ribbons, Denver begins to worry that her mother might have gone insane even though she, at the same, was enjoying. “The three of them look like carnival women”. The author describes them as carnival women to illustrate that the house has began to become out of control. Because Sethe spends too much on expensive food and ribbons, Denver becomes aware that there is no more money to buy food and to assist the family. However, there are more factors that why Denver gets worried. One of the factors is the confusion of who is becoming the “Queen” of the household. Beloved’s stomach strangely gets bigger as time elapses. Denver questions how Beloved’s stomach gets bigger each even though there is not enough food to feed her. There are two explanations that can answer Denver’s question. One of the reason is that Beloved is “pregnant”. Therefore, her stomach is eventually gets bigger. But there is a more in-depth metaphoric explanation that can lead to answer the question. Because Sethe only pays close attention and gives Beloved the “love”, Beloved is assuming the love and the attention of Sethe,

which is also similar to her power as the author writes, “Anything she wanted she got, and when Sethe ran out of things to give her, Beloved invented desire.”

When Beloved first came into the house, she appeared to be very childlike and innocent as Toni Morrison describes “When she was finished a little water was on her chin, but she did not wipe it away.” As the story progresses, Beloved became a more mature girl as she can able to talk clearly with some proper English like “Why did you leave me who am you?” However, at the same time, Sethe has changed also. Sethe used to be very caring with her own interest and job but as soon as Beloved appeared in her life her focus of her life geared towards nurturing Beloved as her priority amongst all the other significant individuals and events. As it is shown in the book, “The thirty-eight dollars of life savings went to feed themselves with fancy food...” All these alterations have occurred due to appearance of Beloved. But the case becomes worse when they begin to swap their jobs and title unnoticeably. Beloved tends to take over Sethe’s job and Sethe is more coming in a position of Beloved being taken care of; for example, “The job she started out with, protecting Beloved from Sethe, changed to protecting her mother from Beloved”. It is evident that they switched their job. However, Beloved starts to feed her “sick” mom and Sethe sitting in the bed taken care by Beloved. This also represents us that Beloved is grabbing more power as Sethe gets weaken. The scene almost looks like Beloved is literally eating her alive. Therefore, the jobs between Sethe and Beloved have changed in a way that their roles have flipped around, “Mother to Daughter, Daughter to Mother.”

As Beloved and Sethe’s relationship grows stronger, Denver becomes isolated and feels more responsibility for taking care of their “family.” With Beloved’s growing stomach and Sethe’s depleting health, Denver’s only choice is to ask for help and look for a job. She visits Lady Jones, a woman of “gray eyes and yellow woolly hair,” and who taught Denver at the

schoolhouse when she was younger. With news of Beloved's existence in 124 Bluestone Road, Lady Jones alerts the community of the events that have been occurring within their house. Soon, Denver "[noticed] something lying on the tree stump at the edge of the yard..[finding] a sack of white beans. Another time a plate of cold rabbit meat." The help of the community persuades Denver to pursue a job in order to support her mother and Beloved. Denver's visit to the Bodwins' leads her to meet with Janey Wagon, a woman who has known Baby Suggs since they worked together. With Denver seeking work, it shows the future, being able to make money for her mother and Beloved, as well as the trigger for her becoming mature and more responsible of her own actions. Led by Ella, a woman who knew Sethe and worked the Underground Railroad with her husband, the women of the community "[approached], accumulating slowly in groups of twos and threes from the left...[bringing ] what they could and what they believed would work...[as] others brought Christian faith," in order to pray for and rid 124 of the "devil-child."

Sethe is getting smaller both metaphorically and physically primarily because of Beloved. Metaphorically, the change in size between the two also signifies the shift in power from one to the other. For example, in the start of the story, Beloved is personified as a person who is very needy and dependent as shown in the line "She's not strong. She can hardly walk without holding on to something." However, as Sethe continues to succumb to this dependency there is a shift in power from Sethe to Beloved. As shown in the line "They mended the plates, swept the salt, and little by little it dawned on Denver that if Sethe didn't wake up one morning and pick up a knife, Beloved might" Denver expresses that Sethe had fulfilled every whim and wish of Beloved. In the line "When once or twice Sethe tried to assert herself—be the unquestioned mother whose word was law and who knew what was best..." we see that Sethe's motherly powers grow "smaller" while Denver's powers get "bigger" as exemplified through the line,

“Was it past bedtime, the light no good for sewing? Beloved didn’t move; said, “Do it,” and Sethe complied”. This attitude may also result from Sethe’s desire to return all the love that she “feels” should’ve been received from Beloved, had she lived. Physically, Beloved seems to also be getting bigger as she begins to eat all the food around the house shown through the line “If the hen had only two eggs, [Beloved] got both”. Along with this, Beloved is also pregnant with the child of Paul D resulting in the size of her stomach, specifically, increasing. As Beloved grows in size, we see Sethe getting smaller and smaller because of her lack of food and ability to fend for herself giving so much attention to Beloved as shown in the line “Denver watched her mother go without-pick-eating around the edges of the table and stove: the hominy that stuck on the bottom; the crusts and rinds and peelings of things”

Within the story, Beloved is meant to represent the past, while Denver is meant to represent the future. As shown in the line, “Whatever was happening, it only worked with three-not two-and since neither Beloved nor Sethe seemed to care what the next day might bring, Denver knew it was on her”, Denver feels as if the caretaking of her mother and her family as a whole has been left to her because of Beloved’s influence over Sethe’s actions and health overall. Beloved’s representation of the past is furthermore shown when Janey says “I guess there’s a God after all” signifying that the past had returned to the present, but was not meant to be part of the future. When Janey asks Denver “Tell me, this here woman in your house. The cousin. She got any lines in her hands?” she means to show that this woman was a part of the past not the future because no lines on her palms represents no future for Beloved as a true being. The specific reason that Janey states “I guess there’s a God after all” can be diverted into two different perspectives. The first being that God had tried to provide justice to Sethe for the killing

of Beloved earlier in the story as exemplified later in the chapter through the line “Guess she had it coming... You can’t just up and kill your children”. This line shows that, literally, God’s fairness to provide justice was the force that was present in 124. Another interpretation of the reason why Janey says “I guess there’s a God after all” is to show that she understands how much strength and power it took for Denver to come out into a society that shunned her family, and her mother, for her deeds. For one, Beloved had returned to the mother that had cared for her so depicting a true miracle only performable by “God” and furthermore, this return would allow for Sethe and the family to once more be accepted into the society because the return of Beloved personified forgiveness of Sethe’s once committed sin of killing Beloved, distancing the townspeople from her.

Because Denver is the only person helping out the family, she goes around town asking for job opportunities. Knowing that the Bodwins had played a significant role in helping Sethe and Baby Suggs Free, Denver came to them to ask for work. Janey, a slave maid for the Bodwins, was there to interview Denver for a job. Feeling sorry for the family problems and the odd predicament that she is, Janey told Denver that she needed some time to convince the Bodwins to give her a night shift job. And as they were talking about the job description of what she has to do, Denver mentions that the Bodwins “used to be good white folks.” This statement is rather true in how the Bodwins say that they are abolitionists but at the same time still racist. This is evident when right before leaving, Denver notices a disturbing statue of a black boy that she hadn’t noticed before. This statue had a “mouth full of money” with a head “thrown back farther than a head could go.” It had moons for eyes and nail heads for hair. The most disturbing things to see for Denver, however, was how his mouth “held the coins needed to pay for a deliver or some other small service,” and was the words “At Yo Service” Painted across the pedestal.

This black boy eating coins serves as a symbol of the racism still in the hearts of the Bodwins. They still keep this offending statue because they still feel superior to blacks, even though that they are good abolitionists that want to abolish slavery. The Bodwins believe that “human life is holy” but still discriminate against blacks, which is represented by the statue. The black boy is an irony of the white’s impact on the slavery and equality because it shows that racism will still remain in the hearts of white people even if slavery is abolished.

A black women’s meeting was called after hearing about beloved’s abuse of Sethe. They tell stories of how Beloved “sleeps, eats, and raises hell.” Most of the women at the meeting believe that Sethe had this coming for killing her baby many years ago. Some said that “she had it coming.” Ella, however, disagrees with all the women and quickly replies that “nobody got that coming.” Ella, the leader of the women’s group, still however disagrees and is angered by the murder of Sethe’s own child, but is sympathetic to her. This is seen when she calls Sethe prideful and misdirected, but still tells the others that she does not deserve this punishment. Ella changes her mind about Sethe because of Ella’s belief that past sins should remain in the past. Ella holds the idea that Sethe shouldn’t have to pay for her sins that were committed many years ago and also that it isn’t “right” for her to be punished this much. This is evident when it says that “Ella didn’t like the idea of past errors taking possession of the present”. Another reason that Ella changed her mind was because she was empathetic to Sethe’s situation, although she didn’t agree with her action. Ella was empathetic because she herself was “shared by a father and son” and refused to take care of the child. So, she understands Sethe and feels bad for her situation and thus she changes her mind and asks the women to rescue her from Beloved. And because of this decision, they were able to save Sethe from the curse of Beloved.



The meaning of the biblical reference, “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” signifies that each day already contains enough problems and “evils”. For that very reason, Ella feels that no outside forces should be introduced into Sethe’s everyday life. Ella feels that each individual, whether “slave life; freed life” experiences their share of hardships on a day to day basis. Furthermore, when Ella realizes that Beloved has changed from a ghost form into a physical form, combining the two different dimensions of spirits and flesh, she feels the need to intervene as shown in the line “As long as the ghost showed out from its ghostly place-shaking stuff, crying, smashing and such-Ella respected it. But if it took flesh and came in her world, well, the shoe was on the other foot.” Ella is shown as a woman of no true emotion, and because of this, she functions solely off of logical reasoning. Feeling as if this specific condition was an “exorcism”, Ella convinces all of the other women to take collective action against the “invasion” made by the flesh form of Beloved. We can see her logical reasoning taking over her emotional reasoning when one of the women in the group says “Shall we pray”, and Ella responds in a very hesitant, blunt response “Uh huh...First. Then we got to get down to business”.

In Greek mythology, Medusa is portrayed as a personification of all things feminine which was a very ordinary in the Greek civilization. Medusa can be defined differently in many ways. It can be described as *feminine* or ruler or queen, possibly a guardian. However, Medusa originated from Greek mythology. She was a wild woman from the Libyan Desert. However, when Poseidon sees her praying in Athena’s temple, he is infatuated with love for her and he ravishes her there. Athena finds out this shocking news and she punishes Medusa. She claims that it was Medusa’s fault for attracting the lusty god of the sea. Therefore, her hair becomes snakes with reptilian skin. However, this symbolizes the natural cycle of birth, death and rebirth

as snakes shed their skin and rebirth a new skin. Also she obtains this ability to turn men into stone. This is the symbolic power over all life and also it is an important facet for her feminine power. However, the characteristics and physical features represent some of the Beloved's feature. For example, "Vines of hair twisted all over her head. Jesus. Her smile was dazzling" as Toni Morrison describes Beloved. Like Medusa, Beloved's hair is very thick and it is "constantly moving" as Medusa's snake hair. Also it describes that her smile was dazzling; this describes that she was attractive like Medusa was so attractive that she got a god of sea's attention. Not only her physical features portray the likeness of Medusa but also their personalities illustrate the sameness between these two "fictional" characters. Medusa is usually known as a symbolic of life, taking life away and bringing it back. However, Beloved was dead at first and then she came back again in a human form which represents that she is also able to control the life cycle in a way. Also as Medusa has seduced Poseidon, Beloved seduced Paul D and was supposedly pregnant with his baby as Medusa is pregnant with Poseidon's baby. They share a common ground in their life and their ability. Death of Medusa was similar with Beloved's death because they both got sliced by a knife or sword. Also they then vanished (Plush.org). Even though Beloved may seem like an ordinary woman with some malfunctions, she is definitely portrays as Medusa and her qualities are very similar as those of Medusa. Therefore, the way the author is describing Beloved on this chapter is referring to Medusa, the ancient Greek fictional character

"Was it past bedtime, the light no good for sewing? Beloved didn't move; said 'Do it,' and Sethe complied. She took the best of everything-first." While Sethe's primary focus was taking care of Beloved and providing her with the upmost necessities, Sethe and Beloved begin to switch roles as Sethe starts demonstrating child-like manners. With Beloved's new

identity for herself, taking command over Sethe, Sethe begins to become sick, unable to take charge of herself.

“Sethe pleaded for forgiveness, counting, listing again and again her reasons: that Beloved was more important, meant more to her than her own life. That she would trade places any day. Give up her life, every minute and hour of it, to take back just one of Beloved’s tears.” Sethe was no longer able to live for herself as food, money, and clothes all went towards Beloved to make her happy. In order to make up for the horrible ordeal that happened on Sweet Home, Sethe believes that now that Beloved has returned, she must do everything in her power to compensate what has happened and make Beloved forgive her, to make Beloved know that what she did was not the right choice.

As Mr. Bodwin approaches 124, Sethe is vigorously working on breaking a block of ice with her ice pick. Her mind is absent as she continuously breaks apart the ice while Beloved is resting on a bed. Sethe, her mind not fully intact, sees a white man ride down the street and believes that Mr. Bodwin is indeed, the schoolteacher. She is convinced, with the horse carriage and white man stance that schoolteacher is back for Beloved. “He is coming into her yard and he is coming for her best thing.” With that, Sethe is so engulfed with the past that she feels as though she must protect her children as she should have done before, rather instead, protect them by attacking the enemy, not by killing them. Sethe loves Beloved so much that she doesn’t want her to be stripped away from Sethe again. She loses track of the past and reality from caretaking Beloved which is displayed during the exorcism and Mr. Bodwin’s arrival.

Just as Sethe is trying to make up for her past violent actions, the townswomen are also making amends with their past actions by preventing Sethe from making a mistake of

killing Mr. Bodwin. This serves as a make-up for them not warning about schoolteacher's arrival in the past.

Denver, concerned about her mother's welfare, turns to the Bodwins for help because she is alarmed about Beloved's presence. The women of the community realized that with Denver's description of Beloved's manners and actions, they think that Beloved is a ghost and conclude that they must perform an exorcism to extract the evil out of her. "The singing women recognized Sethe at once and surprised themselves by their absence of fear when they saw what stood next to her."

Ella, one of the townswomen, disturbed by her own past of slavery, recognizes the need to expel 124 of Beloved in order to rid of slavery in the area. As she leads the exorcism, she not only tries to rid the presence of Beloved and her evil aura, but also to rid of slavery and the sins created. She also shares Sethe's load of having to take care of Beloved because of her past actions since Ella once neglected her child in the past. However, Ella believed that Beloved's appearance to the family is not a proper "punishment" since whatever had happened in the past should stay in the past, therefore, giving Ella the motive to rid of Beloved's spirit.

"You can't just up and kill your children." "No, and the children can't just up and kill the mama."

Shown through this quote, Ella is the primary factor that convinces the rest of the townswomen "that rescue was in order."

When Sethe runs out of the house noticing the company of women, Beloved, at first, is pleased by Sethe's actions, trying to protect her from the outside world. However, her views shift as "her hand is empty. Sethe is running away from her, running, and she feels the

emptiness in the hand Sethe has been holding.. and leaving Beloved behind. Alone. Again.” Beloved feels as though Sethe has left her and joined society again. What Beloved does not realize is that Sethe has the intention to protect Beloved from everyone so that they don’t take her away again. The misinterpreted act leaves Beloved questioning her relationship with Sethe.

Sethe’s intention of attacking Mr. Bodwin and the townswomen intentions both coincide with one another as they both confront their pasts and make amends.

Beloved’s personality changes from childish and carefree to tyrannical and vindictive. As Sethe begins to sacrifice her life more and more each coming day for Beloved by spoiling her with food and her love, she takes advantage of it to the fullest. In the quote, “The thirty-eight dollars of life savings went to feed themselves with fancy food and decorate themselves with ribbon and dress goods...” displays how Sethe’s personality goes out of the ordinary just to satisfy Beloved. Sethe even starts to pay less attention to Denver and her job, which eventually leads to the loss of her job. With all the love and attention Beloved is finally receiving from her mother that she should’ve gotten years ago, she gradually expects more from Sethe and her aggressive behaviors began to show. “A complaint from Beloved, an apology from Sethe” became a routine of every argument. As Sethe gave Beloved “the best chair, the biggest piece, the prettiest plate, the brightest ribbon for her hair,” Beloved adapted quickly to Sethe spoiling her so when she didn’t get her way; she provides a guilty conscious for Sethe by “accusing her of leaving her behind.” Metaphorically, as Beloved becomes bigger and Sethe becomes smaller, it shows how Beloved consumes more power in the household now than anyone else.

As Beloved and Sethe’s relationship grows stronger, Denver becomes isolated and feels more responsibility for taking care of their “family.” With Beloved’s growing stomach and

Sethe's depleting health, Denver's only choice is to ask for help and look for a job. She visits Lady Jones, a woman of "gray eyes and yellow woolly hair," and who taught Denver at the schoolhouse when she was younger. With news of Beloved's existence in 124 Bluestone Road, Lady Jones alerts the community of the events that have been occurring within their house. Soon, Denver "[noticed] something lying on the tree stump at the edge of the yard...[finding] a sack of white beans. Another time a plate of cold rabbit meat." The help of the community persuades Denver to pursue a job in order to support her mother and Beloved. Denver's visit to the Bodwins' leads her to meet with Janey Wagon, a woman who has known Baby Suggs since they worked together. With Denver seeking work, it shows the future, being able to make money for her mother and Beloved, as well as the trigger for her becoming mature and more responsible of her own actions. Led by Ella, a woman who knew Sethe and worked the Underground Railroad with her husband, the women of the community "[approached], accumulating slowly in groups of twos and threes from the left...[bringing ] what they could and what they believed would work...[as] others brought Christian faith," in order to pray for and rid 124 of the "devil-child."

Beloved becomes more dependent on Sethe and their relationship strengthens, leaving Denver to be the odd one out. Sethe treats Beloved as if she is most important, "it was Beloved who made demands." With Sethe's care and love, Beloved starts to grow a large belly, both from Sethe's attention as well as from being pregnant with Paul D's child. Beloved wants to get revenge on Sethe so she starts demanding and needing everything; food, clothes, and attention. This makes Sethe want to give her everything she can, in order to gain back Beloved's love. Beloved acted like the mother, always controlling Sethe's actions and duties; and Sethe like the child, growing weaker from lack of nutrition as well as still trying to make Beloved forgive her. Beloved became high-maintenance and power-driven as Sethe became frail and weak. Beloved's

attitudes form from her feelings of having been betrayed by her own mother and being killed as just a young child. By needing to get revenge on Sethe, Beloved became monstrous and uncontrollable.

Beloved affects both Sethe and Denver, and as her time in 124 continues, Denver and Sethe show signs of distress and worry. With Paul D. gone, the girls get to spend more time together "... [ice-skating] under a star-loaded sky and [drinking] sweet milk by the stove...". As the three continue to spend more time together, Sethe realizes that Beloved is her dead daughter's ghost in human form. Sethe starts to spend all of her time devoted to keeping Beloved happy and well, trying to prove to Beloved that she is indeed a loving mother who wants the best for her children. With all of the activities going on around the house, conditions start to worsen for both Sethe and Denver. With Beloved getting all of the food and love, Denver and Sethe's well-being was diminishing slowly; Sethe became thinner and weaker while Denver became solitary and independent. Sethe's role changed from being caretaker to needing to be taken care of. Denver realized that she wanted to be able to support her mom and Beloved, and started her search for a job. She makes a visit to Lady Jones, a woman who used to be the schoolteacher for all of the children. There, she educates Lady Jones about what goes on in 124 and asks for help with their family needs. Lady Jones then informs the women of the community of the needy family living in 124. A woman named Ella then rallied up the women in order to rid the house of the ghost, Beloved. They felt that with Beloved, a remembrance of the past was burdening the community, and so it should be rid of. Beloved was a symbol of the slavery and the pain that they all endured, and it was a memory which did not need to be remembered.

## Chapter 27 Study Questions:

Beloved, to the townswomen, Paul D, Denver, and Sethe, represents a different interpretation.

To the townswomen, Beloved represents children in the past who have been neglected by slave mothers who were unable to maintain a stable life, giving up or neglecting their own child. These children were tossed away from slave ships. Beloved displays child-like manners which embodies pain and suffering of children in the past. The townswomen do not believe that Beloved is real, but instead, an evil presence, in form of a human haunting Sethe because of what she had done.

To Paul D, Beloved is someone in which he is able to love since he has not been able to be fully in love before because of the hardships Sweet Home threw at him. Beloved, his “lover,” opened his “tin box,” which contained memories and past events that he locked up to forget. By opening his box, Paul D succumbed to Beloved’s intention of corruption, freeing the horrific images he did not want to remember.

Denver sees Beloved as a lost friendship in which she regained when Beloved came back in human form. Saddened by an absence of a companion, Denver holds onto Beloved in order to break away from a life of emptiness. Denver is disturbed when she discovers that Sethe is no longer the strong woman she used to be, but instead overthrown by Beloved’s demands and Beloved’s love for Denver dies as her main focus is on Sethe.

