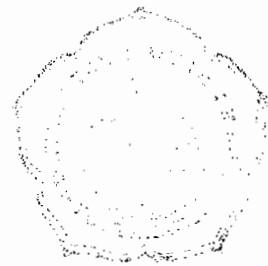


**AN ANALYSIS OF ANGELOU'S EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN
MAYA ANGELOU'S *SINGING AND SWINGING AND GETTING
MERRY LIKE CHRISTMAS***

A Thesis

**Presented as Partial Fulfilment for the Requirement
to obtain the *Sarjana Pendidikan* Degree
in English Language Education**



By

ANA ANGGRAINI

Student Number: 981214069

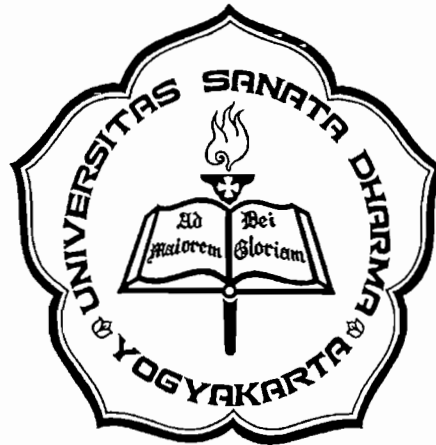
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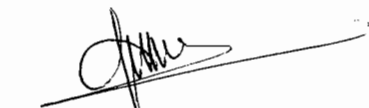
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A Thesis on
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Prepared and Presented by

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Was defended before the Board of Examiners
on December 16, 2002
and was declared acceptable

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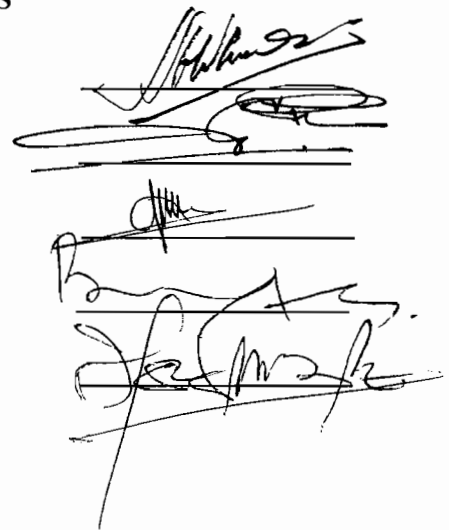
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STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

I honestly declare that the thesis I wrote does not contain the works of other people, except cited in the quotations and the bibliography, as a scientific paper should.

Yogyakarta, December 3, 2002

The Writer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ana Anggraini', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ana Anggraini

PAGE OF DEDICATION

Do not be afraid to be weak; do not be too proud to be strong.

Do not care what people say. Be yourself and just follow your own way.

Do not give up and use the chance. Just believe in destiny.

Dream what you want to dream. Go wherever you want to go.

Be what you want to be, because you have only one life and one chance to do all the things you want to do. When you were born, you were crying and everyone around you was smiling. Live your life so that when you die, everyone around you is crying and you are the one who is smiling.....

(Enigma)

Dedicated with gratitude and love to:

My beloved parents, Sayono and Sri Wardani

My wonderful sisters, Iin and Sartika and brother, Sukma

And those who have coloured my life so beautifully and meaningfully

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I am sincerely grateful to my beloved parents. They are always there beside me, behind me, and guiding me through all of life's ups and downs. Also to my sisters, Iin and Sartika and my brother, Sukma for being my nice sisters and

brother in my life. I thank them so much for all the joys and laughter they have brought into my life.

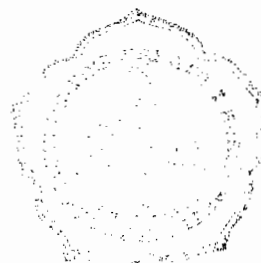
I also give my acknowledgements to all my friends. I have to express big thanks to Desi Ariadne. Without her advice and help, I would have remained still and done nothing. My special gratitude also goes to Nanan Yogananta who has encouraged me by giving spirit and advice in finishing my study. For Winong, Sara, and Nining, I am glad to have them in my life. Thanks for all the years of support and friendship. Also to Eva Respati, Santi 'Gadis', Ida, Rindu, Andre Ronggo, and Galih, thanks so much for being there when I really needed the help. I always remember every moment we got through together. My great thanks also go to my KKN's friends, Noer, Febby, Rina, Eni, Candy and Hans. My play performace's friends Dian Suksma, Kaka, Adek, Leting, Natalia Dewi, and Yudhi. My PPL's friends, Imelda, Ron Reni, Yanny, and Realita. It has been even a greater pleasure to have all of them as my friends.

Last but not least, I also thank 1998 students of PBI, especially class B, with whom I have got through the good and bad times during my study. Struggle is life, life is struggle, struggle is my life and I love my life.