To Sethe, Beloved’s return gives her the chance to make up for what she had done wrong. Beloved’s presence gives Sethe a second chance to make things right and believes that



she has been given the opportunity to do things over. However, Sethe is so drawn upon the idea of Beloved's existence that she does not realize that Beloved is taking over life.

When Sethe bursts out of the house to attack who she thinks is schoolteacher, she is stopped by Ella, from making the wrong choice. After the commotion settled, Beloved

disappears. This is probably a result of Sethe's action. With Sethe's intention of preventing "schoolteacher" from taking away her daughter once again, Sethe is "righting her wrong" that she performed in the past. After Sethe committed a sin by killing Beloved, Beloved's spirit has returned in spite of what Sethe has done to haunt her of her mistake. By Sethe's actions of trying to kill "schoolteacher" rather than killing Beloved, she proves to Beloved that Sethe truly does love her.

Beloved might have believed that Sethe did not love her, therefore killed her in the end and decided to haunt Sethe. While Sethe's actions proved to Beloved that she loved her, there are many instances throughout Beloved's arrival where Sethe displayed love, but why did Beloved disappear during that specific incident with the townswomen and Mr. Bodwin present for Sethe to show her love? The reenactment of the specific event might have triggered Beloved's memory and Sethe's action in attacking "schoolteacher" erased the sin of Sethe's action of killing Beloved in the first place. While both explanations of "righting the wrong" and displaying Sethe's love for Beloved can be interpreted in several ways, Beloved's disappearance, indeed, was a combination of the disappearance of slavery (townswomen representation), getting rid of sins, and the quest to find love.

Beloved's Departure in this chapter and her death at the beginning both affects the family members. Beloved's death leaves a ghostly spirit locked in Sethe's household that haunts the

house. This figure disturbs Sethe's sons and Beloved's brothers, Howard and Buglar, and cause them to get "chased off by the dead one". The ghost also haunts Paul D when he arrives at the door, "into a pool of red and undulating light that locked him where he stood". Beloved's Departure, however, affects the whole town, Sethe in particular. After Beloved "disappears, some say, exploded", Sethe becomes emotional. Sethe believes that "my best thing left [her]. Paul D ultimately decides to comfort her by "[touching] her face and holding [her] fingers". The difference between Beloved's departure and Beloved's death is the level of publicity. Beloved's departure is noticed by the whole town while Beloved's death is seen only by a few.

Some people say that Beloved exploded because she was nowhere in sight. Paul D knew that "Beloved is truly gone" and some say, "exploded right before their eyes". Ella is not so sure but she believes that she "could be hiding in the trees waiting for another chance". One thing for certain is that Beloved disappeared from the town and is "truly gone". Due to her sudden disappearance, some people can come to realization that she may have "exploded". Although not meant to be taken literally, Beloved exploded can be seen a sign that she is no longer in town.

Stamp Paid and Paul D are finally able to laugh because they "no longer hear the voices around the house". Unlike the past, when Paul D looks toward the house, "surprisingly, it does not look back at him." They are finally free from the spirits and voices of Beloved. Stamp Paid even admits that there "used to be voices all around that place. Quiet now." "I been past it a few times and I can't hear a thing."

With the spirits of Beloved long and gone, Paul D and Stamp Paid are no longer experiencing the uneasiness around the neighborhood. "A rusty chuckle at first and then more, louder and louder" is used to demonstrate Paul D and Stamp Paid's happiness. They are free to

do whatever they wish without being constantly followed by Beloved's spirits. To amplify their joy, they realize that they are making a positive impact on Sethe's family. They, especially Paul D, comfort Sethe, who is feeling depressed that her "best thing" has left her. Paul D asserts that Beloved is not her "best thing"; rather, Sethe, herself is

Denver changes her attitude towards Paul D because she becomes more mature. After the departure of Beloved and long talk with Miss Bodwin, Denver comes to realize that she needs to behave more maturely. Denver is the most dynamic character of Beloved. While at first she seems angry and depressed all the time, she eventually learns to cope with the surroundings. "Lay off Denver, Paul D. That's my heart. I'm proud of that girl.

Denver also learns the necessity to change after witnessing Paul D's motivation to help run her family. Paul D's arrival to 124 motivated Denver to continue her strong willpower and strive to run the family with Beloved and Baby Suggs. Having always seen Paul D as ill-willed and malicious, Denver's sense of maturity affects not only Sethe but also Paul D.

Paul D goes to 124 in order to help Sethe deal with her depression. Paul D assures Sethe that as long as he is at 124, Sethe will be safe. However, when he witnesses Sethe lying in Baby Sugg's bed, just as Baby Suggs did moments before she passed away, he fears that Sethe is counting hours before her time is over. Paul D reaches his boiling point and screams out "Don't you die on me! This is Baby Sugg's bed! Is that what you planning?"

Paul D eventually reassures Sethe that "Denver [will] be here in the day. I be here in the night." He is motivated to "take care of" Sethe. He wants to keep Sethe in her best shape and constantly persuades her that her "time" is not over. Paul D also constantly reminds Sethe

that she herself, rather than the children is her own “best thing.” Paul D inspires Sethe that by dealing with the past, they secure the possibility of enjoying a future together.

## Chapter 28 Study Questions:

The memory of Beloved disappears because "no one is looking for her". "It was not a story to pass on". It affected Sethe's family to look back at Beloved's life because she lived through hard times and struggles. "It took longer for those who had spoken to her, lived with her, fallen in love with her, to forget, until they realized they couldn't remember or repeat a single thing she said, and began to believe that, other than what they themselves were thinking, she hadn't said anything at all".

Toni Morisson repeatedly wrote "This is not a story to pass on" yet "passes it on" because she wants the audience to remember the hardships that enslaved families had to endure. The reason why she wrote this book is because she wants the story to pass down generations.

## Character Analysis:

Baby Suggs:

Baby Suggs was seen as a type of center for the story “Beloved”. She signified the presence of peace and love in the environment, and through her passing, the ghost of Beloved was born to haunt the family. Through the author’s usage of diction, we can see that the tone WHILE Baby Suggs is alive is one of peace and serenity. Her lines in the story show influence because of her ability to take control of others and understand their problems putting their lives before hers. For this very reason, Baby Suggs is seen as the factor of the family holding everything together and in place, and she also keeps “Beloved” away from the house. In one scene, there’s also a part in which Baby Suggs comes back to give Denver advice of taking care of her family. Denver is conflicted with herself in deciding what to do with Beloved after Denver has been found to be the returning ghost of Sethe’s daughter. Furthermore, both Denver and Sethe see Baby Suggs as their protection even after her death because she, in a way, keeps the ghost of Beloved under control as shown in the line “Grandma Baby must be stopping it, said Denver. She was ten and still mad at baby Suggs for dying”. Through this line, we can see that both Denver and Sethe feel ~~that~~ Baby Suggs death was both positive and negative aspect in their lives. Because Baby Suggs had been living such a hard life, her passing was seen more of a release from hardship for her as shown through the line “She shook her head. Soft as cream. Being alive was the hard part. Sorry you missed her though. Is that what you came by for?” Baby Suggs is also seen as a woman with strong perseverance for many reasons and for these reasons, she is perceived by others as a very influential woman. Baby Suggs is also an influential preacher in some ways, for example, speaking and teaching from her experiences. For instance, she differentiates the importance of having a man to the importance of having a son. In the line, “A man ain’t nothing but a man, said Baby Suggs. But a son? Well now, that’s somebody.” It is clear that Baby Suggs is able to place importance on each individual, and furthermore, Baby

Suggs places emphasis on her son, specifically Halle. Out of all her 8 children, Halle was the only one who provided freedom for her as shown in the line, "...gave her Halle who gave her freedom when it didn't mean a thing". For this very reason, Baby Suggs takes the initiative to give back to Halle by caring for his wife and children, Sethe, Denver, Beloved, Howard, and Buglar. Not only is Baby Suggs seen as a source of hope and inspiration to her immediate family, but the community as a whole has such respect for her that they continue to provide help to the family long after Baby Suggs death. For example, towards the end when there is a struggle between Beloved and Sethe regarding the power and control of the house, Denver decides to go out into the community and request help because Baby Suggs gives her hope as shown in the line "Then what do I do? Know it, and go on out the yard. Go on." Furthermore, because Beloved had questioned the past life of Sethe, Sethe begins to reminisce on the time when both she and Baby Suggs had agreed upon keeping discreet about Sethe's struggles in coming out of slavery. This portrays Baby Suggs effort to try and create a new life for her family; Sethe and Denver. She feels as if any reference to the past may somewhat evoke its tragedies on the family. This exemplification is shown in the line "It amazed Sethe because every mention of her past life hurt. Everything in it was painful or lost. She and Baby Suggs had agreed without saying so that it was unspeakable; to Denver's inquiries Sethe gave short replies or rambling incomplete reveries." Not only was Baby Suggs seen as the peace and hope of the family, but she was also portrayed as a force of calmness within the family. Her "instructive voice" allowed Sethe to feel, momentarily, stress-free, as shown in the line "[Sethe] wished for Baby Suggs' fingers molding her nape, reshaping it, saying, Lay em down, Sethe. Sword and Shield. Down. Down. Both em down. Down by the riverside. Sword and shield. Don't study war no more. Lay all that mess down. Sword and Shield."

Not only was Baby Suggs seen as a calming woman with her spirit, but also when she was alive. She signified the beating “heart” of the community as shown in the line “[Baby Suggs] decided that, because slave life had busted her legs, back, head, eyes, hands, kidneys, womb and tongue, she had nothing left to make a living with but her heart which she put to work at once.” This heart exemplifies Baby Suggs longing to express her freedom and hope to all those around her. Baby Suggs, escaping from slavery with the help of one whom she loved, felt that this love was powerful enough to spread happiness to those around her, and she felt the importance of family love was under stressed throughout the town. For this reason, 124 was seen as a “cheerful buzzing house where Baby Suggs, holy, loved, cautioned, fed, chastised and soothed” It was during the time of Baby Suggs life when, not only the family, but the town in whole was a peaceful and loving town. Baby Suggs shared this loving attitude with those around her as shown through the line “They knew she was ready when she put her stick down.” While in the “Clearing” Baby Suggs gathered all the townspeople, and in this instance she not only exemplified her sharing of love and peace among the people, but also the respect she retained and the amount of love the town offered her. She said to the children “Let your mothers hear you laugh” and all the children began laughing without even a single uttered word of denial. She then stated to the men “Let your wives and your children see you dance” and thus they began dancing, and lastly she said to the women “For the living and the dead. Just cry”. Giving this power to Baby Suggs made her feel not so much superior, but more of a savior to the people of the town because in the next line it states “Baby Suggs, holy, offered up to them her great big heart” signifying that this moment was somewhat a biblical allusion in which Baby Suggs was portrayed as Jesus, and the townspeople were all the common people.

Baby Suggs also signifies the pride in each and every black man and woman in the town. She states the importance of self-worth and explains its derivation from the heart as shown in the line “*You* got to love it. This is flesh I’m talking about here. Flesh that needs to be loved” Baby Sugg’s attitude shows her commitment to the Black community, and significance of not regretting their culture and heritage. During the time that the story takes place; many of the Blacks within the community were struggling to assimilate into the white community, however, Baby Suggs brought this newfound confidence to become a part of the black community, and make the most of what they have to work with as shown in the line “More than lungs you have yet to draw free air.” This free air symbolizes that the townspeople should ~~try to~~ make the most with what they have as in metaphorically “breathe all the free air possible.”

#### Stamp Paid:

Although Stamp Paid is portrayed as a minor character in the novel, he is discreetly among the people who helped the family escape from slavery. With help from others, such as the Bodwins, Stamp Paid’s character is formed by the outside factors that shape him. “... the Bodwins- the white brother and sister who gave Stamp Paid...goods and gear for runaways because they hated slavert worse than they hated slaves.” Through the Bodwins, Stamp Paid is given the sense that he has support from outside his normal vicinity which gives him the motivation to help others become free as well, such as helping Baby Suggs.

By helping out Baby Suggs escape, leading the way of the Underground Railroad, Stamp Paid is accepted into the family and plays an important role as a sort of care taker among the incoming family members of Baby Suggs. Stamp Paid’s fatherly care to Sethe’s child shows how the family trusts him with their personal life. The importance of family in this section is



portrayed by Stamp in that he tries to repay all the good that is given to him back to others. This allows Stamp to ensure that he has a sense of support around him while he gives support to others as well.

Stamp Paid's determination to convince Paul D that it was Sethe in the clipping shows that he is an honest man and does not want to sugarcoat any information that may seem vital to Paul D. "Instead he took a breath and leaned toward the mouth that was not hers and slowly read out the words Paul D couldn't." Stamp Paid establishes a relationship with Paul D as a brotherly figure with displays his affectionate side. However, at first, "he wasn't ready to confront the man whose life he had altered with his graveyard information." He didn't want to reveal to Paul D about Sethe but did anyways because he was concerned about his welfare and his state after seeing him drinking himself away at church. After seeing that, Stamp offers Paul D several options to stay at to sleep and his caring side is shown once again as he tries to take care of Paul D while also offering an apology "to ask [for his] pardon. Apologize." Stamp tries to be of good hospitality by asking Stamp Paid where he would like to sleep for the night in order for Paul D to be taken care of. "Why? Why he have to ask? Can't nobody offer? What's going on? Since when a blackman come to town have to sleep in a cellar like a dog?" Although Stamp shows that he is a caring person for others, he still contains a side of him that is bitter towards society when he makes a racial reference about how a "blackman comes to town [and has] to sleep in a cellar like a dog."

However, Stamp's caring attitude shifts when he arrives at 124 because the women inside the house seems to disregard the outside world. "Stamp Paid abandoned his efforts to see about Sethe, after the pain of knocking and not gaining entrance, and when he did, 124 was left to its own device." Stamp tries to make the effort to help Sethe out but when she does not

acknowledge his presence, his attitude changes and he does not feel the need to have to give his fullest effort for something that will not happen. This negatively affects Sethe because since she does not recognize that help is literally at her porch steps, her problems at home are gradually increasing although she does not know it herself. Because Stamp Paid's help is disregarded, the family deteriorates as Beloved takes over. This displays how the importance of family and community influences the actions of the family and how Stamp Paid's efforts could have made a difference if he was just welcomed in to help.

Another example of Stamp Paid's neglected help is when a man approaches both Paul D and Stamp Paid asking if they knew of a Judy. Quickly, Stamp Paid responds saying he does not know her and does not provide any help to the man besides telling him where "Plank Road" is.

The main focus on Stamp is his change in name. He describes to Paul D why he changes his name from "Joshua" to "Stamp Paid." "I never touched her at all that time. Not once. Almost a year." Stamp reveals to Paul D that he has a sense of respect towards women and that he valued the fact that he did not touch her although there were probably things that provoked him or that he wanted to do. Although Stamp wanted to kill the slave owner who took his wife away, he restrained himself, respecting his wife's demand that he does not. After a while of waiting for his wife to return, Stamp finally approaches Vashti asking for his wife in hopes that she will return to him. His constant hope for his wife's return displays his dedication towards his wife and that although he does not approve of what is going on, he knows that he must deal with it in order to get the results that he wants in the end. Even though most things do not bother Stamp because he has a high tolerance, he snaps when he can not tolerate Vashti's return. "I been low but that was as low as I ever got."

After the incident with Vashti, he is able to get away by “snapping her neck.” He decides to change his name because he feels as though his duties were paid after he gave his wife away. Another interpretation of his action to change his name is because he feels emotionally distraught about his actions during enslavement that he feels obligated to pay those debts that he owes. With that, he realizes that he needs to help out the community in order to satisfy these debts which make him a primary figure in the community. He is welcomed by everyone as rescuer and in the end of the book; he also realizes that he has neglected his duty to help Sethe and the family.

As much as the community relies on Stamp Paid to be their “salvation,” it is evident that Stamp Paid also needs the help of the community to make him the person he is trying to be for everyone else. In order to help pay off his own debts (which pertain to why he changed his names), the community helps support him by extending their support to him. In return, he works as an aide to the Underground Railroad which was the main escape for Sethe and later Denver. Incorporating the theme of the importance of family and community, both the community and Stamp Paid would not be able to function without the assistance of one another. “Once Stamp Paid brought you a coat, got the message to you, saved your life, or fixed the cistern he took the liberty of walking in your door as though it were his own.”

Sixo:

There are many minor characters that help us to comprehend the purposes of Toni Morrison’s fiction, “Beloved”. The author presents significant issues that our society once has endured through and we are currently facing everyday: unethical labor and discrimination. An anecdote of Sixo trying to pursue the ultimate freedom illustrates all these issues and narrows our

attention to the inevitable precedent of life. Thus, Sixo represents a significant symbol of sacrifice, risking his life to let others achieve their dream and freedom.

The main appearance of Sixo starts to engage the readers towards the end of the book. Sixo is determined to escape from Sweet Home and wants to achieve the freedom that he always dreams about. His plan to escape shows the reader about his personality that he keeps his promise and doesn't betray his friends. He describes the plan as possible and he finds an alternative way to his plan. While everyone who planned to escape have successfully escaped from Sweet Home, Sixo got caught while escaping. "Seven-O, Seven-O" Sixo yells out when he gets captured and as he is burned to death. His ethic tells the reader that Sixo considers each individual's values because he does not report other escapers. He is just happy that his wife and his baby got away as it is evident when Sixo says, "Seven-O, Seven-O. Thirty Mile Woman got away with [my] blossoming seed". His actions were wise enough that we were able to perceive the goodness of him. However, his motivation all came from Sweet Home and its new owner of the plantation. Sixo has been determined to escape Sweet Home since Schoolteacher took over Mr. Garner. His determination and motivation has never changed throughout the novel even when he is dying.

After Mr. Garner has passed, the schoolteacher took over and he was stricter than the previous owner by restricting their rights and leniencies. Being free was his motivation. The reason why he calls out "Seven-O, Seven-O" is because his son achieved the freedom that he once wished and hoped. Sixo is certainly depicted as the biblical figure, "Jesus Christ", in some ways. Jesus sacrificed himself to let God forgive the sins of all the people. Sixo sacrificed himself to let his friends and family attain the freedom.

Many times, Sixo is portrayed as a smart figure, perhaps a smart-aleck. “Sixo had a knowing tale about everything” represents that Sixo’s characteristic is know-it-all. For instance, Sixo concludes that, “[the stroke was actually] a shot in [Mr. Garner’s] ear put there by a jealous neighbor.” He likes to assume and gossip about things around him. Also he thinks that everyone thinks the same way he does. Sixo tells Halle that why doesn’t Halle understand what he is trying to tell Halle, “What you think, what you think?”

In the book, it says, “Sixo...is speaking English again.” We can conclude that Sixo is a bilingual who can speak his native language and English. Therefore, he is considered more educated than any other slaves. Also he has a logical and critical thinking. “Is it better to leave in the dark to get a better start, or go to daybreak to be able to see the way better?” Sixo suggests this to his fellows. Also he has complex planning, as it is evident when “Sixo keeps a nail in this mouth now, to help him undo the rope when he has to” and when “Sixo is about to crawl out to look for the knives he buried.” He does not just plan for the ultimate goal, which is to escape, but he plans step by step covering every single details and methods to either carry out the plan or adjust to new modification.

The basic conflict is when Sixo faces the capture, “[Paul D and Sixo] are surrounded and tied [by schoolteacher and his pupils].” Sixo and Paul D were captured and tortured by the schoolteacher. Their escape has failed but Paul D ran away as the book says, “Paul D does not look back.” Sixo burns to death. The conflict awkwardly resolved by Sixo’s death but the purpose of escaping to gain the freedom was a success for others.

Sixo is considered as a minor character whose name barely appears in the book. Though, he symbolizes and represents many important aspects in our life. He presents the sacrificing for

his loved ones to achieve the freedom, presents as a smart, educated, and critical thinker, and presents as a person who can adjust to any situation and who knows everything about something. Sixo informally informs the reader that even though if you are stuck in a doomed and bloody place, there is always a way out and there is a hope. Through his short and temporarily appearance, we can perceive many sentiments and emotions that Toni Morrison wants us to feel and understand; he is not only just a character but also a symbol to our life.

#### Mr. & Mrs. Garner

Mr. and Mrs. Garner are the slave owners of Sweet Home, where most of the characters resided as slaves and escaped from slavery. They allowed their slaves to get more freedoms than other slaves would have had, and they treated their slaves better than others were treated. At Sweet Home, the slaves were allowed to have their own thoughts and make their own decisions, all at the expense of Mr. Garner's insecurities. Since he wanted his slaves to like him, he felt that by giving them a sense of having control over their own lives and decisions, they would appreciate him. Yet, upon giving the slaves their own liberties, Mr. Garner really only sees the great amount of power he is giving himself; with the slaves happy, they won't rebel against him, giving him more opportunities to keep his control over the slaves.

Mr. Garner was very prideful of himself, and he would always boast to other farmers of his slaves, comparing them as "...men every one of em. Bought em thataway, raised em thataway. Men every one." He "...acted like the world was a toy he was supposed to have fun with." Mr. Garner was a power-hungry man, and by always making his slaves happy and content with being and living on the farm, he kept his great amount of power unwavering. With his boasting however, he is still trying to deal with the insecurities he has about himself. He

contradicts himself in that although still having control over slaves, it does not give his slaves total freedom, something which he says he wants them to have.

Although he does try to give his slaves some freedom, he still has power over them and is able to make restrictions on their freedoms. When Sethe asked Mrs. Garner, “Is there a wedding?” when Halle and Sethe decided to become married, Mrs. Garner simply laughed and said, “You are one sweet child.” This shows the control and limitation the Garners put upon the slaves of Sweet Home. When Mrs. Garner asked if Sethe was already expecting a child and Sethe replied no, she simply said, “Well, you will be. You know that, don’t you?” This shows that it was expectant of her to have children who would eventually work on Sweet Home as slaves as well. This gave them expectations to have to meet, and this gave the slaves, especially Halle and Sethe, more to have to work towards. The Garners were always encouraging their slaves; they did contradict their beliefs by controlling them and still telling them what to do.

Mr. Garner was always described as a man who is proud, smart, and tough and although he did not give his slaves full discretion to what they were allowed to do or say, he allowed them to think for themselves and make their own decisions. They had opportunities other slaves did not, and they were treated as “nigger men,” not “nigger boys.” Mrs. Garner was different from Mr. Garner in that she was much more calm and compassionate about their slaves. She always made sure that the slaves were in good shape, and that they were always working hard with the task at hand. She was the caring woman, and although both she and Mr. Garner both treated the slaves in the same way, the slaves found Mrs. Garner much more approachable.

Mrs. Garner is a woman who was very timid and shy, and she had a kind heart, yet she was a slave owner which made her someone who was still dehumanizing. Although she was caring, when Sethe asked for a wedding, she simply “...put down her cooking spoon. Laughing a

little, she touched Sethe on the head, saying, “You are one sweet child.”” She was like her husband, although they tried to give the slaves some freedoms, there were still many restrictions on what they were able to do within the farm. Mrs. Garner was weak, and it showed distinctly after Mr. Garner had died. “Mrs. Garner, restless at night, is sunk in sleep all morning...[Sethe] is on call for Mrs. Garner anytime, including nighttime when the pain or the weakness or the downright loneliness is too much for her.” After Mr. Garner had passed away, Mrs. Garner called for her brother, the schoolteacher, to accompany her at Sweet Home.

With the schoolteacher at Sweet Home, conditions for the slaves worsened. Mrs. Garner eventually got a tumor in her throat, leaving the schoolteacher in charge. The schoolteacher treated the slaves worse than they were previously being treated, which made all of the slaves frustrated. The Garners was a symbol of the racism and slavery that was happening during that time. Although it may seem that they did not harm that many people, they were still controlling and demanding to their slaves. The Garners were still slave owners, proving that no slave owner was fully kind to their own slaves.

Schoolteacher:

School Teacher in “Beloved” has a very large role in the story. Although he is not one of the main characters of the story, he is, however, one of the driving forces of the story. Without school teacher, the main conflict of “Beloved” could not be possible. This significant role in the story is found throughout the book as he is described by both Paul D and Sethe as a very inhumane master. Schoolteacher is the brother of Mrs. Garner and is the new owner of Sweet Home. After, Mr. Garner’s death, Schoolteacher became the owner of the plantation. When he came to the plantation, they said that “He brought two boys with him. Sons or nephews”. School teacher “was a little man. Short. Always wore a collar, even in the fields.” His is also described



to a “pretty good farmer”, according to Halle but not as strong as Mr. Garner. Another thing that is associated with him is the book that he carries around all the time. “It was a book about us but we didn’t know that right away. We just thought it was his manner to ask us questions. He commenced to carry round a notebook and write down what we said. I still think it was them questions that tore Sixo up. Tore him up for all time”. He uses this little notebook to take measurements of the slaves and also calculations of how much they are worth. The ironic thing, however, is the slave don’t have any real worth to him.

Schoolteacher is a direct contrast with Mr. Garner. Rather than using the “soft” approach of getting the slaves do what they do, schoolteacher creates an oppressive regime. He uses fear and force to get the slaves to work efficiently. At times, schoolteacher complains about the quality of work that the slaves do on Sweet Home. He wants them to be efficient in order to profit well from the plantation.

Although some may try to claim that schoolteacher is only trying to make Sweet Home more efficient by being tough on the slaves, the tactics used to punish or treat the slaves is inhumane. Because of this, Schoolteacher is also an example of dehumanization of the slaves. This is found when Paul D talks about the iron bit that was placed around his mouth during a punishment. People who had this before had “the wildness that shot up into the eye the moment the lips were yanked back.” Another example of dehumanization is when school teacher and his nephews “took the milk” of Sethe. Although there were not many direct acts of dehumanization, schoolteacher did it nonetheless. An indirect way of dehumanization act that schoolteacher did to the slaves was when he “took away the guns from the Sweet Home men and, deprived of game to round out their diet of bread, beans, hominy, vegetables and a little extra at slaughter time...” Another example of this indirect way of dehumanization is when schoolteacher lets Paul

D know that he is worth \$900. Although no physical pain or punishment was used, the mental pain caused by worth of a man did some damage to both his manhood and self-esteem.

The type of character that schoolteacher represents in the story is an antagonist. He has no moral center for anything. He is often described as cold, sadistic, critical, and racist person. This example of no morality is found when we learn that schoolteacher and his nephews “took Sethe’s milk”. Another example of schoolteacher’s lack of morality is when he chooses to kill Sixo. He believes that Sixo is too much trouble for him to keep and therefore just makes up his mind to kill him. This lack of appreciation for human life lets us see how schoolteacher is the clear antagonist of the story and also a large factor in the slaves’ problems in life. Another reason that schoolteacher is the antagonist of the story is when he goes to 124 to claim back Sethe’s children. He rides to the house, with the intent to get back the money he lost. But when he sees what Sethe had done to all her children, he is disgusted by it and realizes that there is nothing else to be claimed back from 124. And so, this starts the main conflict of the story of how Sethe had killed Beloved to protect her children from schoolteacher.

As one can see, school teacher is the tormenter of the slaves throughout the book. He is the sole reason why Sethe had to kill “Beloved”. Schoolteacher’s creates the main conflict in the story and is the cause of Beloved’s return to punish Sethe. This evil man, racist to the bone and lacking any respect for blacks, is the representation and the symbol of racism. Still to today, schoolteacher becomes society’s symbolism for the racism prevalent in this evil world.

## Research Questions:

Since the origin of the slave trade in the 1600's, an ongoing debate has formed between whether slaves are worth the same as a "true" human life. Many people, in the past, felt as if slaves had no worth because of their inferior characteristics such as dark skin, uneducated lifestyles, and birth defects. In fact, one huge debate about slave worth took place on U.S. soil regarding the worth of slaves and African-Americans when it came to voting. American legislators had decided that the true worth of each African American was 3/5 of a person. From this decision taken by the Americans, the worth of each African American slave was labeled, however, in contradiction to popular belief it was those who supported slavery who wanted the African Americans to be represented because that meant more representation for them in Congress giving them more power.

As shown in the line "to make up for coupling with a straw boss for four months in exchange for keeping her third child, a boy, with her-only to have him traded for lumber in the spring of the next year and to find herself by the man who promised not to and did" prices were put on both slaves and sexes. Gender-wise, Baby Suggs had agreed to trade her two girls in order to keep her one boy signifying that she felt a higher importance was given to a "boy" rather than a girl. As a slave as well, Baby Suggs trades her son for lumber in the spring the next year. This specific exchange sets Baby Sugg's son, a human, as an equal exchange for a natural resource, lumber. Such examples are shown throughout the story, and are not just limited to Baby Suggs as just soon after Halle is able to buy Baby Sugg's freedom for her. By allowing himself to be in servitude of Mr. Garner for a longer time, Halle had allowed for Baby Suggs to go free. This incident also places a worth on Halle and his labor, for because Halle agreed to "pay himself" to Mr. Garner the worth of Baby Suggs became insignificant and thus a monetary exchange in human form took place.

Throughout many instances in this book we see that although Blacks have somewhat assimilated into the existing society, there are still incidents under which the Blacks are shown inferior to their fellow whites. One incident that accurately exemplifies this particular attitude of “worth” for the Blacks is when a carnival is hosted for the Blacks in Cincinnati. These Blacks are offered the same entertainment as the whites had previously experienced, however traces of racism and “worthlessness” are still placed in front of the Blacks as shown in the line “One-Ton Lady spit at them, but her bulk shortened her aim and they got a big kick out of the helpless meanness in her little eyes. Arabian Nights Dancer cut her performance to three minutes instead of the usual fifteen she normally did-earning the gratitude of the children, who could hardly wait for Abu Snake Charmer, who followed her”

Mistreatment of the Blacks during this time was also common because they were referred to as property in their coming during 1619 as labeled by writer, David Hinckley. For this reason, many plantation owners and slave owners wanted to mark their “property” deeming them under the ownership of one particular person or area as further exemplified in this book while Sethe is with her mother and she learns that her mother is labeled through one way, her brand. The line that exemplifies this is “One this she did do. She picked me up and carried me behind the smokehouse. Back there she opened up her dress front and lifted her breast and pointed under it. Right on her rib was a circle and a cross burnt right in the skin. She said, this is your ma’am. This,’ and she pointed.”

So many of the Blacks were treated poorly and under captivity that even some animals experienced more freedom than them. This ultimately signified the worth of animals to be more than that of Blacks, putting them under those considered to be the bottom of the food chain as shown in the line “Mister, he looked so...free. Better than me. Stronger, tougher...Mister was

allowed to be and stay what he was. But I wasn't allowed to be and stay what I was. Even if you cooked him you'd be cooking a rooster named Mister. But wasn't no way I'd ever be Paul D again, living or dead."

In order to elevate the self-esteem of all the Blacks in Cincinnati, Baby Suggs calls them all to the clearing and expresses to them their self-worth and the reason they are now considered "freed slaves". She may also play a reflected version of Marcus Garvey who also, in Black history, attempted to express Black pride, along with the "Back to Africa" movement instead of assimilating into white society. Baby Suggs expresses this in the line "Here, she said, in this place, we flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Lot it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh"

Many whites felt that it was unnecessary for Blacks to be educated, mostly because their work was strictly limited to labor-intensive jobs. Because they felt this way, whites deemed it illegal for Blacks to be educated. Not only was this a way for Blacks to feel inferior, but whites also used this to prevent Blacks from creating a future for themselves restricting them to jobs assigned to them by whites as shown in the line "For a nickel a month, Lady Jones did what white people thought was unnecessary if not illegal: crowded her little parlor with the colored children who time for and interest in book learning."

Along with the Blacks having less of a worth than animals, they were also labeled with actual, physical prices stating the principle that "human beings" are priced accordingly to their abilities and "productivity" as exemplified through two lines. In the first line "But you got my boy and I'm all broke down. You be renting him out to pay for me way after I'm gone to glory", Baby Suggs explains that although Mr. Garner had done the family a favor by allowing Halle to

buy her freedom, she knows that after she has passed, he will take advantage of the servitude owed to him and furthermore, Halle has given up his whole future just for the 5 or 6 years of freedom for Baby Suggs. The second line “He would have to trade this here one for \$900 if he could get it and set out to secure the breeding one, her foal and the other one, if he found him. With the money from this here one he could get two young ones, twelve or fifteen years old. And maybe with the breeding one, her pickaninnies and whatever the foal might be, he and his nephews would have seven niggers and Sweet Home would be worth the trouble it was causing him...her price was greater than his, property that reproduced itself without cost.”

To show the extent to which Blacks were tortured by whites, Sethe killed her daughter in order to prevent her from being taken by the “whites”, or Schoolteacher. This shows that Sethe truly felt that death was a better way to go than to have to be forever tortured by the whites as shown in the line “They ain’t at Sweet Home. Schoolteacher ain’t got em? Maybe there’s worse. It ain’t my job to know what is and to keep them away from what I know is terrible. I did that.”

Schoolteacher specifically felt that the “Negroes” were worth only the work they did and nothing more. He never acknowledged them as human beings and labeled them with a price making them feel as if each individual had a certain worth to them. This was one of the other rising reasons as to why the Blacks at the time shared the ideology that they were only worth the label giving to them. This is exemplified through lines such as “The information they offered he called backtalk and developed a variety of corrections (which he recorded in his notebook) to reeducate them” and “He even let em have guns! And you think he mated them niggers to get him some more? Hell no! He planned for them to marry! If that don’t all! Schoolteacher sighs, and says doesn’t know he know it? He had come to put the place aright.”

The last instance in the story where true racism is exemplified is when Denver goes to the Bodwin residence in order to get a job. As she comes into the house, she gives off a feeling of security and safety, however, after the conversation with Janey is over, Denver leaves, and on her way out, she stops and looks at a statue of “a blackboy’s mouth full of money”. This shows that although the Bodwin’s may be abolitionists, they still believe that Blacks are worth less than whites as shown in the line “His head was thrown back farther than a head could go, his hands were shoved in his pockets...Painted across the pedestal he knelt on were the words “At Yo Service”.

Beloved’s arrival comes unexpectedly to 124 Bluestone Road after Paul D “banishes” the evil spirit in the house. To Sethe’s surprise, she, at first, is oblivious to the fact that the unknown visitor is actually her own child and extends her hospitality regardless. After she discovers that the girl is her child, Sethe sends her unconditional love to Beloved, providing her with everything, sacrificing her most basic necessities to Beloved. She sacrifices her own identity as Beloved takes over her image, and does not complain once. “Anything she wanted she got, and when Sethe ran out of things to give her, Beloved invented desire.” Sethe constantly gave Beloved her undivided attention in order to satisfy her needs and wants.

As Sethe transforms into a new identity, Denver becomes more independent and takes action in order to help her family suffice. She turns to Lady Jones at first for work in order to provide the family food. With Lady Jones’ understanding of the changes that occur in the house of 123, she offers Denver food and help whenever she needed. ““But if you all need to eat until your mother is well, all you have to do is say so... Anytime at all.”” Lady Jones’ sincere approach to Denver enlightened her spirit about her current situation and acknowledges the support that Lady Jones gives her. With that, Denver is able to reestablish a sense of family.

The community also extends their support to the struggling family when Denver notices food baskets given from various members of the community. “Every now and then, all through the spring, names appeared near or in gifts of food.” Denver shows her appreciation for the help by returning all the bowls and baskets that had a labeled name written upon it. Although the community does not want to directly approach the family, they indirectly express their support by secretly placing food items on the steps of 124. “She went to look and found a sack of white beans.”

The community once looked at the house of 124 as a sense of established community center as “others remembered the days when 124 was a way station, the place they assembled to such news, taste oxtail soup, leave their children, cut out a skirt...” Because 124 was the house of Baby Suggs, the community felt as though they had the obligation of paying back to Baby Suggs for all she had advocated for everyone. By delivering food items, the community’s “debt” is repaid.

The community also believes that it is their duty to rid of evil presence at 124. When they heard about Beloved, Ella convinced the townswomen that it is not healthy to have such an evil influence in the house they centered their community around. However, many did not believe that it was the right idea. “It was Ella more than anyone who convinced the others that rescue was in order.” The community felt as though they were obligated to take on this duty and turned to religious practices to “exorcise” the “spirit” to help out Sethe and Denver. “Some brought what they could and what they believed would work”

“They had no idea what they would do once they got there.” Although many of the townswomen did not have a sense of direction as to what to do when time approached, they all



joined for the same purpose, to help out 124. However, only the dedicated advocates who believed that it was the right thing to do joined. Although it did not involve the entire community, the message was sent clear to Beloved that they were after her. This greatly affected Sethe as she thought they were out to get her and was not able to realize that they were there to help her.

Baby Suggs can also be seen as the most influential head or the “leader” of the community. Her “pressing fingers and the quiet instructive voice” would attract religious gatherings at the Clearing, where Baby Suggs would teach her followers to “love their voices, bodies, and minds”. Every Sunday afternoon, people would “wait among the trees”, to hear and experience Baby Sugg’s “praying” and emotional sermons.

These gatherings at Clearing allowed for the town to become whole, together as one. “Laughing children, dancing men, [and] crying women” would all gather as one as “Baby Suggs, holy, offered up to them her great big heart”. Rather than asking for the community to “clean up their lives” or “sin no more”, Baby Suggs would simply tell the town that the “only grace [the town] could have was the grace they could imagine”. Only through grace, the community would find the strength to love their hands “that had been bound”, their mouths that had been “silenced”, and, most of all, their hearts.

The sermons also allowed for the enslaved families to find hope for future and remain optimistic. Baby Suggs, aware of the fact that white families only “flay the skin on our back”, abuse the hands to “tie, bind, chop off, and leave empty”, urges the town to “love [their] own flesh”. This in turn leads to a source of inspiration long even after Baby Suggs retreats to sickbed.

Due to the initial gatherings held at Clearing, Denver has the courage to leave 124 and find help for Beloved. It is also due to Baby Sugg's sermons that the community even responds to Denver's requests for support.

Sixo, sacrificing his life for his Thirty Mile Woman's escape, displays characteristics of the importance of family. As Sixo was captured and deemed "unsuitable," rather than try and fight back for his own freedom, he copes with the punishment given and mocks the slaveholders by consistently laughing and crying out "Seven-o Seven-o" because his Thirty Mile Woman got away with his blossoming seed." With Sixo's sacrifice, his woman and unborn child had the chance to escape into freedom with the rest of the other escapees. Paul D, at first, does not understand the importance of his own worth and why the escape for the woman was important until he is labeled with a value amount. He then realizes that the woman's escape is important in that she is worth more because she is able to reproduce, therefore, the capture of her is worth a lot. Sixo's diversion succeeded.

In the time of the Colonial Era, the triangular slave trade was created to transport goods, services, and slaves across the Atlantic. Weapons, ammunitions, and tools from Europe were traded in Africa's "slave coast" in exchange for slaves. These slaves were chained and sailed across the Atlantic. Arriving in America, merchants sold these slaves for sugar and tobacco that are sold back to Europe. The last leg of the triangular slave trade and the most dangerous part of the journey, the middle passage was responsible for the deaths of millions of African slaves being transported to America.

Although goods such as weapons, sugar, and tobacco were very important to keep and maintain during the voyage to America, the most precious cargos on the ships were the African

slaves. These slaves were “extremely valuable” because of the exponential investments in them as they worked on plantations. By working on these plantations, slaves made 100x more money than they were worth. But although the slaves were considered more precious cargo than goods, slaves were forced to live in horrid living conditions within the ships. Just like cargo, slaves were cramped but chained side by side, without any room in the cargo room. Most of the time, slaves only had about “5 feet of headroom”. Also, sleeping shelves, which were bolted on all four walls of the ship, cuts the cargo space in half. Space was so limited that there “was not even enough space to place buckets for human waste.” Because of poor hygiene and the compactness of the space, “disease was [also] prevalent”.

Poor ventilation contributed to the poor living conditions and also allowed deadly diseases to spread like wildfire. Despite the crew’s desire to keep as many of the slaves alive as possible, these terrible living conditions were the cause of many millions of Africans to die even before they arrived at the shores. Because so many had lost their lives, it is believed “that [of the 20 million who were traveled through the middle passage] between 20 to 10 percent of those transported [through the middle passage] lost their lives. Many slaves preferred to die and attempted to commit suicide by not eating. Crew members prevented this tactic by torturing them to eat and in some cases use a contraption called a speculum orum. This device clamped onto the mouth opened it so that crew members could force feed the subject. But even through these tactics, many slaves still died during the treacherous middle passage due to disease and illnesses.

In “Beloved”, reflections and symbols of the middle passage are found throughout the novel. The novel, focusing the slavery and its pains, refers sometimes to the treacherous living conditions and the grim atmosphere of the middle passage ships. For example, near the beginning of the book, when Sethe was telling Beloved and Denver about her mother, the story

referred back to the middle passage. Nan, Sethe's caretaker when her mother was gone, told Sethe that "her mother and Nan were together from the sea. Both were taken up many times by the crew". This passage talks about how Sethe's mother and caretaker were slaves that made it through the middle passage and also how the crew members took advantage of them. From the information given, we can infer that Sethe's mother was raped many times by the crew members. Disgusted by these men, Sethe's mother "threw them all away.. The one from the crew she threw away on the island. The others from more whites she also threw way. Without names, she threw them." When the author writes "[throwing] them all away", it lets the reader feel the hatred of Sethe's mother during her time in the ship. Also, as Nan says that Sethe's mother threw away her bastard children without names, it shows her disgust and the vile nature of her life on the ship.

Another passage in "Beloved" that refers back to the middle passage is found later in the story when Beloved and Denver begin talking. This subject is first brought forth by Denver, curious about Beloved's origin. She begins this conversation by asking "What's it like over there, where you were before? Can you tell me?" Beloved responds by saying that the place is dark. She also says that, "I'm small in that place. I'm like this here." Beloved's description of where she comes from describes the small quarters of a slave being shipped through the middle passage. Just like the grim cargo space where all the slaves were kept on the ship, Beloved's origin is dark and depressing. She describes it as a large place that made her seem small and represents the large cargo room where many slaves were chained to the floor. Then, Denver asks Beloved if she was cold where she came from. Beloved shook her head and said, "Hot. Nothing to breathe down there and no room to move in." This is yet another reference to life during the transportation through the middle passage. Saying that it was hot, Beloved describes the intense body heat of slaves that may have been filled the cargo room. Also, in saying that it was hard to

breathe and that there was no room to move in, Beloved perfectly illustrated the poor ventilation and also the lack of space within ships crossing the middle passage. Now, eager to hear more about where Beloved came from, Denver probes for more answers from Beloved and asks if she saw anyone there. Beloved recalls seeing “heaps [of people]. Some is dead.” This visual of many dead people inside the dark, cramped room is a representation of the millions of Africans who died during the middle passage. All around her, Beloved saw the deaths of people she didn’t know that names of.