December, 2002

Ana A.

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ABSTRACT

Ana Anggraini: (2002) An Analysis of Angelou's Emotional Development in Maya Angelou's *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*. Yogyakarta: English Language Education Study Program Sanata Dharma University

This thesis discusses Maya Angelou's autobiographical novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*. In this novel, the main character undergoes the development of emotion. She faces some complicated problems, starting from childhood until adulthood. Although the problems are hard, she succeeds in surmounting them. Emotion always influences her when she encounters one problem. Further, she is able to manage her emotion in overcoming her problems.

There are three problems related to the topic of thesis. (1) How the main character, Maya Angelou, is portrayed (2) The attitudes of Maya Angelou which reflect the emotional development (3) Maya Angelou's ability to manage her emotion in order to alter her life to be better.

This thesis is library or desk research. There are two kinds of sources used in this study. The primary source, which is obtained from the novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*, and the secondary sources are obtained from books on literature and books on psychology. I also apply some literary criticisms to support this study.

In order to answer the problem, I adopt the theory of characterization and the theory of psychology, especially the theory of emotion. I use psychological approach because this study is dealing with emotion. Emotion is a part of psychic world in every human being. Further, I want to analyze it through the acquirement of emotional development of Maya Angelou.

Based on the analysis, I make some conclusions. Maya Angelou, as the main character, is successful to face some complicated problems in her life. By having Mrs Flower, a wise white teacher, Maya Angelou recovers from her trauma of sexual molestation when she was seven. Although she feels inferior toward whites, Mrs. Flower's tenderness and encouragement bring her speak again. Then, she delivers a baby into the world when she was seventeen. She determines to raise her son alone. Sometimes the society will mock and underestimate the mother. Even, the mother aborts her baby. It is different from Angelou, she does not feel ashamed of bringing her baby up alone. The other is getting divorced with her husband. It is very hard for a woman who has no someone to rely on. Angelou has to work in order to satisfy her family's need. She is not only to be a single mother but she is also to be the economic provider for her family. Although she lives alone with her son, she feels all right. The worst thing is she wants to end her precious life. She judges herself as a wicked mother because she neglects her son. She stands between her family and career. She feels depressed. With the help of her friend, Wilkie, she can find herself again. Her spirit of life is obviously seen in her efforts to have a better life.

ABSTRAK

Ana Anggraini: (2002) Analisis Perkembangan Emosi Angelou dalam Novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* Karangan Maya Angelou. Yogyakarta: Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Sanata Dharma

Skripsi ini mengulas tentang novel autobiographi Maya Angelou yaitu *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*. Di dalam novel ini, tokoh utama mengalami perkembangan emosi. Dia menghadapi masalah-masalah yang rumit sejak masa kecilnya hingga masa dewasanya. Meskipun masalah-masalah yang dihadapi berat, dia berhasil mengatasinya. Emosi mempengaruhi ketika dia mengalami suatu masalah. Lebih jauh lagi, dia mampu mengatur emosinya untuk mengatasi masalah-masalahnya.

Ada tiga masalah yang berhubungan dengan tema dari skripsi ini, yaitu (1) Bagaimana Maya Angelou sebagai tokoh utama dideskripsikan (2) Tingkah laku atau perbuatan Maya Angelou yang mencerminkan perkembangan emosi (3) Kemampuan Maya Angelou mengatur emosinya untuk mengubah hidupnya menjadi lebih baik.

Skripsi ini adalah penelitian pustaka. Ada dua sumber yang digunakan di dalam studi ini. Sumber yang pertama diperoleh dari novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*. Sumber yang kedua diperoleh dari buku-buku karya sastra dan psikologi. Saya juga menerapkan beberapa kritik karya sastra untuk mendukung studi ini.

Untuk menjawab pertanyaan, saya menggunakan teori penokohan dan teori psikologi. Saya menerapkan pendekatan psikologi karena studi ini berkaitan dengan emosi. Emosi adalah bagian dunia psikis dalam setiap diri manusia. Lebih jauh lagi, saya ingin mengetahui dunia psikis Maya Angelou dalam mencapai perkembangan emosi.