Later in the novel, Beloved again refers back to the middle passage in her long monologue in chapter 22. In her long monologue, the repetitive use of the word “crouching” is used to illustrate the stance of many of the people on the ships. By using “crouching”, we can see that the place where Beloved is describing is very crowded and resembles a crowded cargo room filled with African slaves. The resemblance of the crowded cargo filled with slaves is also evident in Beloved words that say, “I cannot fall because there is no room.” In this chapter, Beloved also talks about how “some who eat nasty themselves...the men without skin bring us their morning water to drink—we have none” and comments again about the poor living conditions within the ships. This is shown when she says that “small rats do not wait for us to sleep—someone thrashing but here is no room to do it in—if we had more to drink we could make tears—we cannot make sweat or morning water” The poor living conditions is again slightly referenced to when Beloved says that “the bread is sea-colored”, which we can be assumed as moldy and expired.

Sick of being held captive in the ship’s cargo room, Beloved accurately portrays the real slaves’ desire to rather die when she observes that “we are all trying to leave our bodies behind”. In saying this, we know that all the slaves were treated so badly that they would have rather died

than be de-humanized and put into slavery. Sometimes, these slaves would not sleep or even eat, as described in *Beloved*'s dialogue.

Talking again about the voyage during the middle passage, *Beloved* remembers seeing "those able to die are in a pile". She recalls "the little hill of dead people" and how the "men without skin push them though with poles". These "men without skin" broke up "the little hill and pushed" all the bodies into the ocean. This part of the chapter talks about all the dead men and women who died during the middle passage. Those who died were placed "in a pile" and pushed off of the boat. *Beloved* tells how "they fall into the sea which is the color of the bread" and also describes the dead bodies that are "floating on the water." This process to pile up all the dead and throw all of them overboard, most likely occurred in real life during the middle passage.

As we can see, many parts in *Beloved* clearly resemble certain aspects of the middle passage. *Beloved*'s clear insight of the middle passage and the references of it from Sethe's caretaker, make this book a symbol for all the slaves who were shackled and transported through the middle passage. The "middle passage was the longest, hardest, and most dangerous, and also the most horrific part of the journey..." For many, crossing the middle passage was change of lifestyle from civilization back in Africa to barbarianism in America. This one way trip to slavery never returned the souls taken from the beaches of Africa. And with all the pain and suffering that African slaves went through during the trip, the middle passage has become a representation of ultimate human misery. This trade passage has also become one of the largest turning gears that started the machine of the "greatest evil", slavery.

“Slave Codes of the States of Georgia, 1848: Section 1 Capital Offenses: 1. Capital crimes when punished with deaths. 2. When punished by death, or at discretion of the court. 3. Punishment for manslaughter. 4. Punishment of slaves for striking white persons. 5. When the striking a white person justifiable. 6. Punishment for burning or attempting to burn houses in a town. 7. Punishment for burning or attempting to burn houses in the country. 8. Trial of offenders for arson. 9. Punishment of free persons of color for inveigling slaves. 10. Punishment for circulating incendiary documents.

These are the Capital Offenses in the State of Georgia for slave codes during the 1800s. Paul D, however, was trying to kill a white man, Brandywine, as it is evident from this quote, “[Paul] was sent [to prison] after trying to kill Brandywine, the man schoolteacher sold him to.” Paul D’s action fell under Section 1 Capital Offenses, Code 1: “When punished by death or at discretion of the court” which says, “assaulting a free white person with intent to murder”. Paul D then gets captured and reported to the prison in Alfred, Georgia in 1856. During 1856, Georgia had a vast black population including freed slaves and active slaves; therefore, the state had stricter rules against the black/slaves.

“When all forty-six were standing in a line in the trench...” Paul D and other slaves had been captured for their crimes. Compare to different prisons in Georgia, the prison that they were suffering was very undersized because the prison had only forty-six inmates, all of them black men. These prisoners were stuck in a limited place with dirt and filthy environment, “the one thousand feet of earth—five feet deep, five feet wide, into which wooden boxes had been fitted...and a roof of scrap lumber and red dirt”. The prison itself was already built in a malfunctioning location. The weather condition also ruined the condition of the “cells”. “It rained. In the boxes the men heard the water rise in the trench and looked out cottonmouths.

They squatted in muddy water, slept above it, peed in it.” This is a descriptive scene of filthiness that the slaves had to live through every day. However, not only the location and place was horrible but also the treatment towards the inmates was terrifying. There was a set routine every day, as it is shown, “All forty-six men woke to rifle shot...another rifle shot signaled the climb out and up to the ground above.” The correction guards treated the prisoners as if they were literally animals, such conversation represents the maltreatment, “Breakfast? Want some breakfast, nigger? Hungry nigger?” Also they abused the prisoners with harsh punishment such as when “an observing guard smashed [Paul D’s] shoulder with the rifle”. Because harsh weather condition weakened the structure of the prison, the black prisoners were able to escape very easily under careless guards, “Other plunged, simply ducked down and pushed out, fighting up, reaching for air. For one lost, all lost.” They worked as a team to escape. Thus in “Beloved”, the prisoners were portrayed to receive horrifying treatments from the white men.

According to an article, “Georgia Prison Strike Against Slavery”, the slaves were treated better. The Georgian prison strike shows the advantages and disadvantages of these two types of involuntary servitude. It claims, “George prisons and their supporters interpret the [13<sup>th</sup> Amendment] incorrectly.” The court says that the prisoners must work and serve involuntarily whether they like it or not. But it says that “they lived in a cashless economy for the most part, but could usually earn money [with bonuses]”. The Georgia prison strike explains that the prisoners in “Beloved” are treated way better.

In conclusion, the prisoners in “Beloved” are treated very badly. The treatments were inappropriate and it degraded the human being, especially the blacks. Paul D is just another prisoner who suffered through the malfunction and maltreatment from the boxes of the prison.



# Timeline:

## 1. Mr. Garner's stroke - 1853

- Mr. Garner comes back to **Sweet Home** "bent over his mare's neck, sweating and blue-white." After he passes away, Mrs. Garner feels the need to fill in Mr. Garner's position with schoolteacher. Sixo and the other slaves conclude that Mrs. Garner needed another "white" on the home but do not understand why. They did not count on Mr. Garner dying and feel as though their life is slowly deteriorating.

## 2. Mrs. Garner gets sick - 1853

- Slightly after Mr. Garner dies on **Sweet Home**, Mrs. Garner becomes sick. Sixo believes that the doctor made her sick with his drink remedies for horses and they could have stopped his actions but schoolteacher's rules prevented them from warning Mrs. Garner about it.

## 3. Planning the escape - 1855

- Sixo, the Pauls, Halle, and Sethe plan to escape **Sweet Home** after waiting **through spring** "till the corn is as high as it ever got and the moon as fat" in order to put their plan into action. Sixo decides to escape at night in order to give themselves the advantage of time and blending into the nighttime. He makes practice runs through the corn hiding necessary items for the trips such as blankets and knives. The group consistently watches schoolteacher and Mrs. Garner's daily routines to measure what time they are able to go. They plan for Sixo and Paul D to go first to wait for the Thirty Mile Woman at the creek while Halle waits for Sethe and the children.

## 4. Sethe is pregnant - 1855

- **Springtime on Sweet Home**, Sethe is pregnant. It becomes questionable whether Sethe will be able to continue with the escape with the other men and keep up with their pace because by **August**, she is “so heavy with child.”

#### 5. **Halle’s disappearance – 1855**

- Halle was need to work extra on Sweet Home so the plans for the escape had to be altered. The Pauls see Halle swinging as they rest under **Brother’s shade**. After seeing Halle “squatting in butter,” that was the last they have seen of him.

#### 6. **The escape - 1855**

- At **supper**, Paul D, Sixo, Thirty Mile Woman wait at the **creek** for Paul A to show up. They try to figure out where Sethe and Halle are and decide to head out to the corn to continue with their journey. Sixo begins looking for his supplies when he hears something and pushes the Thirty Mile Woman out further into the creek bed. That is when Sixo and Paul D are caught and tied up by schoolteacher. They are taken into the **woods**. Schoolteacher has Sixo burned at the stake for putting up a fight and deems Sixo “unsuitable.” Since the fire has not been prepared to kill Sixo fast enough, one of the whitemen shoots Sixo to shut up him after he constantly shouts out “Seven-o! Seven-o!”

#### 7. **Paul D learns his “value” amount**

- “The dollar value of his weight, his strength, his heart, his brain, his penis, and his future.” Paul D finally overhears how much he is worth as a laborer and is later taken into a **cabin**, ankles chained together and a three spoke collar on him. It is **August** and raining outside.

#### 8. **The meeting of Sethe and Paul D**

- Sethe comes into the **cabin** and questions Paul D what as happened. He explains to her that the Thirty Mile Woman ran, Halle is nowhere to be found, and Sixo died while he was

awake and laughing. Paul D tries not to make eye contact as he is embarrassed of his appearance with the collar. Sethe tells Paul D that she is going to go past the gate. Although Paul D does not believe she will make it, he allows her to continue, knowing he won't see her again anyways.

**(August at Sweet Home)**

**9. Paul D and the 44<sup>th</sup> Colored Regiment**

- Paul D ran away from the “Northpoint Bank and Railway to join the 44<sup>th</sup> Colored Regiment in **Tennessee**.” However, he traveled to a different location in **New Jersey** and joined a different regiment. As the soldiers were unable to hold fire arms and kill whitemen, Paul D was exchanged for \$300 by Northpoint to be slaved for a year for the Rebels. He tried to escape several times. “From Sweet Home, from Brandywine, from Alfred, Georgia, from Wilmington, from Northpoint.”

**10. Paul D on the church steps – January 1874**

- Paul D is seen sitting on the steps of the **church** drinking away. It is a “sunny and windless day in **January**” and Paul D drinks to keep himself warm. “His tobacco tin, blown open, spilled contents that floated freely and made him their play and prey.” While on the steps, Paul D tells the stories of his enslavement on Sweet Home since his tobacco tin could no longer stay closed.

**11. Stamp Paid comes to Paul D / someone asks for Judy – January 1874**

**12. Stamp Paid tells Paul D about his name – January 1874**

- Stamp Paid describes to Paul D that his wife, Vashti, was given to the slaveholder for intercourse. After she returns to Stamp Paid one morning, Stamp Paid does not want to associate himself with her any longer so he changes his name.

**13. Stamp Paid tells Paul D about Sethe's past – January 1874**

- Stamp Paid reveals to Paul D that he was present when Sethe killed Beloved. Paul D is shocked by this news and wants Stamp Paid to stop. Stamp Paid explains that it is not what Paul D thinks and that Sethe just tried to “outhurt the hurter.” Paul D explains to Stamp that Beloved scares him and he tells Stamp how Beloved just showed up at the stump of 124 after the **carnival**.

#### **14. Paul D leaves Sethe – 1874**

- After Stamp tells Paul D about Sethe, he shows Paul D the newspaper clipping of the event. Paul D approaches Sethe about the incident and decides to leave Sethe because he is sickened by her actions.

#### **15. Sethe’s massive spending**

- Sethe excessively spends money on food and ribbons for Beloved in order to show her unconditional love for her. However, Sethe is impacted negatively although she does not realize it. Beloved has overtaken her life and transforms Sethe into a new person. “ And instead of looking for another job, Sethe played all the harder with Beloved, who never got enough of anything.” Because of this, Sethe begins to lose her sense of direction and their roles are switched. Denver begins to be neglected by Sethe as Sethe’s attention is focused solely on Beloved. “ But different because, unlike Baby Suggs, she cut Denver out completely.”

#### **16. Denver goes to Lady Jones – April 1874**

- Denver recognizes that Sethe needs help to take care of herself and the family so she sets out to **Lady Jones’ house** to find work. “I can’t do anything, but I would learn it for you if you have a little extra... Food. My ma’am, she doesn’t feel good.” Denver offers to do chores, however, can not stay long because she has to be back home to take care of the family. Lady

Jones gives her food and extends her help by offering Denver to come back whenever she needs help.

**17. Food items appear at 124 – April 1874**

- “Denver... noticed something lying on the tree stump at the edge of the yard. She went to look and found a sack of white beans.” After visiting Lady Jones, the community begins to help out **124** by sending food to their porch. They feel the obligation to have to repay the house in their time of need. To express her gratitude, Denver returns all the bowls to the people who labeled their bowls.

**18. Denver goes to the Bodwins**

- Denver decides to ask Mr. and Mrs. Bodwin if there is any available work for her at the house. She meets Janey Wagon (who worked with Baby Suggs) and tells Janey about the “girl who plagued her mother.” Interested in Sethe’s condition, Janey was upset that Sethe does not seem to be the person she last met.

**19. Townswomen come to 124 – August 1874**

- After hearing the story from Lady Jones, the townswomen gathered and decided that they will take part in helping 124 get rid of its evil spirit. The leader of the rally, Ella, experienced past mistakes and feels that it is not just for “Beloved” to come back and haunt 124. “Whatever Sethe had done, Ella didn’t like the idea of past errors taking possession of the present.” As the townswomen approached 124, they preached out to “exorcise” the spirit out of the lady visitor who seems to be “Beloved.”

**20. Sethe attacks – August 1874, 3 p.m., Friday**

- Denver first spots the townswomen approaching the house. Then Sethe. “It broke over Sethe and she trembled like the baptized in its wash.” She comes out after ice picking and,

with the combination of the hot, sticky weather, Sethe is delusional and attacks who she believes is schoolteacher. It is actually Mr. Bodwin riding in his carriage to help the family. Sethe sees Mr. Bodwin as schoolteacher because she has lost her mind and tries to protect Beloved from another unfortunate event and does not want to repeat what happened in the past. Ella punches Sethe to avoid her from attacking Mr. Bodwin.

## **21. Paul D returns to 124 – 1875**

- “The odd placement of cans jammed with the rotting stems of things, the blossoms shriveled like sores.” Paul D’s return to 124 shocks him as the appearance of 124 is not as he left it. The house is dismantled and groggy as Paul D approaches the porch. When he enters the house, it is empty and quiet and Sethe, at first, is nowhere in sight. Paul D goes up the stairs and finds Sethe in a room singing to herself. He notices that Sethe has not taken care of herself and he offers to stay at night while Denver is out to take care of her. Sethe cries out to Paul D that Beloved left her and that “she was my best thing.” Paul D enlightens Sethe by telling her “You your best thing, Sethe. You are.”

# **Literary Elements:**

## **Chapter 24**

The author’s diction within the story is very explanative of his intensions for each character and the plot. For instance, through various lines in the story, the author exemplifies Paul D as an illiterate man struggling to live his everyday life as shown in the line “Why she call

on him? Paul D asked. Why she need the schoolteacher?" Through these lines we can see that Paul D's illiteracy in English reflects his struggles while growing up on the Garner's plantation. Furthermore, the author is very discreet about the perceived meaning for his words. For example, instead of simply stating that Paul D felt "emotionally troubled", the author elaborates on Paul D's internal conflict with himself through the line "His tobacco tin, blown open, spilled contents that floated freely and made him their prey and play." That line exposes Paul D as a man who had tried to bottle up all of his feelings inside himself, however, he had reached his peak when he heard of what Sethe had done to her child. These feelings then rushed out to him because he felt that "he had nothing else to hold on to". Also, the way that the author described the surrounding environment, he hoped to signify Paul D as a drunk as shown in the line "And an oil lamp in a cellar was sad, so Paul D sat on the porch steps and got additional warmth from a bottle of liquor jammed in his coat pocket," we can also see that Paul D had released his "tobacco tin" because of his drunken state when he mentions that he feels "warmth and red eyes". The amount of alcoholic intake by Paul D portrays to the readers that Paul D had turned to the alcohol in order to make himself feel better, and for this very reason he was unable to keep his emotions bottled up in that "tobacco tin".

Chapter 23 outlines all of Paul D's struggles not only internally, but also externally. He was previously portrayed as a man capable of caring for Sethe's family, however through this chapter we realize that his true manhood is yet to be found. After Paul D's "tobacco tin" is "blown open", we, as the readers, get an inside look at his true emotions and struggles. The first struggle portrayed was Paul D's lack of family love. In the line "Nothing like that had ever been his and growing up at Sweet Home he didn't miss it" showing that Paul D felt that family wasn't as important because growing up at Sweet Home had disallowed him to have any true connection

with anyone in his family. That reason may reflect Paul D's inability to stay at one place for a long time as shown in the line "Eighteen years, she said softly. Eighteen, he repeated. And I swear I been walking every one of em". We can see Paul D's family life when he was young as shown in the line "When Paul D waved goodbye to his oldest brother, the boss was dead, the mistress nervous and the cradle already split". The one place that Paul D truly felt a connection to anyone was when he stayed with the Garners because the Garner's had instilled in him that spirit of self-worth which made Paul D a much more accepting and able man. Paul D's faith and reliance on Mr. Garner is exemplified through the line "Everything rested on Mr. Garner being alive. Without his life each of theirs fell to pieces." Furthermore, Paul D's reliance on Mr. Garner also associates to his own manhood as Paul D feels that he is only labeled a man in the eyes of Mr. Garner and not the world outside as shown in the line "It troubled him that, concerning his own manhood, he could not satisfy himself on that point. Oh, he did many things, but was that Garner's gift or his own will?" Lastly, the author personifies Paul D's attitude of no "family connection" when he explains that his heart felt no pain and had no worries when he was all alone as shown in the line "When he was drifting, thinking only about the next meal and night's sleep, when everything was packed tight in his chest, he had no sense of failure, of things not working out."

From the beginning, Toni Morrison mentions that the "tiny church [was] no bigger than a rich man's parlor". The reference to a rich man's parlor is made to show the readers the difference in social classes during this specific time period. While the rich, white people continued to dominate in employment and businesses, poor, black people continued to work low wage usually under the white people. The fact that Morrison compares the tiny church that the African Americans attended on a daily basis to a parlor, a private room for mere entertainment



can be seen as degrading for poorer folks. However, this comparison is relevant in this setting because former slaves – Sethe, Halle, Paul D, Paul A, Paul F, Sixo – ate, slept, and worked in crowded spaces while the Schoolteacher, Mr. and Mrs. Garner would enjoy their lives in spacious houses.

Racial discrimination occurred hand-in-hand with the sharp contrast in social status. Morrison states that the “schoolteacher didn’t take advice from Negroes”. The allusion to the slur “Negro” is made to emphasize the racial discrimination that took place in mid to late 1800s. After the death of relatively friendly Mr. Garner, the cold, sadistic, and racist Schoolteacher takes over Sweet Home. Since the beginning of his reign as the slave owner, the white families abused their African American slaves. The color of one’s skin would frequently determine one’s status.

“At the front of the church was a sturdy porch where customers used to sit, and children laughed at the boy who got his head stuck between the railings.” Toni Morrison creates the image of the church to be a family friendly based center where the community can look at the church as a place of peace and gathering. The description of the various types of people who attend or visit the church shows that the church does not discriminate nor exclude certain types of people. Because of the friendly atmosphere it creates, Paul D feels as though he can rely on going to the church to find peace within himself. As he is drinking liquor on the steps, his eyes turn red with warmth. Normally, red is an archetype of evil or love, but in his case, the red in his eyes represents lost hope because he does not know his sense of direction of the time. Paul D’s “tobacco tin, blown open, spilled contents that floated freely and made him their play and prey” suggests that he has lost hope in his eyes because the events that have haunted him in his past during enslavement are now freely dispersed which he has tried to hide before.

Back to when Sethe and the others planned to escape, “Sethe’s children cannot play in the kitchen anymore, so she is dashing back and forth between house and quarters- fidgety and frustrated trying to watch over them.” Sethe’s dedication to her children develops the image that she is restless with the efforts she makes but does not give up on her duties although greater freedom is in her agenda. The plan of escape was in order, but because Sethe’s children cause the plan to backfire (resulting in the men having to create a different strategy later on), Sethe does not give up on her children.

The capture and burning of Sixo displays the white men’s unorganized tactics and careless planning that result in a messy execution of Sixo. “What they can manage is only enough for cooking hominy. Dry faggots are scarce and the grass is slick with dew.” Because the men were not planning on killing anyone, but instead planned solely on capturing the slaves, the fire they created was not strong enough to burn Sixo fast enough. This results in Sixo’s constant laughing and screaming of “Seven-o!” “A rippling sound like Sethe’s sons make when they tumble in hay or splash in rainwater. His feet are cooking; the cloth of his trousers smokes.” As the fire continues to just burn Sixo and not kill him, the white men decide to shoot Sixo, killing him with just one shot. The messy and unplanned execution shows the white men’s carelessness with handling their own slaves and shows that they do not care about what happens to their slaves as long as they have full control over them. “They put a three-spoke collar on him so he can’t lie down and they chain his ankles together.” Paul D’s treatment after the killing of Sixo shows that he is treated less than equal to the white men and the embarrassment he experiences while being in the collar reiterates how little control slaves have over themselves.

“Seven-O, Seven-O” Sixo laughs out loud as he mentions that Thirty Mile Woman got away with his blossoming seed. The fact that Sixo is laughing is ironic because he is posed to

danger but he overwhelms himself by laughing it off. Schoolteacher decides to burn him but he keeps laughing as his skins burn and he dies. This irony represents that Sixo is basically sacrificing himself, which also symbolizes of Jesus Christ, for his loved ones, Thirty Mile Woman and “Seven-O”. It is sort of to distract the schoolteacher and his pupils’ attention. By confusing them, Sixo’s baby and his wife were able to escape successfully. He basically sacrificed himself for his family, which also shows the importance of family and how much a man is supposed to take as Paul D once have asked Stamp Paid.

“That there’s my auntie. This here’s her boy. Yonder is my pap’s cousin. My ma’am was married twice- this my half sister and these her two children. Now, my wife...” Paul D’s dialogue in this scene shows how uneducated he is. Improper English and misplaced words hint at the level of poverty of most people during this era. Even though almost all slaves never received the chance to learn proper English, the fact that Paul D is able to communicate with others is still shocking.

There is a heavy correlation between one’s wealth and one’s education during the 1800s. Without the money to afford education, most, if not all African Americans, would forgo learning proper English. Paul D, just like his brothers, Sixo, Halle, as well as Sethe, has never learned to speak properly and therefore, speak as if he is still in grade school.

The theft of Sethe's “milk” symbolizes her unconditional love towards her children. Sethe never cared when "people saw [her] with drops of [milk] on the front of [her] dress". She saw the importance of milking her child and "hadn't stopped nursing [Denver] when [she] sent her on ahead with Howard and Buglar." She said to Paul D, "All I knew was I had to get my milk to my baby girl. Nobody was going to nurse her like me... Nobody knew that but me and nobody had her milk but me," which shows how possessive and protective she was over her children. When

Schoolteacher's nephew raped Sethe and took all of Sethe's milk, she realized that the milk that she had been carrying for so long has no meaning if it wasn't her child that was receiving it. The milk had been saved for her children, but for a slave owner to take it away in a matter of seconds only left her with feelings of remorse. Sethe's breast milk also symbolizes her realization of self-worth because after the milk was taken from her, she realized the cruelty that she had to endure was truly beyond bearable and it motivated her to get out of Sweet Home to meet with Baby Suggs and her two sons.

Sixo had died in place of Thirty-Mile Woman and their child that she was holding inside of her so that she could runaway successfully. This great sacrifice that Sixo made for Thirty-Mile Woman and his child, "Seven-O," symbolizes freedom. The slaves' plan to escape had failed and when Sixo got captured by the white men, he acted in such a psycho manner by singing and laughing that Schoolteacher "changed his mind: 'This one will never be suitable.'" However, what Schoolteacher didn't know was that Sixo intentionally acted this way so that Schoolteacher and the white men would focus on him and not Thirty-Mile woman and his child, and they would be able to runaway successfully. To be able to get away from Sweet Home meant that Thirty-Mile Woman and his baby would finally be free and be able to pursue a better life, without brutal physical, mental, and emotional treatment and pain. Sixo's death also symbolizes his love for his child. He was willing to take his life so that his child would be able to experience freedom- something Sixo had never been able to. He didn't have a care in the world that he was going to be killed and that he was digging himself in a bigger hole by acting in psychotic behavior, as long as his baby was safe. Paul D witnessed "Sixo [interrupting] his laughter to call out, 'Seven-O! Seven-O!'" which shows that sacrificing his life in order for Seven-O to be free from slavery was enough for him to die happily.

Paul D sits on the porch of a church, "...[getting] additional warmth from a bottle of liquor jammed in his coat pocket," while thinking about his past, and things that had happened. "And a oil lamp in a cellar was sad," written to show us the feelings that he is going through; after leaving Sethe with Beloved and Denver, he feels disappointed on how things had taken so long to happen. He reminisces on Sweet Home days, "For twenty years they had all lived in that cradle," giving us perspective on how life used to be living together as if they were a family, living together and always spending time with each other. Then he remembers that with his older brother leaving and Mr. Garner dying, the "cradle already split." The 'family' had dispersed and fallen, with Sixo turning to the Thirty-Mile Woman, Halle and Sethe with their growing family, and Mrs. Garner becoming sick. He thinks about the past, to when he first saw Sethe, where "...she moved him. From room to room. Like a rag doll." This gives us perspective to how he was greatly influenced by Sethe's personality and her presence overall. She was able to make him do things even he didn't want to do. He thinks back to the time where they created their master plan to escaping Sweet Home. Everyone had a part to play, and it was planned out impeccably. "But. Sethe was pregnant...But. Neighbors discouraged...But. Sethe's children...But. After the conversation...But. Halle is told to work...But. They had to alter it..." is repeated in order to emphasize the events that happened in order to show how there were many things preventing from their plan working out the way it was supposed to be. Paul D thinks about the day they escaped, and remembers "A teasing August rain that raises expectations it cannot fill." This gives us some foreshadowing to what may happen when they try to escape. How they are excited to be able to leave, but it does not happen, therefore is unable to fulfill the expectation.

Syntax is the use of punctuation, sentence structure, juxtaposition, and other elements [pacing] to create tone and mood within the story. Punctuation within the story helps the story to easily flow or slow down as the author intends it to be. For example, short sentences with all periods make the reader stop at every period. So as there is an increase of stops in the reading, it becomes slow and sluggish to read. Along with periods, many commas within a sentence or series of sentences have this same effect upon the reader. But as long and flowing sentences without commas are put together, the pacing of the story becomes faster and easier to read. Without a lot of breaks and stops in the sentences, the reader is able to speed through the story. Sentence structure, the arrangement of words in a sentence, is also a big part of syntax. Determining how to convey your idea through the choice of sentence structure is a very tricky. There are many possible ways to write about one idea but how it is written determines how it will be acceptance of the audience. For instance, when a sentence is long, medium, or short, it affects how the sentence is perceived and read. Long sentences quickens the reading and gives the reader a sense of rush while short sentences drags the reading. Part of sentence structure, sentence patterns are also affective in syntax within writing. Sentence patterns include declarative sentences, compound sentences, loose sentences, and many more. In syntax, when many declarative sentences are put together, it shows assertiveness and force. And as compound-complex sentences are made, it makes the reader aware that the subject of the sentence is confusing. Other elements under sentence structure are natural orders, and inverted orders of sentences. Natural orders are the normal ways of writing while inverted orders changes so that the predicate comes before the noun. In using inverted orders of sentences structure, it makes the sentences and the passage seem odd and awkward. This makes creates an eerie and scary feeling

for the reader. As we see, syntax is used to help identify tone within the story and also helps the reader understand the story more.

In “Beloved”, the use of syntax is greatly evident throughout the book. At the start of the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter, we can easily spot the use of syntax right away. As this chapter talks about the church where Paul D spent his nights, it has a series of details that describe the church and the activities that happen there. At the beginning in of the chapter is says, “They were papered over while members considered whether to paint or curtain them—how to have privacy without losing the little light that might want to shine on them.” This long sentence is divided into two parts and talks about details about the church. Having no commas or sentences to drag the sentence on, the sentence is paced very quickly for the reader. The whole paragraph is designed like this because it creates a tone of objectivity that is good for showing details.

Another use of syntax in this chapter is found when the author says, “Well, that’s the way it was. Nobody counted on Garner dying. Nobody though he could. How ‘bout that? Everything rested on Garner being alive. Without his life each of their fell into pieces. Now ain’t that slavery or what is it?” These series of sentences uses informal language to describe what happened when Mr. Garner had died and school teacher replacing him. Speaking to the reader by asking questions and also using informal language such as “ain’t” helps us to perceive this part of the story as a story. The author seems to be telling us the story himself rather than just narrating the story. In doing this, author transforms the serious and dramatic remembrance of Mr. Garner dying into something casual to talk about. In short, the author downplays the mood of the death of the master. When the author writes, “He [schoolteacher] complained they ate too much, rested too much, talked too much, which was certainly true compared to him, because schoolteacher ate little, spoke less, and rested not at all.”, it juxtaposes the characteristics of the slaves and

schoolteacher. In juxtaposing their characteristics, the author compares the differences between schoolteacher and the slaves, noting how they are very different from each other. This large difference in appetite, social skills, and sleep constitutes the reason why schoolteacher is so harsh with the slaves. And as the author juxtaposes it, there is a greater emphasis on this difference. Later we notice a series of questions that Paul D asks himself. He asks, “Oh, he did manly tings, but was that Garner’s fig or his own will? What would he have been anyway—before Sweet Home—without Garner? In sixo’s country, or his mother’s? Or, God help him, on the boat? Did a whiteman saying it make it so?...” These series of questions strung together like this helps us to understand the internal conflict that Paul D has about his manhood. We can see from the amount and complexity of his questions that Paul D is deeply considering his manhood. Also we can see him questioning whether he is a “real” man like Halle and Sixo.

Another example of syntax being used in this chapter is when it talks about the plan to escape from Sweet Home. Sixo told Halle “what his Thirty-Mile Woman told him. That seven Negroes on her place were joining two others going north. That the two others had done it before and knew the way. That one of the two, a women, would wait for them in the corn when it was high—one night and a half of the next day she would wait...That she would rattle and that would be the sign.” Talking about the what Sixo’s woman told him, the use of “that” as the start of the next three sentences moves each idea along and combines them together. The syntactic use of “that” is repetition and is also a use of parallelism. Each “that” sentence adds on to the previous one, making it one long story and a plan of escape from Sweet Home. This escape from Sweet Home is carefully planned and observed. This is seen when it describes them “watching and memorizing the comings and goings of schoolteacher and his pupils: what is wanted when and where; how long it takes. Mrs. Garner, restless at night, is sunk in sleep all morning...School



Teacher writes in his notebook after supper; the pupils clean, mend or sharpen tools.” When these sentences are analyzed, we can see by the semi-colons, commas, and periods that this passage in the story is paced to be dragged on and slow. This passage is written like this to relate to the situation of the story. It relates to the situation in how all the slaves are waiting patiently and quietly planning for their escape. The slow process of planning the escape and getting ready for it clearly resembles the slow and dragging pacing of the sentences.

Another example of syntax is found in the reasons why their first plan to escape didn't work out. It writes, “But Sethe was pregnant in the spring and by August is so heavy with child...But. Neighbors discouraged by Garner when he was alive now feel free to visit Sweet Home...But. Sethe's children cannot play in the kitchen anymore...But. After the conversation about the shoat, Sixo is tied up with the stock at night, and locks...But. Halle is told to work extra...But. They had to alter it—just a little.” This long passage about why the original plan did not work is emphasized by repetitive word choice and parallelism. Because the word “but” is used at the beginning of every sentence, “but” becomes a series of bullet points to list down the reasons. Each “but” represents another thing going wrong with the plan. As each “but” is used, it drives another nail into the coffin of their plans to escape. Each “but” used consecutively builds upon the other ones, making a greater emphasis on why the plans failed.

Syntax is also found in the passage “By the light of hominy fire Sixo straightens. He is through with his song. He laughs. A rippling sound like Seth's sons make when they tumble in hay or splash in rainwater. His feet are cooking; the cloth of his trousers smokes. He lughs. Something is funny.” This passage talks about how Sixo was burned to death as a punishment for running away from Sweet Home. This passage is made up of a series of short and precise sentences that all connect together to create a mood. Since the sentences are all short ones with

periods slowing down the pacing, it helps to create the eerie mood that the author wants to make. This way of using syntax makes the reader feel like time is going very slowly as this process takes place. The details of the situation are heightened by the short sentence structure. Just a little later, after seeing Sixo murdered, Paul D soon finds out his dollar worth. He says that he discovered “the dollar value of his weight, his strength, his heart, his brain, his penis, and his future.” This type of sentence structure uses parallelism to equate all of the things he thinks he is worth. All of himself that is of equal value is only worth \$900. He is broken by this because it makes Paul D paranoid to how much he is worth compared to the rest of the slaves.

## Chapter 25

Paul D’s drunken state continues on into this chapter as he and Stamp Paid sit down to discuss Paul’s choice about leaving the house as in the line “I can’t read. You got any more newspaper for me, just a waste of time” Furthermore, as Paul D elaborates on his problems with Stamp Paid he makes a variety of promises and “plans”, however through the author’s choice of words, although Stamp Paid hadn’t straight out said that Paul D’s plans were bogus, he made a reference to his inability to complete and fulfill these plans as shown in the line “Any planning in a bottle is short, thought Stamp, but he knew from personal experience the pointlessness of telling a drinking man no to.” Stamp Paid had been the man who had primarily shown the newspaper clipping to Paul D and because he did so he felt it was his primary responsibility to relocate Paul D into an area where he would be safe as shown in the line “No. No. Nothing like that. I came looking for you to ask your pardon. Apologize.” To ease Paul D and comfort him,

Stamp Paid begins his story of why he had changed his name to Stamp Paid rather than his old name, Joshua. This particular incident plays a large role in the story because it signifies Stamp Paid's rebirth which can further personify Paul D's change of heart at the end of the story. Stamp Paid explains his story of how Vashti, the woman he loved, was every day taken in as a mistress to his master. Originally Stamp Paid wanted to kill his master as shown in the line "Seemed longer. I should have killed him" however Vashti had convinced him to have patience and let the owner take advantage of her because if he did anything out of anger and emotions then his life would be the price to pay. Similarly, Stamp Paid tries to use this experience as a foundation to how he feels Paul D should become because of all the emotional tension faced by Paul D. One day, Vashti returned to him after being with their owner, and he realized that she would want to be out of her misery instead of enduring this on a day to day basis. For that reason, Stamp Paid decided to "snap her neck" and put her out of her supposed misery. From then on, "Joshua" felt that he had paid his dues by putting his beloved Vashti out of her misery, and he thus changed his name to Stamp Paid and he has since then become a server of others hoping to similarly put them out of misery. Stamp Paid also tells this story to Paul D in order to reinforce her actions to kill someone close to her, Beloved. Stamp Paid had felt as if it was a necessity for him to kill Vashti in order to save her, reinforcing the actions of Sethe, who killed Beloved just out of the love for her. As shown in the line "She ain't crazy. She love those children. She was trying to out-hurt the hurter." The last significant use of diction that plays a large role in the story is when Paul D feels a certain "spasm" down his back at both the mention of Beloved and his feelings for Sethe at the time. This signifies Paul D's inability to fully grasp on why he had truly left 124. He then takes time to reconsider the reason as shown in the line "A shudder ran through Paul D. A bone-cold spasm that made him clutch his knees. He didn't know if it was bad whiskey, nights in

the cellar, pig fever, iron bits, smiling roosters, fired feet, laughing dead men, hissing grass, rain, apple blossoms, neck jewelry, Judy in the slaughterhouse, Halle in the butter, ghost-white stairs, chokecherry trees, cameo pins, aspens, Paul A's face, sausage or the loss of a red, red heart".

"Stamp Paid was still fingering the ribbon and it made a little motion in his pants pocket." The red ribbon Stamp Paid found belonged to a little girl who was enslaved. The red represents the blood that was shed in Sweet Home and the hardships that the little girl went through. Stamp Paid fingering the ribbon in his pocket shows that he is nervous and is trying to grasp the meaning behind the ribbon. He treasures it because it is one of the few items he has that connects him to the actual enslavement. It reminds him of the past in which it helps keep him on track of "repaying his debts." The ribbon serves as a constant reminder to Stamp.

"The rider looked at him and then back at Stamp Paid. Loosening the right rein, he turned his horse toward the road, then changed his mind and came back." As the rider came back to tell Paul D that he should respect the grounds of the Church, he represents how the community tries to help each other out if one is doing a bad deed. Even in the smallest form of help, the rider made Paul D realize his mistake and corrects it.

"She was drinking out of it and just gazing out over the yard. I went over. Stood back a ways and took off my hat." This scene portrays Stamp as a very respected man as he gives his respect to Vashit although she committed a "sin" against him and does not remember him. He keeps himself very reserved and well maintained in the presence of Vashti. He displays signs of respect by taking off his hat.

"Paul D tossed the bottle on the ground and stared at the golden chariot on its label. No horse. Just a golden coach draped in blue cloth." Signifying depressing, Paul D's emotions are

reflected upon the acts he commits, such as the bottle throwing. He sees his emotions through the image he creates with the chariot but no horses present. "The golden coach draped in blue cloth" shows depression overriding the uplifting spirit that is suppressed by that emotion.

As Paul D tells Stamp Paid about Beloved, he begins to feel a rush of coldness overwhelm him. "He didn't know if it was bad whiskey, nights in the cellar, pig fever, iron bits, smiling roosters... Paul A's face, sausage or the loss of a red, red heart." The description Paul D feels when he mentions Beloved tells the readers that he does not enjoy Beloved's presence and he doesn't understand the full reason why Beloved came back in physical form if she really was Sethe's child. Paul D refers to the feelings he gets from past experiences he does not cherish or would see as pleasant back on Sweet Home ("... laughing dead men, hissing grass, neck jewelry...") Paul D has a weird feeling about Beloved when he begins to talk about her. "Paul D dug his fingers underneath his cap and rubbed the scalp over his temple." This action shows that Paul D is confused about what is going on and that it hurts him trying to figure out the right explanation for the situation.

Stamp Paid also represents ironic when he says "I should have killed [Vashti]." But he says that "She died". This confuses reader by providing an irony. This is ironic because he claims that he should have killed her but she died. Is that mean he claims that he did not kill her but "he" killed her. This intrigues the reader think deeper into Stamp Paid's mind, how he decides either to tell the truth or lie. However, the reader does not know whether he killed her or not but it sort of portrays that he killed at in my perspective. Stamp Paid is socially educated as he knows how to act in the community of full of white. Even though he abhors the white race, he acknowledges the social stance that it can not be changed. Hence, this irony represents that blacks during this era did not have the courage to stand up for themselves and try to be involved

with the politics regarding about slavery and their rights. However, at the same time, Paul D shows an irony also. "I'm afraid of Sethe. I'm afraid of her." He wasn't actually scared of Sethe. He was scared of Beloved's appearance and how she seduced him. He felt that Beloved is taking control of the house and regulating Sethe as it is evident that Sethe became more like Beloved and Beloved became more like Sethe, a mother. Paul D is actually afraid of Beloved therefore. In the beginning when Paul D first entered the house, he "killed" the spirit, which seems to be more horrifying than appearance of Beloved. But this time, Paul D does not kill her but leaves the house. This is also ironic because he once had punished the spirit but he can not anymore just because it appeared as a human form.

"Let me tell you how I got my name. They called me Joshua. I renamed myself and I'm going to tell you why I did it". Sixo in this scene sounds as if he's determined to prove a point. He is very straight to the point and plans on providing Stamp Paid with valuable information that can be used for future purposes. "I should have killed him. She said no, but I should have." Suddenly, his tone shifts from that of didactic, informational, to violent, criminal. This shift in tone creates a dynamic speech pattern for Sixo.

The red ribbon that Stamp Paid was constantly "[stroking] between his forefinger and thumb" while he was talking to Paul D symbolized the hardships that the slaves had gone through. When Stamp Paid found the red ribbon, he found hair strands with bits of the scalp attached to it that belonged to a little girl. He guessed that this ribbon belonged to a girl who was killed, representing all the blood that was shed numerous times throughout this book by innocent slaves and what the world was like during this time era for them.

The night that Vashti went back to Stamp Paid for good, he had the greatest temptation to kill her. He had much anger built inside of him because he had known his own wife had been

sleeping with his young master. Stamp Paid fought the urge of breaking Vashti's neck and instead changed his name. His previous name before he had changed it to Stamp Paid was Joshua, and this act of renaming himself symbolizes his way of rejuvenating himself. By renaming himself, he was leaving his traumatic past that he had gone through while being enslaved. He was killing the person who he was before and starting a new life as the person he renamed himself as.

Paul D and Stamp Paid talk about their lives and things that they've overcome such as Vashti and Beloved. Paul D is sick of everything that has happened, and he finally asks Stamp Paid, "Tell me something, Stamp. Tell me this one thing. How much is a nigger supposed to take? Tell me. How much?" Stamp Paid replies, "All he can. All he can." Showing that they have to try to always try and pursue the best that they can and deal with all obstacles. Paul D then repeats, "Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?" This gives us a sense of desperation; why do they have to go through pain and suffering? Why do they have to deal with everything?

In chapter 25 the passage "Till one morning Vashti came in and sat by the window. A Sunday. We worked our own patches on Sunday. She sat by the window looking out of it. 'I'm back,' she said. 'I'm back, Josh.' I looked at the back of her neck. She had a real small neck. I decided to break it. You know, like a twig—just snap it." uses syntax to portray Stamp Paid's tone towards his wife. Talking about how he hated that his wife was used and raped continuously without anything he could do about it, he tells the story of how he "broke" her neck. These short and abrupt sentences convey the anger and resentment that Stamp Paid had towards his wife and the master. So, as Stamp Paid was telling the story, he may have added emphasis on certain words, but we cannot tell. The short sentences also describe the frustration of Stamp Paid of not being

able to do anything about it. Just like a frustrated person speaks loudly and abruptly, we can tell that Stamp Paid was frustrated of not being able to save his wife from the white man.

Another example in chapter 25 is at the near end of the chapter. The passage reads, “He didn’t know if it was bad whiskey, nights in the cellar, pig fever, iron bits, smiling roosters, fired feet, laughing dead men, hissing grass, rain, apple blossoms, neck jewelry, Judy in the slaughterhouse, Halle in butter, ghost-white stairs, choke-cherry trees, cameo pins, aspens, Paul A’s face, sausage or the loss of a red, red heart.” This long, monotonous sentence describes many of Paul D’s memories. From nights in the cellar to aspens and to rain, these factors or elements could have caused that bone-cold spasm that made Paul D clutch his knees. These series of factors are put together to make the reader see all the things that Paul D has gone through. All the pain and suffering are coming back to him. This passage, being a list of elements, is what contributes to the dehumanization of Paul D during his whole lifetime. We see all his pains, so that we can understand all the suffering that Paul D has taken over the years. And after this, Paul D asks, “how much is a nigger supposed to take?” and Stamp Paid replies, “All he can.” Somehow disturbed by this insight, Paul D says, “Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?” The repetitive nature of the sentence structure creates sadness as the mood. We can imagine Paul D remembering all his pains and asking when it will stop. When he is told that it may never stop, he gets depressed and therefore asks “why” several times.

## Chapter 26

The opening sentence of Chapter 26 already gives away the theme and environment of the setting in the line “124 was quiet. Denver, who thought she knew all about silence, was



surprised to learn hunger could do that: quiet you down and wear you out.” This diction exemplifies not only Denver’s lonely and socially awkward personality, but also how Sethe and Beloved had traded spots and Sethe had become the child as Beloved grew into a motherly figure. Denver further elaborates in this chapter on how Beloved was taking over Sethe, changing from a role of a child to a role of the mother, and furthermore the power of the house as shown in the line “Beloved bending over Sethe looked the mother, Sethe the teething child, for other than those time when Beloved needed her, Sethe confined herself to a corner chair.” Denver also starts growing socially because of the collective pity the town feels for Denver having to put up with not only one child, Beloved, but also the newborn child, Sethe. Denver assumes responsibility for the line as outlined by the author in the line “As Denver’s outside life improved, her home life deteriorated.” Throughout this chapter, we see Sethe’s falling condition, but her condition is not derived from her lack of care, but rather her over-intensive care for Beloved. She gives so much attention to Beloved that she forgets to care for herself and furthermore, Denver. As exemplified in the book, this attitude was portrayed because Sethe was trying to make up the eighteen years of love Beloved made her feel she “owed”. This love for Beloved gets taken to such an extreme that in one instance when Beloved is clawing at “her throat until rubies of blood opened there...” Sethe, in an instant, tries to go to Beloved in order to wipe “the jewels away”. The blood of Beloved is so labeled as to show how precious Sethe feels Beloved’s physical form is. The “rubies of blood” are shown through Sethe’s eyes as priceless because Beloved’s lost love is now in the process of being regained as shown in the line “Sethe was trying to make up for the handsaw; Beloved was making her pay for it. Sethe is so frantic on Beloved clawing at her throat releasing the blood because these “jewels” may remind Sethe of her diamond earrings that she had lost at the plantation in order to protect her children. All these

memories return warning Sethe that she does not want to lose her baby girl, Beloved, again. There are many factors that lead to Sethe becoming the crazy, and frantic woman she soon becomes living with Beloved, however, the town feels as if the leading factor for Sethe becoming the way she is because in Janey's words "Sethe had lost her wits, finally, as Janey knew she would-trying to do it all alone with her nose in the air" explaining that Sethe's proud personality had ultimately led to her demise. Through Janey's voice of tone and diction we can see the attitude she has towards both Baby Suggs and Sethe. For Sethe "Janey Wagon went on about pride until she got to Baby Suggs, for whom she had nothing but sweet words." Baby Suggs is referred to as a sweet woman who is the one standing factor that holds the community together in a cumulative effort to help Sethe's family. The respect the town for Baby Suggs allows Sethe's family to be cared for by the town and that signifies Baby Suggs ever standing presence even after her death. Janey also questions about Beloved to Denver in order to figure out exactly why her appearance led to Sethe's declining health. Janey then derives the answer that the reason that Beloved affected Sethe so much is because she had no future as shown in the line "The cousin. She got any lines her hands?" The lines in her hand are meant to signify palm-reading and the ability to tell the future, however, with no lines in the palm of her hand, Beloved is meant to signify the past rather than the future. Sethe being so overwhelmed by her past is left going backwards in time slowly making her way from mother to child as portrayed in the line earlier shown. Another character that expresses various themes through her diction within the story is Ella. Ella personified as a reflection of Sethe and her actions because Ella had also killed her child in order to save the child, and herself. Ella knew that love was the one factor that kept people weak and unable to live through life and its challenges as shown in the line "Nobody loved her and she wouldn't have liked it if they had, for she considered love a serious disability."

Out of all the people in the town, Ella was the one who could properly understand “Sethe’s rage in the shed twenty years ago, but not her reaction to it” for Ella felt that her reaction was misdirected. The “misdirection” of her rage was supposed to be directed, in Ella’s mind, to the attacker rather than the attacked. Although Ella was so upset at the actions of Sethe, she still felt that some measure should be taken against the whites who she referred to as “the lowest yet”. As shown in the line “[This incident] gave her opportunity to measure what could very well be the devil himself against the lowest yet” Ella feels as if she is stripped of the opportunity to go against “the lowest yet” because this “devil” like presence is going against it. For that reason, “It was Ella more than anyone who convinced the others that rescue was in order.” Although Ella had no connection personally to the invading being, she expresses the necessity of her involvement because she felt as if the ghostly figure had made an “invasion” of her world by “[taking] flesh and [coming] in her world...” Ella felt that when the ghost “showed out from its ghostly place-shaking stuff, crying, smashing and such-Ella respected it” however, she also stated that “nobody needed a grown-up evil sitting at the table with a grudge”, and the significance of the “evil” sitting at the table was that when Beloved had entered the physical world from her spiritual form, not only was she making a ruckus in the house, but Sethe and Denver had to physically attend to Beloved by providing her food, shelter, and other necessities creating a burden on their lives. Through entering the physical world, Beloved was not only deteriorating their spirits, but also deteriorating their resources of life. In addition to Ella coming up against the ghost that haunted 124, the women of the community had mutually agreed to attack this ghost together as shown in the line “so thirty women made up that company and walked, slowly toward 124”. This moment in the story signified the first time that the community had come together collectively since the death of Baby Suggs. The fact that all the women were

fighting for one cause exemplified a theme of overcoming an obstacle through a collective approach as shown in the book when Beloved disappears. As the women approach 124, they seem to be entering some type of force field through which they all reminisce of the past and their times at the house while Baby Suggs was alive. As shown in the line “When they caught up with each other, all thirty, and arrived at 124, the first thing they saw was not Denver sitting on the steps, but themselves”, the women all began to remember the earlier times when Baby Suggs had previously brought them all together for the big feast held at the house. This feast was the last time that all the women had been previously seen together and that is why they felt “Younger, stronger, even as little girls lying” and the same day as the feast was when Baby Suggs had given them the speech about “loving themselves” which is why these women all “[run] down to the creek, [tease] the men, [and hoist] children on their hips”. That is when the women feel as if they are much younger than they truly are and through the line “young and happy, playing in Baby Suggs’ yard, not feeling the envy that surfaced the next day” we see that they had forgotten about their reason for coming together. The big feast was signified in the line “Catfish was popping grease in the pan and they saw themselves scoop German potato salad onto the plate. Cobbler oozing purple syrup colored their teeth” and the Cobbler is previously mentioned when Stamp Paid picks the berries for the feast at 124. Mr. Bodwin was a man who prided himself in helping the Blacks of the community and for that reason all the other whites had referred to him as the “bleached nigger” in order to expose him as a disgrace to the whites. They had also “caught him and shoe-blackened his face and his hair”. Seeing all these women coming to the house made Sethe feel like “the Clearing had come to her in all its heat and simmering leaves, where the voices of women searched for the right combination, the key, the code, the sound that broke the back of words.” This right combination, key, and code was the

solution that these women were searching for to help Sethe rid of Beloved and her effect on the house, 124. Finally at the end of the chapter, Beloved begins to disappear because Sethe, for the first time during Beloved's presence, leaves her for another group of people as shown in the line "Now she is running into the faces of the people out there, joining them and leaving Beloved behind. Alone. Again. Then Denver, running too. Away from her to the pile of people out there." Furthermore, as Sethe runs with the ice pick in her hand towards Mr. Bodwin, who Sethe believes is school teacher, Beloved realizes the true love her mom had for her, and although Sethe had the choice to kill Beloved over School Teacher, she ultimately decided to kill the attacker, rather than kill the attacked, which was the situation the first time around. This particular part is shown through the line "And if she thinks anything, it is no. No no. Nonono. She flies. The ice pick is not in her hand; it is her hand."

"Bright clothes – with blue stripes and sassy prints" is served as a reference to the attire of the wealthy. The "thirty- eight dollars of life savings" that Sethe accumulated over her lifetime was used to "feed themselves with fancy food and decorate themselves with ribbon and dress goods". During this time period, the rich would make themselves known by wearing flashy clothes with luxurious designs. This passage also demonstrates the differences in social status. Just as the rich lived in comfy, roomy, houses, and the poor lived in crowded, small, rooms, the wealthy also wore clothes that made sharp distinctions with those that the poorer people wore.

The allusion to the "rainbow colored children" serves to show the unlikelyness and "misfortune" of children of mixed nationality. "Gray eyes and yellow woolly hair, every strand of which she hated", common features of interracial people, were frowned upon by most people of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Not only did the "rainbow colored people" get picked on by the wealthy,

white, landowners, “her light skin got her picked for a colored girl’s normal school” as well. Simply put, children of mixed nationality weren’t fit in white schools or colored schools.

Toni Morrison makes several allusions to Christianity throughout the novel. Even the novel’s epigraph is taken from Romans chapter 9 verse 25 which hints that several references to God will be made constantly as the novel progresses. “Beloved” discusses numerous ideas relative to Christianity throughout passages including, but not limited to, sin, sacrifice, redemption, forgiveness, love, and resurrection that resound with biblical allusions. In chapter 26, Janey suggests that “there’s a God after all”. This statement implies that the 19<sup>th</sup> century was filled with mixed beliefs in terms of religions; some believed god exists, others believed there was no such thing. Although Janey may have sounded as if she was bringing humor into the table, she was actually proposing that God exists.

The “shield and sword” that people of Christian faith brought is a reference to the Christian beliefs. By repeating that “most brought a little of both”, Morrison is stating that there were many acts of conversions during this period of time. Though not certain that everyone would get proselytized, we can look back in retrospect that most people, regardless of color, would certainly enjoy a Christian lifestyle. African Americans, especially, were actively involved in the Christian church scene as Morrison even states that “God was their only hope in survival”

Morrison makes an allusion to the former slaves’ “flesh” to let the readers experience first-hand the cruel and violent punishments that the slaveholders inflicted upon their slaves. The scene of Slaves “whipping [Sethe] like she was a batter” clarifies all misconceptions of the benevolence of certain slave owners. Although many believed prior to this event that slave

holders were generally malevolent, the friendly behaviors of Mr. and Mrs. Garner at times contradicted the idea.

Sethe finally realizes that the visitor is her child Beloved when she first discovers the scar on her neck. "... the little curved shadow of a smile in the kootchy-kootchy-coo place under her chin-once Sethe saw it, fingered it and closed her eyes for a long time, the two of them cut Denver out of the games." When Sethe discovers her child has returned, she neglects Denver because she regrets what she did in the past and wants Beloved to know that she loves her and wants to do everything to keep Beloved happy. "From the night they ice-skated under a star-loaded sky ... and shadow pictures in the gloaming." Sethe and Beloved enjoyed each others company and spent countless hours of the day together to express each other's love that was absent in the time span from when Sethe killed Beloved. Sethe tries to make Beloved happy by spending all her money on food and ribbon fabric for Beloved to enjoy. While this makes Beloved happy, Denver is bitter and frustrated about the attention that is not given to her. This sparks her decision to find help from Lady Jones and the Bodwins.

As Sethe continues to bathe Beloved in materialistic items and endless love, Beloved's child-like personality begins to erupt greatly. "Beloved slammed things, wiped table clean of plates, threw salt on the floor, broke a windowpane." Her destructive behavior does not raise a concern for Sethe as her and Denver "mended the plates [and] swept the salt." Although Sethe does not realize the destruction Beloved has caused, Denver does. Denver notices that Beloved's violent behavior is not appropriate and fears for the safety of her mom. "...it dawned on Denver that if Sethe didn't wake up one morning and pick up a knife, Beloved might." Denver saw it to be inappropriate for Sethe to have to constantly serve Beloved's needs as Sethe works for Beloved day and night.

“At the fourth house the buds of a sycamore tree had rained down on the roof and made the yard look as though grass grew there.” The description of Lady Jones’ neighborhood portrays the area to be a typical, well-maintained white neighborhood. The clean area provides an atmosphere of hostility to Denver because she is unfamiliar with the area and she is afraid of being attacked by the white men in the area. “Under her headcloth her scalp was wet with tension.” Denver becomes nervous as she approaches the house, unaware of the environment she is in. The numerous amount of descriptions describing the neighborhoods that Denver pass gives Denver a mysterious look as she is not familiar with the houses. It makes her anxious about who or what is around the next corner as she continues to walk. “The stone porch sitting in a skirt of ivy, pale yellow curtains at the windows...”

“Heavy eyebrows, thick baby lashes and the unmistakable love call that shimmered around children until they learned better.” The description of Denver from the view of Lady Jones is that of a typical child. Lady Jones sees Denver as she once knew her and doesn’t think that Denver changed one bit.

Beloved’s odd behavior continues. “She sometimes screamed, ‘Rain! Rain!’ and clawed her throat until rubies of blood opened there, made brighter by her midnight skin.” As Beloved claws her throat, she reminds Sethe of her action which disturbs Sethe. The reference to “rubies of blood” can coincide with Sethe’s diamond earrings that Beloved remembered from when she was a child. It scares Sethe when Beloved claws at her throat because Sethe does not want to be reminded of her mistake. As she tries her best to keep Beloved satisfied, it eats away at her own pride and self-identity. “ She sat in the chair licking her lips like a chastised child while Beloved ate up her life, took it, swelled up with it, grew taller on it.” As Sethe loses control of her own life and starts living for Beloved, her energy is transferred to Beloved and she is no longer able



to function for herself. Beloved's odd behavior fuels Sethe's desire to keep Beloved happy and therefore is restless when it comes to Beloved's demands.

“His hair was a cluster of raised, widely spaced dots made of nail heads. And he was on his knees. His mouth wide as a cup... painted across the pedestal he knelt on were the words ‘At Yo Service.’” The little statue that was found in the Bodwins' house depicts a young black man as a slave. Although the Bodwins are black advocates, they still possess a racial mind through the statue. The description of the statue is that of a typical black man during enslavement and he is in a position that illustrates his inferior status towards whites. The image created by the description, such as the spelling of the written words” describes the man to be of illiterate background and stereotypes the black community to be only of a slave background.

As the day approached when the townswomen decided to congregate in front of 124, the day was described to be “so wet and hot...” “Hanging meat and things rotting in jars; from small animals dead in the fields, town sewers and factories. The stench, the heat, the moisture-trust the devil to make his presence known.” The atmosphere of the area is a mucky, overwhelming mixture of moist and humid weather to create an image as if the devil was present. The reference to the devil overlaps the feeling Beloved brings to 124, making the journey to 124 an exhausted one.

Mr. Bodwin advances closer to 124, being described as “dark, velvety, its beauty was enhanced by his strong clean-shaven chin.” Morrison conveys Mr. Bodwin to be an influential figure and one of beauty as many women in the community look at Mr. Bodwin's mustache as “the most attractive feature he had.” His description exemplifies the typical white man image as he rides in his coach coming to 124. Mr. Bodwin's influence among the people allows himself to

become well-known in the community. However, Sethe mistakes him for schoolteacher because he resembles certain features of schoolteacher as he rides to the house. Sethe's faulty mistake almost cost Mr. Bodwin's life, although Mr. Bodwin's reason for visit was to help her.

“Thunderblack and glistening, she stood on long straight legs, her belly big and right. Vines of hair twisted all over her head. Jesus. Her smile was dazzling.” The picture of Beloved shocks the townswomen as she stands on the porch, pregnant. Two things shock the women. At first they are amazed at the physical form that the “devil-child” has taken. The beautiful human form of Beloved takes the townswomen by surprise as her human form was not what they were expecting her to be, but instead, beautiful. Second, the women are shocked that Beloved is pregnant. The twisted hair of Beloved, although it is usually portrayed as messy and unattractive, is disregarded as ugly but embraces Beloved's beautiful features and Beloved is only seen as striking.

Sethe and Beloved's position is changed; it poses an irony because usually mother and daughter do not trade job. Sethe took care of Beloved in the beginning of the story but as it progressed through the plot, Beloved seemed to take more charge and she becomes physically and emotionally strong as Sethe lost her strength and her tendencies to motivate her children and carry on the family. Beloved has grown as the story continues. But her mind and logical thinking has not matured as she may look mature. This is ironic because she is still like a baby who wants the attention from her mother. Ironies help us to determine the correlation of each plot as we can perceive that Sethe was the mother in the beginning but gradually became the “child” as it is evident on the book, “She sat in the chair licking her lips like a chastised child while Beloved ate up her life, took it, swelled up with it, grew taller on it”. Beloved, however, is literally portrayed as a monster.

An irony is also illustrated in one scene when Beloved's stomach gets bigger even though she doesn't consume food. This seems to contradict its idea because Beloved is actually not getting bigger because of the baby or food; she is getting bigger because of mass consumption of Sethe's love, "Beloved, who was getting bigger, seemed nevertheless exhausted. Her stomach is full of love from Sethe. She tends to keep receiving the love because she wanted to get all the love that she wasn't able get due to her death. Even though Sethe keeps telling her that she loves Beloved, Beloved does not eventually "forgive" her. "She understand Sethe's rage" Ella her friends. However, she discouraged Sethe to kill her babies but she already has done the same thing. This makes her hypocrite but at the same time ironic. Sethe kills her Beloved as Ella killed her children to prevent and protect away from the White because it would be living hell under the control of them. "Ella didn't like the idea of past errors taking possession of the present." It illustrates that Ella has went to same incident. She is also a leader of the Black women society so it was very hypocritical for her to kill her children even if it was to better the "life". "His hair was a cluster of raised, widely spaced dots made of nail heads. And he was on his knees. His mouth, wide as a cup, held the coins needed to pay for the delivery or some other small service, but could just as well have held buttons, pins, or crab-apple jelly. Painted across the pedestal he knelt on were the words 'At Yo Service'". This extensive and descriptive quote represents a black boy statue in the Bodwins's Residence. Bodwins are known as the abolitionists and actively political activists who support anti-slavery and helps many freed and non-freed slaves to find a better life and find a job as he helped out Denver. Having this such statue is ironic because they are known to be the most influential and socially well known anti-slavery activists but they have the statue of a black slave boy, which contradicts their title and their environment. This irony helps us to acknowledge that our world is still full of prejudice and

it resides within our nature and it can not be changed or transformed because it will always stay within our soul and our community. Another example is presented when Sethe comes out to kill "schoolteacher", who is actually Mr. Bodwins. It is ironic because Sethe is trying to kill someone who she perceives as schoolteacher. Apparently, her eyes perceived all white male to be "schoolteacher" because she had to go through such a hard time, killing Beloved for the sake of her life. Towards the end of the chapter, a group of black women comes to Sethe's house to "save" her away from the devil, Beloved. They originally disliked because she killed her own daughter. They thought she was insane and she should be condemned to hell but it was ironic that the townswomen helped her family and her in general. This is not only shows an irony but also shows a core generosity that author wants to pose in the story, the importance of the society and community. Therefore, it is ironic that they helped Sethe and her family.

"I want work, Miss Lady. I can't do anything, but I would learn it for you if you want extra." Denver's dialogues show her determination to work. The way she admitted that she isn't perfect yet she is willing to learn is enough for Lady Jones to feel comfortable using Denver.

The conversation between Ella and Janey holds a unique speech pattern. "You talking about flesh?" "I'm talking about flesh." "Whipping her?" "Like she was batter." "Guess she had it coming." "Nobody got that coming". When Ella uses simile to describe Sethe's whipping scene, we are able to visualize the schoolteacher's actions through mere words. Ella also shows her stance on freedom by asserting that "What's fair ain't necessarily right". She believes in equal treatment of everyone, even slaves.

The thirty-eight dollars of life savings that Sethe had worked so hard for symbolizes the temporary happiness that money provided in 124. The money "went to feed themselves with fancy food and decorate themselves with ribbon and dress goods," which was mostly beneficial

to Beloved because it was what made her happy. When money finally became short, arguments between Sethe and Beloved broke out constantly. Beloved wasn't happy anymore that Sethe couldn't provide the things that she did before after they couldn't afford the materialistic things. The thirty-eight dollars of life savings also represent Sethe's scary obsession of Beloved's preferences and making her happy. Sethe spent the money that she worked so hard for on mostly Beloved and not on her other daughter, Denver. With that money, Sethe gave Beloved "the best chair, the biggest piece, the prettiest plate, the brightest ribbon for her hair," – basically the best of the best. When Sethe didn't have enough money and food began to run low, she even sacrificed some of her own food to please Beloved. Sethe used up all her energy and effort on things to see Beloved happy.

- Denver, who transforms from a naïve girl to an independent woman, symbolizes the future. As she watches Sethe become small under the power of Beloved, Denver matures and grows independent. Sethe and Beloved were still caught up with each other and since "neither Beloved nor Sethe seemed to care what the next day might bring, Denver knew it was on her." She felt that she was responsible and the care-taker of Sethe, and she knew "she would have to leave the yard; step off the edge of the world, leave the two behind and go ask somebody for help" before things in 124 worsened. Denver's action to seek for help for Sethe later linked the community with Sethe and in doing this, Denver was providing Sethe a chance to finally leave the past memories of slavery and Beloved that haunted Sethe constantly.

Beloved, who gradually became more and more harmful to 124 and the community, symbolizes the past and the haunting memories of slavery. For eighteen years, Beloved couldn't forgive Sethe's sin of killing her when Sethe had only done this to keep Beloved from going through the pain of slavery. Beloved's coming back to life brings back memories from the past to

Sethe, who is so stuck on making her happy. To make Sethe feel guilty, “Beloved accused her of leaving her behind” and Sethe continued to beg for “forgiveness, counting, listening again and again her reasons: that Beloved was more important, meant more to her than her own life.” Beloved’s presence only brought back the taunting memories of slavery, which Sethe and the community had left behind so long ago and healed from.

Denver, Sethe, and Beloved spend more time together and eventually Sethe is fired from her work. The three girls play all day, “[Sethe’s] eyes fever bright,” as they make plans and have fun dressing “like carnival women with nothing to do.” They are enjoying their time together, and have finally found a time of peace and happiness when everyone can get along with each other and have fun. Then, Beloved starts to get controlling and the relationship between Beloved and Sethe becomes closer and more personal. They spend more time trying to get along, Beloved wanting food and sugar, while Sethe frantically does everything in her power to please her and make her feel as if she is important to Sethe once again. Denver eventually “Saw Sethe’s eyes bright but dead, alert but vacant,” showing us how much the dynamic had changed within the house they lived in. Then, Denver realized something that “rocked [her] like gunshot.” This gives an emphasis on the effect it had on Denver. She realizes how the roles within the women of 124 has rotated, from Denver protecting Beloved from Sethe, now she must protect Sethe from Beloved. This makes her realize that she needs to “step off the edge of the world,” making a huge step in her life and becoming more mature as a person. She takes a big risk and sacrifice for mostly her mother but also Beloved, but she wants to make sure that in the end, it is not Beloved who wins. As she left 124 Bluestone Road, “her heart kicked,” and she was “ready to be swallowed up in the world,” as she went to seek help from the community outside of their house. She did not know what to expect, or what to do, nervous for taking a big leap into the world of

responsibility and obstacles. Denver ends up visiting Lady Jones, someone who's "eyes grew dim" after her husband's death. There, Denver is able to inform Lady Jones of things that have been going on at the house, and they discuss things that may be able to happen for a job for Denver. While back at 124, Beloved and Sethe continue to play the roles of the mother and child, as Sethe "sat in the chair licking her lips like a chastised child." The more love and care Beloved got from both Denver and Sethe, the more Beloved's belly started to "[protrude] like a winning watermelon." It symbolizes the amount of love and care Beloved has gotten, that she has grown a belly from it, as well as the child with Paul D she is carrying inside her belly. As Denver visits the Bodwin's, she sees a sculpture of a blackboy, "bulging like moons, two eyes were all the face he had above the gaping red mouth. His hair was a cluster of raised, widely spaced dots made of nail heads. And he was on his knees. His mouth, wide as a cup..." This shows how although the Bodwins' have slaves and treat them fairly, they are still supportive of slavery and are not very good people. When ladies of the town hear of Beloved living in 124 and the "sin moving on in the house, unleashed and sassy," Ella rounds some of the women together in order to see for themselves exactly what it is that is living inside of 124 with Sethe and Denver. When the women rally to go over to the house, Denver is waiting for Mr. Bodwin to pick her up for her first day at work. Sethe comes out of the house to see what all of the commotion is, and when she sees Mr. Bodwin, she is immediately reminded of the schoolteacher. Instantly, "the icepick is not in her hand; it is her hand." This gives us an example of how quickly Sethe responded to a potential "threat" to her family, although Mr. Bodwin came for a good purpose, Sethe is still greatly influenced by Beloved's words and actions.

Chapter 26, one of the longest chapters in the books, has many syntactical elements that portray the tone of the story. One example is on the first page when it says "the hungrier they

got, the weaker; the weaker they got, the quieter they were” This is showing a direct relationship between their lack of food and how quiet the house now was. With the lack of food, they did not have the strength to even talk. Using this type of syntax, we can assume that series of chain reactions will occur within the story. Another example of syntax in chapter 26 is in the passage that says “the best chair, the biggest piece, the pretties plate, the brightest ribbon for her hair, and the more she took..” Because it lists down all the good and best things that “Beloved” was entitled to, it shows how greedy and self-interested Beloved is. This also shows the impact that she has on the household and on Denver. Using a list to describe this, it makes the reader believe the importance of Beloved in the novel. For example, now that Beloved gets the best of everything, Denver get nothing in return. However, even though Denver does not much, she still continues to be a large part of the story by taking care of Sethe and Beloved.

The passage, “Denver kept her eyes on the road in case they were whitemen; in case she was walking where they wanted to; in case they said something and she would have to answer them.” is also very syntactical. At this point of the story, we see Denver looking for a job so that she can support both Sethe and Beloved. And as she walks down the streets, she tries to keep herself under low profile so nothing would happen to her. The use of “incase in” in the three parts of this passage show how paranoid and cautious Denver is out in the real world. She only keeps her eye on the road because she believes many horrible things may happen to her and that worry is found in the 3 “incase” reasons. But in reality, nothing is really a danger to her because it was only in her head.

Another example of syntax in chapter 26 is about how 124 used to be an old way station. The passage reads “Others remembered the days when 124 was a way station...One remembered the tonic mixed there that cured a relative. One showed her the border of a



pillowslip...One said she wrapped Denver when she was a single day old..." The beginning of all these sentences refer to people or a group of people that remember the good old days of 124. "Others" acts as an initiative to prepare the reader to hear all of the good things that used to happen at 124. The "one"s in this passage prove to the reader examples and details of when 124 used to be a way station. Acting as a series of examples, the reader realizes that many good things were associated with 124 before it turned into a horror house.

The last syntactical element in chapter 26 is the description of the changing relationship between Sethe and Beloved. This part of the book is when Denver notices "Beloved bending over Sethe looked the mother, Sethe the teething child, for other than those times when Beloved needed her, Sethe confined herself to a corner chair. The bigger Beloved got, the smaller Sethe became; the brighter Beloved's eyes, the more those eyes that used never to look away became slits of sleeplessness." The change in the relationship is evident through the syntax used by the author. The author compares the two in a series of sentences that first describe Beloved's change and quickly compares it to Sethe's change. The syntax also helps us to understand the indirect relationship and the opposite role change of Beloved and Sethe. This is most evident when it says, "The bigger Beloved got, the smaller Sethe became." This is a symbol of the parasitic nature of Beloved and how she is punishing Sethe for her sin. And because of this parasitic nature of beloved, evident through syntax, we see that Beloved now is acting like the mother while Sethe is appears to be the child.

The Greek chorus was used to comment upon, at many times in a collective group, the dramatic action during a tragedy. The Greek Chorus can be anywhere from 15 to 20 people and often times helps to reveal information to both the audience and other characters. Along with these roles for the Greek Chorus, these people also represent the general population of that story.

They are representatives of society and the norms and often act by society's rules. The group of neighborhood women has similar roles in "Beloved" as the Greek chorus has in Tragedies. Just like the Greek chorus, the group of women in Beloved serves to comment upon Sethe's situation of being beaten by Beloved. This is evident in the passage "It took them days to get the story properly blown up and themselves agitated and then to calm down to assess the situation." They took the time to get into groups and began discussing and commenting on Sethe's odd predicament, just like the old Greek chorus. They said things like, "Guess she had it coming" and "you can't just up and kill your children" about Sethe. This is an example of how the group of women comments upon the drama occurring during the story. Also, just like the Greek chorus, they are a group of people of about 15-20 that represents the general population. They are symbols of society and provide information to the audience.

## Chapter 27:

To elaborate on how much food Beloved had devoured Paul D mentions seeing a potato bag on the floor empty, as shown in the line "The potato sacks too, but empty now, they lie on the dirt floor in heaps". Paul D also further emphasizes that the house was once so haunted by Beloved's spirit that he had felt its presence to be alive. He knows for a fact that Beloved has gone when the author states "He looks toward the house and, surprisingly, it does not look back at him". In this chapter, Paul D also realizes that in order to move towards the future, one must let go of the past and this was shown in the line "And he didn't say, Watch out. Watch out. Nothing in the world more dangerous than a white schoolteacher. Instead he nodded and asked the question he wanted to." Denver was always seen as the child of the family because no matter what she needed, Baby Suggs and Sethe were always there to provide her with her needs,

however, as Beloved integrates herself into the family, Sethe grows more and more towards Beloved's needs and less and less towards Denver's needs. For that reason, Denver is forced to go out into the real world, and not only provide money for her mother, but ultimately for herself. As Denver is shown to be the future of the family, she grows and matures into an adult through the experiences she goes through while Beloved is in her house as shown in the line "He licked his lips. Well, if you want my opinion-I don't, she said. I have my own". As soon as Paul D makes his way out of the Plantation where he had been working for schoolteacher, he views a totally different world that gives him the respect of a "man" which had only been previously given by Mr. Garner. While in this outside world, Paul D realizes his true worth when he learns that there truly are no differences between Blacks and Whites as exemplified through the line "Coloredmen and white, their faces wrapped to their eyes, picked their way through the meadows with lamps, listening in the dark for groans of life in the indifferent silence of the dead." He further discovers this when he makes his way down to New Jersey and realizes that "Moving down a busy street full of whitepeople who need no explanation for his presence, the glances he got hard to do with his disgusting clothes and unforgiveable hair" and this tells him that he was not judged by the color of his skin, but rather how he personified himself through his "shabby" look. This part in the story explains to us that although Paul D had once faced hardship in the hands of these whites, he was still able to overcome these struggles and lead a life of happiness and content as he says "that was when he decided that to eat, walk and sleep anywhere was life as good as it got". Twice Paul D's path is labeled as "His coming is the reverse route of his going" signifying Paul D's return to 124 where he agrees to help Sethe in her time of need as shown in the line "You think I should stop by? Would she welcome it?" When he returns to 124 he feels the change in the house because he explains that "In the place where once a shaft of sad

red light had bathed him, locking him where he stood, is nothing". The "red light" signifies the sad spirit of Beloved and her presence within the house haunting Denver and Sethe, but this time as he walks into the house, he instead sees "nothing" confirming that Beloved had truly left the house. 124, the number itself signified that Beloved, child number 3, was missing from the family. Because she signified the missing 3 in 124 Paul D expresses this through the phrase "He can't put a finger on it, but it seems, for a moment that just beyond his knowing is the glare of an outside thing that embraces while it accuses". The "embracing" comes from Beloved finally feeling as if she has gotten the love she deserved from Sethe, but the "accusing" is targeted toward Paul D because Beloved feels as if Paul D had never accepted her presence in 124. Paul D enters 124 frantically searching for Sethe and finally when he finds her, he sees her "lying under a quilt of merry colors". That same quilt was the one Baby Suggs had died in, along with the same bed. This somewhat signifies Sethe's wish to die the same way Baby Suggs had died in a way of peace and knowing. Paul D realizes that Sethe's intention to die in this way and he says to her "Don't you die on me! This is Baby Suggs' bed! Is that what you planning? He is so angry he could kill her" Paul D explains to Sethe that although Sethe and he have a past together, they must move out of that past and start planning their future. For this reason they rid of their past both mentally and physically because Beloved represents the past for Sethe, and with her leaving, Sethe is now able to move towards the future. Paul D's expressions are exemplified through the line "Sethe, he says, me and you, we got more yesterday than anybody. We need some kind of tomorrow?"

The reference to "44<sup>th</sup> Colored Regiment in Tennessee" is made to show the readers the color barrier that stretched from one's social life to one's political life. As predicted, there were different areas reserved for the whites and the colored. The colored weren't allowed to be with

the whites while the whites were free to do whatever they please. When Paul D served in the army during his early years, he would anticipate in a group gathering for both the whites and colored. However, this wasn't the case. He worked endlessly only to find out that "the regiment fell apart before it started on the question of whether the soldiers should have weapons or not"

Colored males that served in the military is put in spotlight because they were treated unfairly. "Some of ten thousand stayed there to clean, maul and build things; others drifted away to another regiment; most were abandoned, left to their own device with bitterness for pay". Paul D at one point was "[taken] back to Delaware, where he slave-worked a year". The member of the military, such a respected position today, was not the case in 19<sup>th</sup> century. The allusion to African Americans that served in military is the most apparent when Morrison mentions that Paul D went from a member of the military to a slave to in the end a "rebel".

Morrison makes an assertion that the Cherokees were helpful during the colored's tough times. "Following their advice and living in hiding with the weaver woman in Wilmington", Paul D was allowed to escape from slavery for a short amount of time. The allusion to the "Cherokee" is made to show the audience that African Americans and Native American tribes worked cooperatively in dealing with racial segregation. Though not described efficiently, "Cherokee" serves to provide the audience with African American's only friends.

After hearing about what happened that day at 124, Paul D and Stamp Paid display signs of uneasiness but relief. "They laughed then. A rusty chuckle at first and then more, louder and louder until Stamp took out his pocket handkerchief and wiped his eyes while Paul d pressed the feel of his hand in his own." The act of Stamp wiping his eyes shows that he is relieved that Beloved is gone and the condition of 124 is back to the way it is, just Sethe and Denver. Paul D's

action, on the other hand, shows signs of uneasiness. The movement of his hand tells the readers that although Beloved is gone, he is uneasy about what is to happen to Sethe. Both did not happen to be present when everything happened, but the story that was told makes both of them laugh at “its seriousness and its embarrassment.”

“He hid in its breast, fingered its earth for food, clung to its banks to lap water and tried not to love it.” Paul D appreciates the surrounding environment that he lives in. Although life is tough and he is not able to be free at the time, he nurtures and cares for the things given to him. The quote states that he tried not to love it because he does not want to be attached to things that he can be stripped away from in a second. Paul D does not take nature for granted and embraces this environment.

After the craze settles down at 124, Paul D decides to return to see Sethe once again. 124 is not what he left it to be as the place was described as “the odd placement of cans jammed with the rotting stems of things, the blossoms shriveled like sores...jars and jars of dead lightning bugs...” Because of Sethe’s carelessness, she does not maintain her house. Distressed about the disappearance of Beloved, Sethe loses her mind and does not take care of herself, let alone the house. The messy description of the house creates a lonely mood as Sethe lives alone in the house while Denver works in the daytime. The absence of the feeling of home, Paul is frightened by what he sees when he enters the house. He does not hear anything while downstairs and observes the house to be empty until he reaches upstairs. However, the lonely atmosphere he experiences while in the house does not remind him of how he last remembered it. Paul D offers Sethe his service while Denver is away and it reestablishes Paul D and Sethe’s.

“She left me. She was my best thing” Sethe says this after Beloved has exploded. It is ironic because Sethe still misses her. But at the same time, she was glad that Beloved was gone because Beloved literally possessed Sethe and daunted her with bad influence. This shows that Sethe has not received Beloved’s forgiveness and Sethe secretly wants Beloved to come back.

“Used to be voices all around that place. Quiet, now. I been past it a few times and I can’t hear a thing. Chastened, I reckon, ‘cause Mr. Bodwin say he selling it soon’s he can” Stamp Paid shows a sign of bittersweet relief as he notices that Beloved has disappeared. The loud noises caused by Beloved has fled and he is free to do whatever he pleases without startling Beloved. Though not obvious through his dialogue, the readers can sense his relief through his diction and syntax

“Aw no. Hey. Lay off Denver, Paul D. That’s my heart. I’m proud of that girl. She was the first one wrestle her mother down. Before anybody knew what the devil was going on.” Stamp Paid, in this dialogue, shows that he is proud of Denver. He characterizes her as his heart which symbolizes that of something very important; in this case, Denver. Stamp Paid realizes that it was Denver who kept Sethe in near perfect condition. Through his speech pattern, Stamp Paid explains how happy and proud he is of Denver.

“Denver be here in the day. I be here in the night. I’m a take care of you, you hear? Starting now. First off, you don’t smell right. Stay. There. Don’t move. Let me heat up some water.” In this scene, Paul D sounds as if he is desperate to please Sethe as he is willing to spend a whole night everyday to take care of Sethe. Paul D’s speech pattern shows just how romantic and willing Paul D is to help Sethe ease through her depression.

When Paul D returns to Sethe, he sits beside her to comfort and soothe her. He massages “first her face, then her hands, her thighs, her feet, her back. Ending with her exhausted breasts.”

Sethe's exhausted breasts symbolize the long road of hardships and pain that it had gone through. Her breasts had nourished four of her children and it was a maternal body part of hers that had been the most significant to her. It was her breasts that Sethe had great pride in carrying and the breasts that she was always sensitive about when talking about them, because of the time when she still lived at Sweet Home and had been tortured by a slave owner who took all her baby's milk.

Now that Beloved has disappeared, there is no more voice in the house. Paul D returns to the house to find that Beloved is not there anymore. The women still talk about Beloved, and the attack on Mr. Bodwin by Sethe. They say that it is his personality, he has always been "steady as a rock." Showing that through all he has endured, he never fails to lose his composure. Paul D remembers all the times he had left 124, and he remembers the "Coloredmen and white, their faces wrapped to their eyes, picked their way through the meadows with lamps..." The time when they were trying to escape, people were looking for anyone alive who was trying to escape in order to keep as slave. Paul D looks for Sethe, and remembers "Her hair, like the dark delicate roots of good plants, spreads and curves on the pillow." He still remembers every detail about Sethe, showing his true feelings for her, and how he wishes that they could be together again. They spend time together, "Her tenderness about his neck jewelry – its three wants, like attentive baby rattlers, curving two feet into the air. How she never mentioned or looked at it, so he did not have to feel the shame of being collared like a beast." Sethe has the same feelings for Paul D as he has for her, and she is showing it when they finally can spend time together again. They have finally found their place and time to be together.

The syntactical element in chapter 27 is evident in the passage that says, "Coloredmen and white, their faces wrapped to their eyes, picked their way through the meadows with lamps,



listening in the dark for groans of life in the indifferent silence of the dead. Mostly young men, some children, and it shamed him a little to feel pity for what he imagined were the sons of the guards in Alfred, Georgia.” The author uses long sentences and to drag on details about the dead people on the battle field. As the story becomes dragged on by the long sentences, it captures the sadness and melancholy of the scene described by Paul D. The commas placed in the long sentences also make the pacing slower and conveys the feeling of death and grief.

## Chapter 28:

“Certainly no clamor for a kiss” This is ironic because Beloved did not forgive Sethe but her action did. As people forgot and considered Beloved as bad dreams, Beloved literally sunk down into the stream and she and her footprints did not appear again after she “walked” to her grave. This means that she forgave Sethe.

The footsteps of Beloved symbolize all the different impacts that Beloved made on Sethe, Denver, and the townspeople’s life. For Sethe, Beloved brought back past memories and sins of Sethe’s from the time of slavery. For Denver, Beloved was an important factor as to why Denver matured into a woman and set up a connection between the rest of the community and Sethe. It was Beloved who gave the community a reason why to come together and work as a whole to get rid of what was holding back Sethe from leaving the devastating past. Although “it took longer for those who had spoken to her, lived with her, fallen in love with her, to forget,” she still left an imprint in each other their lives, no matter the size. “Her footprints come and go, come and go,” in the lives of her sister and mother, but “they are [still] so familiar.”

Beloved is still remembered, but is slowly becoming a forgotten memory. She is a loneliness, one that is “an inside kind – wrapped tight like skin.” She isn’t one that can be forgotten too easily, she can easily be remembered, especially for Sethe, Denver, and Paul D. Everyone tried to forget about her, “it was not a story to pass on.” She wasn’t a memory to be retold or brought up. “They forgot her like a bad dream,” and they soon saw that as quickly as she had come, she has disappeared. “Like an unpleasant dream during a troubling sleep,” she was occasionally remembered by a relative or someone who had been close to her, but it was not something that was appealing to everyone. “This is not a story to pass on,” to the people who had endured it, Beloved was something that did not bring good memories.

The syntactical element within “Beloved” occurs at the end of each paragraph. The line, “It was not a story to pass on” is placed right after a couple of paragraphs that are narrated by Beloved. This repetition of phrases is used to emphasize the sadness of Beloved. She believed that she was not remembered because the story about her “was not a story to pass on”. It also shows us the extent of disappointment of Beloved as she says it this three times in the chapter. The last syntactical element is the ending of the book which only ends in “Beloved.” This last goodbye for the reader is similar to a signature often found in emails. Beloved, narrating the last part of the book, ends with her name, the one given to her after she died as a little baby.

## **Point of View**

### **Chapter 24**

For the most part in Beloved, Toni Morrison uses third person omniscient to tell the thoughts and actions of various characters. In this chapter, Morrison tells the narration of

characters, however the perspective shifts from one character to another. The first section of the chapter, the perspective is focused on Paul D. He sits on the steps of the church porch as he reminisces about the past life on Sweet Home. "He couldn't figure out why it took so long. He may as well have jumped in the fire with Sixo and they both could have had a good laugh." Here, Paul D questions his life and the decision he made when him and Sixo were captured. He drinks his hours away as he reflects about the events. Paul D also thinks about how he has never had a family like those he passed by. "Nothing like that had ever been his and growing up at Sweet Home he didn't miss it." He realizes that all the families he met, although he has never had one of his own, he does not miss it because the people to him at Sweet Home were like his family.

The perspective then changes to the group of slaves on Sweet Home. "Nobody counted on Garner dying. Nobody though he could... without his life each of theirs fell to pieces." The group of slaves that congregated with one another both had the same idea about Mr. Garner's death and their well-being. They questioned what to do and how to live their lives because they depended on Mr. Garner to take care of them. Shortly after, schoolteacher's perspective is in play.

"He complained they ate too much, rested too much, talked too much, which was certainly true..." Schoolteacher describes what he observes on Sweet Home and it does not satisfy his likings.

Then the perspective shifts over to Paul D again as Paul D begins to question his manhood. "It troubled him that, concerning his own manhood, he could not satisfy himself on that point." Paul D is confused with himself thinking if his manhood really existed or if Mr. Garner just built them up to think that way. Paul D concludes that schoolteacher broke all of

them into children what Mr. Garner raised them up to be, men. He also begins to think about what he would have been outside of Sweet Home or before Mr. Garner, whether his manhood would have been existent or not. Paul D begins to think of hypothetical situations about if one thing happened, would it lead to another event that could have happened? “Would they have run then? And if he didn’t, would the Pauls have stayed there all their lives?” As the chapter continues, Paul D starts to think about what went wrong with the plan. He knew that the plan was good, but he couldn’t quite figure out what went wrong.

A flashback, as well as a change in perspective occurs as it focuses on Sixo and the rest of the gang in third person objective. It describes the events that occurred, but does not give readers insight into every characters’ thoughts. “Will Sethe be able to swim the creek? they ask him. It will be dry, he says, when the corn is tall.” The point of view is objective because it shows the narrator’s observation of the scene and the conversation does not provide personal insight on the situation. Each paragraph that start with the phrase “But.” Provide different perspectives but is limited to an objective point of view. The first one is Sethe, following is the neighbors on around Sweet Home, third is Sethe’s familiy, fourth is Sixo in the barn, and lastly is about Halle and Sixo.

After, it shifts to third person omniscient point of view as Halle’s disappearance shows his actions and the actions of others. “He has to tell Sethe that he has heard the sign,” displays Halle’s thoughts. After, the Pauls come into play as “they lick sweat from their lips to give it a saltier flavor.”

When the actual escape comes into action, the perspective is shift to Sixo. “He hears something. He hears nothing. Forget the knives.” Sixo attempts to gather up his supplies that he

leaves in the corn field results in his capture. This change in viewpoint also incorporates an objective standpoint as it later introduces the Thirty-Mile Woman and Paul D into the scene. Sixo's outlook is once again in effect as he stands over the fire, laughing. "He laughs. Something is funny." Although we do not exactly know why Sixo is laughing, though it might be because the Thirty-Mile Woman has escaped, this view on Sixo tells us about his character.

The viewpoint then again shifts back to schoolteacher as "voices remind schoolteacher about the spoiling these particular slaves have had at Garner's hand." This outlook on schoolteacher's views show that he does not like treating the slaves well. "Schoolteacher sighs, and say doesn't he know it?" He is bothered by the fact that Mr. Garner treated the slaves with dignity and does not like that fact. By giving this insight on schoolteacher, the readers are able to see what kind of character has entered Sweet Home. When Paul D is locked up in the barn and Sethe enters, the narrator gives an objective point of view as it shows the actions of both characters. However, it does not provide insight in details.

## **Chapter 25**

A continuation of the third person point of view, it starts with omniscient as the narration describe that conversation and outlook of both Stamp Paid and Paul D and presents personal reflection of the events. "Paul D looked up, noticed the side pocket agitation and snorted." Stamp Paid's offer comes to Paul D as a surprise, as well as Stamp's apology. Then it shifts to the rider's outlook, "Loosening the right rein, he turned his horse toward the road, then changed his mind and came back." The rider's change in mind can only be determined by the narrator's all-knowing ability in omniscient point of view. The objective viewpoint is continued when the lady across the street passes by to give Stamp a greeting. "Let me tell you how I got my name." Later,

when Stamp tells Paul D his story about how he changed his name, it is seen as objective because it is told through the narrator's perspective, and although it is Stamp's personal story, it does not give hidden insight that Paul D would have not known if it wasn't told verbally. Stamp's story can be seen to outside onlookers so it does not provide personal thoughts or information that others cannot see.

A third person limited point of view is given to Paul D at the end of the chapter when it describes the odd sensation Paul D experiences as he thinks of Beloved. "A shudder ran through Paul D. A bone-cold spasm that made him clutch his knees. He didn't know if it was bad whiskey, nights in the cellar..." Only thoughts of Paul D are shown as it tells thoughts of his that others would not be able to know. The narration that is provided tells the readers about Paul D's current emotions and feelings, and his past thoughts of events that took place that affect him at that moment. It has a huge impact on him because they are depressing memories that have returned to describe other negative feelings he has.

## **Chapter 26**

In this chapter, the main character perspective is focused on Denver. As she tries to deal with taking care of her mom and Beloved, she begins to develop her own character into a strong, independent woman. "Denver, who though she knew all about silence, was surprised to learn hunger could do that." It shows that Denver is progressively learning throughout her journey and Beloved's stay. Denver observes Sethe becoming less functional than she was and Beloved, gaining all of Sethe's strength and eating up all the supply of food. After, a short prespective change switches to Sethe when she discovers the scar on Beloved's neck. "But once Sethe had seen the scar... once Sethe saw it, fingered it and closed her eyes for a long time, the two of them

cut Denver out of games.” It was then when Sethe began to change her views as to who was more important to take care of. The viewpoint retreats back to Denver as she examines ongoing days of interaction between Sethe and Beloved.

“At first they played together. A whole month and Denver enjoyed it.” All the activities Denver listed in the past showed how she enjoyed the days spent with the three of them. However, as activities shift from the three of them to just Sethe and Beloved, “it made Denver nervous to watch her...” Denver begins to realize the shifting attitude of both Sethe and Beloved and does not approve of the behavior but recognizes her duty to watch over them. “Denver began to drift from the play, but she watched it, alert for any sign that Beloved was in danger.” In full details, the changes between Sethe and Beloved are vividly revealed through Denver’s eyes. “She imitated Sethe, talked the way she did, laughed her laugh and used her body the same way down to the walk...” This transformation creates an aggressive relationship between Beloved and Sethe “and the arguments began.” The viewpoint changes to third person objective as the narrator watches the fights between Sethe and Beloved, but does not reveal personal emotions. “A complaint from Beloved, an apology from Sethe.”

Later, the chapter moves to Sethe as she provides the reader with her part of the story during her “transformation” that she does not know. “Did she know it hurt her when mosquitoes bit her baby? That to leave her on the ground to run into the big house drove her crazy?” Sethe’s unconditional love for Beloved drives her to think that she must sacrifice herself for Beloved’s sake. However, Sethe believes that Beloved does not know about the love she is giving to her.

Moving back to Denver, “Frightened as she was by the thing in Sethe that could come out, it shamed her to see her mother serving a girl not much older than herself.” The readers are

able to see that Denver is disturbed by Sethe's continuous labor and work she does for Beloved. Denver does not like how Sethe is treated and tries to help her "to relieve her of it." Through Denver's point of view, we experience the pain Denver suffers seeing both Sethe and Beloved in action. We also are given an exclusive look into Denver and Baby Suggs' Conversation which gives Denver the motivation to help her family. The "spiritual" conversation between Denver and Baby Suggs serves as a realization to Denver because with her grandmother's help, she goes through a revelation. When Denver decides to look at places for work, she arrives at Lady Jones' house. On the way there, Denver catches sight of various sceneries in the neighborhood. "She remembered the plot but not the cow...Denver kept her eyes on the road in case they were whitemen..." As she approached Lady Jones' house, the perspective switches to Lady Jones.

"Lady Jones went to the door expecting raisins... When she heard the tapping at the door, she sighed and went to it hoping the raisins had at least been cleaned." As Denver begins to tell Lady Jones about the occurrences at 124, Lady Jones tries to remember what she last remembered at Sethe. She does not at all remember Sethe to be this distraught and sympathizes with Denver. After introductions, the perspective changes back to Denver as she does not know where to begin to tell Lady Jones about. " Denver stopped in the middle of a swallow. There was no way to tell her how her family was, so she said what was at the top of her mind." The afternoon with Lady Jones puts Denver's mind at ease. "She did not know it then, but it was the word 'baby,' said softly and with such kindness, that inaugurated her life in the world as a woman." The interaction between Denver and Lady Jones provides Denver with a sense of comfort that she is able to have someone to talk to and a person of support.

After two days, Denver notices food items placed in front of 124. She thankfully accepts the gifts and to show her gratitude, Denver returns the bowls that contained the food to its



respectful owner. Denver perspective prolongs as the relations between Beloved and Sethe continue. “Denver thought she understood the connection between her mother and Beloved...”

When Lady Jones tells the townswomen about Denver's reason of visit, they all get riled up. The leader of activists who decide to go to 124 to “help” the family is Ella. The chapter switches to her perception when Ella decides to stop Beloved. Having her own history similar to Sethe, Ella feels obligated to have to stop the madness that is going on. “It was Ella more than anyone who convinced the others that rescue was in order.” Although she agrees that what Sethe did to Beloved was wrong, Ella believes that it is even more wrong for Beloved to come back in human form to disturb 124. “She understood Sethe’s rage in the shed twenty years ago, but not her reaction to it, which Ella though was prideful, misdirected, and Sethe herself too complicated... Ella didn’t like the idea of past errors taking possession of the present.” Ella took it into her own hands to try to get rid of Beloved’s spirit so that 124 can be, again, at peace.

When the townswomen draw closer to 124, the viewpoint is changed to the group of women. “Some brought what they could and what they believed would work... They had no idea what they would do once they got there.” The unplanned group of women congregated together in hopes that all their powers would drive Beloved’s spirit away. Although the women did not know what their plan was, they all joined together for the same purpose. Their opinion on Beloved’s existence influenced their actions. When the group approached 124, Denver’s reaction causes the shift in view.

“Denver heard mumbling and looked to the left. She stood when she saw them.” Denver did not expect people to show up at 124, so the arrival of the townswomen shocked her. “Denver sat back down wondering what was going on.” After a short intermission of Denver’s view, it

shifts quickly to Ella, “She remember the bottom teeth she had lost to the brake and the scars from the belt were thick as rope around her waist.”

The arrival of Edward Bodwin sparks a new perspective. “It displeased him a bit because he preferred his figure astride Princess.” Mr. Bodwin arrives to 124 to help out Denver in her plea when she visited. Mr. Bodwin decides to help because he felt part of the community that lived in 124. “He was headed for the house he was born in.” Mr. Bodwin’s connection to the house influences his decision to return and help out the family. However, because of his return and resemblance to schoolteacher, it creates an arousal of Sethe’s past. That is when Sethe’s thoughts of schoolteacher emerges. “He is coming into her yard and he is coming for her best thing.” Sethe mistakens Mr. Bodwin as schoolteacher and thinks that he has come to take Beloved away again. As Sethe attempts to kill Mr. Bodwin, Beloved falsely believes that Sethe is leaving her again.

The perspective is changed to Beloved as Beloved sadly believes that both Denver and Sethe are leaving her. “ Now she is running into the faces of the people out there, joining them and leaving Beloved behind. Alone. Again.” Beloved is upset about Sethe and Denver’s actions which results in her disappearance.

## **Chapter 27**

The introduction of the beginning of the chapter starts off with Paul D’s third person point of view. “...so Paul D knows Beloved is truly gone.” Paul D returns to 124 after hearing the news of Beloved’s leave. He is relieved to know that she is gone but is still haunted by her words, “Touch me. Touch me. On the inside part and call me my name.” He begins to remember all the interactions between him and Beloved and is disgusted by their affair. Later told, the

conversation between Stamp Paid and Paul D provide insight in the two characters. Stamp tells Paul D what happened that Friday evening and after, the both of them have a good laugh. “A rusty chuckle at first and then more, louder and louder until Stamp took out his pocket handkerchief and wiped his eyes while Paul D pressed the heel of his hand in his own.

As Denver goes into the city for her job, she runs into Paul D. The view is objective towards Denver but reveals Paul D’s thoughts. “And he didn’t say, ‘Watch out. Watch out...’ Instead he nodded and asked the question he wanted to.” Denver does not reveal any exclusive information to Paul D as she keeps to herself and replies back with only simple answers such as, “Yes, sir.” Paul D leaves Denver and moves forward to 124. “He left her unwillingly because he wanted to talk more, make sense out of the stories he had been hearing; whiteman came to take Denver to work and Sethe cut him.” Paul D’s confused state of mind sways him to go to 124 to see how Sethe is doing. “... Paul D doesn’t care how It went or even why. He cares about how he left and why.” Paul D doesn’t fully understand the reason for Beloved’s disappearance or why he left in the first place so he hopes that if he returned to 124, he would be able to find the answer.

When Paul D walks the stairs up to Sethe’s room, he is amazed at the state she is in. However, it is Sethe who is more surprised by Paul D’s presence. “She is thinking: No. This little place by a window is what I want.” Sethe’s thoughts about her condition and fantasy only presents Sethe as a dysfunctional person. She is unable to recognize the reality she is in. However, she is able to recognize Paul D’s company. “Because with him, in his presence, they could.” Sethe sees Paul D as someone she can rely on and connect with. Someone she can turn to for support. Paul D is unable to make sense of the woman he stands in front of. “There are too many things to feel about this woman. His head hurts. Suddenly he remembers Sixo trying to

describe what he felt about the Thirty-Mile Woman.” The flashback Paul D has is related to his confused state of mind as he is unable to determine his feelings for Sethe at the moment. But in the end of the chapter, Paul D realizes what he wants and tells Sethe that “You your best thing, Sethe. You are.” His comment eases Sethe’s mind after Sethe stresses about losing her best thing.

## Chapter 28

Beloved’s persona is quickly forgotten after a while as everyone soon forgets her existence. The perspective in this chapter is the community as a whole. “Everybody knew what she was called, but nobody anywhere knew her name. Disremembered and unaccounted for, she cannot be lost because no one is looking for her.” Beloved’s character is lost and unimportant to the community after the event took place. “They forgot her like a bad dream.”

# Style Analysis:

In chapter 26 of Toni Morrison’s “Beloved”, there are a series of style that create the tone of the passage (“When the women assembled outside 124... He is looking at her”) which changes from suspenseful to fearful to loneliness. The author’s diction, syntax, and point of view help create these tones as well as the underlying theme of “Beloved”. The passage describes the incident where the black women in the community come to save Sethe from her “devil” baby. They arrive at 124 chanting and singing so that they can exorcise Beloved from the home. But as they do this, a white man, driving in the a wagon and also looking like school teacher, drives by. Sethe mistakes this person as school teacher. She believes that he has come back to take Beloved

away from her again and becomes enraged. She lets out all his anger as she comes towards this innocent white man, intending to kill him. The community of black women quickly sees this and stops her from doing something she'll regret later on.

Diction, the word choice of the author, is the first element that creates the tone and the theme of "Beloved". For example, "when the women assembled outside 124" Morrison makes it sound as if they met for a cause, to defeat evil. This is apparent in super hero films as they "assembled" to defeat the villain in the story. Just like this, the women assemble to defeat the "devil-child", Beloved.

Another example of diction is in this passage is when Beloved is "sweating profusely" as the women draw near. The use of the word "profusely" heightens the suspenseful tone by increasing the level of extent of sweating. Knowing that Beloved was "profusely sweating" rather than just sweating helps the reader to understand how the suspense of the situation rises. The suspense of the situation increases even more as "Sethe and [Beloved]exchanged glances..." This is because "exchanged glances" portrays the confused and mysterious feeling of the women approaching 124. This also portrays the seriousness of the mood and atmosphere.

The fearful tone of the passage is ignited by Beloved's appearance as a "devil-child". The devil, lord of hell, and tormenter of the world, is seen as a fearful figure. Thus, making Beloved seem like a "devil child" turns her into a fearful figure. In doing this, we are able to see how the author's diction initiates a fearful tone in the passage. This again used in the same way when the author describes Beloved. The author describes her as "thunderblack" with "hair twisted all over her head." "Thunderblack" which represents darkness and people's tendency to be afraid of darkness, adds on to the fearful tone. Just like "Thunderblack", "hair twisted" adds on to the

fearful tone. The use of “twisted” creates an eerie and scary feeling for the reader and constitutes fear in the story.

The tone of loneliness is also supported by the diction used by the author. Near the end of the passage, Beloved “feels the emptiness in the hand Sethe has been holding.” This emptiness within Beloved affects the mood by causing the readers to feel empty and lonely as well. Another use of diction to describe the loneliness is when Sethe runs to kill the white man, “leaving Beloved behind”. When left behind, Beloved can feel a sense of isolation and seclusion as Sethe leaves to kill the white man. This sense of isolation of Beloved portrays the tone of loneliness evident at the end of the passage.

Syntax also helps to create the tone of the passage by using sentence structure to get the author’s meaning across. An example of this is when Sethe becomes infuriated by the white man returning to take “her best thing”. Sethe thinks that “it is no. No no. Nonono. She flies. The ice pick is not in her hand; it is her hand.” This part of the passage uses short and abrupt sentences to portray her fear towards the white man. Each period and break adds more emphasis on each “no” as she yells it at “school teacher”. These yells directed at the white man constitute fear of having her children taken away into slavery.

Various sentences hint at the tone of loneliness. Examples include when Beloved is “Standing alone on the porch” and when Beloved is left “behind. Alone. Again.” The way the first sentence of the last paragraph is constructed shows that Morrison emphasizes her “standing alone” over her “smiling”. The inverted sentence allows the readers to prioritize the loneliness over happiness. The two short fragmented sentences, “Alone. Again” underline Beloved’s sense of isolation, yet again. Morrison decides to split the two words into two separate sentences

because she feels the need to stress both the fact that she's lonely and that she has been lonely before.

The author uses a third person point of view to allow the readers to perceive into each character's thoughts and emotion. For example, at the end of the passage, the third person point of view lets us understand Beloved's view of Sethe running toward the white man. Looking through Beloved's eyes, we see that she thinks that Sethe and Denver are running away from her, leaving her all by herself. In reality, however, Sethe is running to kill Mr. Bodwin because she thinks he is school teacher. Since we are able to understand Beloved's point of view through the third person point of view, we can see the feeling of loneliness that Beloved feels from being left alone.

This passage can be seen as the climax of "Beloved" as Sethe tries to correct her misdeeds. The understanding of the tones is required in order to identify the climax and the tones of this passage sets the mood for the remainder of the story.

### 10 Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the tone of the last paragraph?

a. livid

**b. lonely**

c. melancholy

d. fearful

e. suspenseful

2. What does music refer to in sentence 3?

- a. song of Sethe
- b. Beloved's joy
- c. Women's prayer
- d. random noise
- e. none of the above

3. What theme is present in this passage?

- a. importance of family and community
- b. dehumanization
- c. must correct your past wrongs
- d. retribution
- e. all of the above

4. The word "assembled" most nearly means

- a. congregate
- b. put together
- c. combine into a collection
- d. gather something



e. construct structure

5. What does rapt mean in the context of this passage?

a. deep engrossed

b. transported with emotion

c. showing from rapture

d. carried off spiritually

e. none of the above

6. Why is “Clearing” capitalized?

a. to show emphasis

b. because it is a memory

**c. a specific place**

d. Clearing holds a significant role

e. A & C

7. Which describes how the women felt about Beloved?

a. skeptical

b. afraid

**c. undaunted**

d. infuriated

e. none

8. Who does “loving faces” refer to?

a. Seth’s family

b. women from the community

c. Sweet Home

d. Paul D

e. none of the above

9. The second to the last paragraph is most concerned with \_\_\_\_\_?

a. Sethe’s anger

b. retribution

c. white man’s return

d. B & C

e. C & A

10. Which is an example of slow pacing?

a. Line 1

b. Line 10

c. 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph

d. Last Paragraph

e. Second to last Paragraph

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