Berdasarkan analisis, saya membuat kesimpulan. Berkat Ibu guru Flower, seorang wanita kulit putih, Angelou sembuh dari trauma penganiayaan seksual ketika dia berusia tujuh tahun. Meskipun merasa rendah diri terhadap orang kulit putih, kasih sayang dan dorongan Ibu Flower membuatnya dapat untuk berkomunikasi kembali. Masalah yang lain adalah dia membesarkan bayinya sendiri pada usia tujuh belas tahun. Kadang-kadang masyarakat akan menghina dan merendahnya. Bahkan, seorang ibu tega untuk mengaborsi bayinya sendiri. Berbeda dengan Angelou, dia tidak merasa hina untuk membesarkan anaknya seorang diri. Masalah yang lain adalah perceraian dengan suaminya. Ini berat bagi wanita untuk hidup seorang diri. Angelou harus bekerja untuk memenuhi kebutuhan keluarganya. Dia tidak hanya menjadi ibu tunggal tetapi dia juga menjadi pemberi nafkah ekonomi untuk keluarganya. Masalah yang paling berat adalah dia ingin mengakhiri hidupnya. Dia menganggap bahwa dia adalah ibu yang jahat karena telah melalaikan anaknya. Dia merasa bimbang di antara keluarga dan karirnya. Dengan bantuan Wilkie, temannya, dia dapat menemukan dirinya kembali. Semangat hidup terlihat jelas dari usaha-usahanya untuk mempunyai kehidupan yang lebih baik lagi.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, problem formulation, aim of the study, benefit of the study, and definition of terms. The background presents some reasons for writing this thesis. The problem formulation states the problems or questions of my study. The objective the study explains the aim of the study. The benefit of the study discusses the advantage and importance of the study. The definition of terms clarifies some significant terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Moody states in his book *Literary Appreciation* that the greatest pleasure and satisfaction can be found in literature. A literary work may bring us back to the reality of human's satisfaction, problems, feelings, and relationship (1986: 2-3). The significant element that involves in a relationship is emotional feeling. Emotional feeling supports us to live our life because we realize that life is not simple. Problems and difficulties always become the shadows for our life. There are family problems. There are friends to be dealt with. There is the problem of deciding who we are, what our talents are, and what we want to do with ourselves.

God grants human beings mind and emotional feeling. Those are the highest gifts from God. By having mind, human beings are able to think of something whether it is good or bad, whether it is right or wrong for their life. By

having emotional feeling, human beings are able to appreciate other people, and especially appreciate themselves. In our life we cannot escape from happiness and sorrow. Happiness is perceived when there is a good fortune or victory whereas sorrow is perceived when there is a failure or calamity. Emotion develops as somebody grows up to maturity.

We do not deny that everything we face in our life is related to the emotion. Emotion does not only deal with how we perceive our own happiness and sorrow but how we perceive other's happiness and sorrow. Nobody can make life simple. But we know that we can do something about our life's ups and downs, its shocks and hurts, its blocks and opportunities (Merrill, 1976: 46).

We do not simply have to stand there and suffer our lumps; we do not have to drift wherever life's storms would take us. We have abundant wisdom. We can make judgments and acts (Merrill, 1976: 47). In general, people become freer and more spontaneous in relating to others. They want to learn more about emotions and feelings. Further, they want to learn that emotions and feelings can contribute to a more contented and happier existence in their real life.

Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas is a novel, which portrays the life of a black woman as the main character. She faces some complicated problems in her life starting from her childhood until adulthood. She is able to overcome her problems although they are hard. She is able to manage her emotion. It shows that the main character experiences emotional development.

Singing and Swinging, and Getting Merry Like Christmas is one of Maya Angelou's autobiographical works. Born on April 4, 1928 in Saint Louis,

Missouri, Maya Angelou's given name was Marguerite Johnson. Growing up in Stamps, Arkansas, Angelou learned what it was like to be a black girl in a world whose boundaries were set by whites. As a child she always dreamed of waking to find her "nappy black hair" metamorphosed to a long blond bob because she felt life was better for white girls than for black girls.

Later, everything took a turn for the worst when Angelou was raped by the time she was seven years old. At the age of 17, she gave birth to her only son, the result of a single sexual encounter with a young man who had no interest in maintaining a relationship with the mother of his son.

This novel covers about five years of Maya Angelou's life from the ages of twenty-two to twenty-seven. During this period she married Tosh Angelos, an ex-sailor who was intelligent, kind, reliable and white. He was a temporary source of stability for herself and her son, but after a year of marriage she found that she was not suited for the marriage. She divorced him and returned to her career as a dancer. Shortly afterwards, she joined the European touring production of *Porgy and Bess*. She devoted over half the book to describe the tour. She talked about how the guilt over her neglect of her son nearly drove her to suicide, but her love for life, motherhood, and dancing sent her to her beloved son (cited from [www.mayaangelou.com /voices from the gaps](http://www.mayaangelou.com/voices-from-the-gaps)).

There are reasons why I choose Angelou's work *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* as an object of research. Firstly, it contains moral values in it. Secondly, I am interested in the Maya Angelou's character. Although she is a black woman, she does not feel inferior. Behind her softness, there is

strength to alter her life to be better. She is successful to be a great mother and have a good career.

Angelou's works give people, especially Afro-American women, self-esteem, self-respect and pride for their colours. Maya Angelou's accomplishments are a wonderful life journey to learn. She proved that a black woman could be the example for women in this modern era.

Maya Angelou represents her success in surmounting the complicated problems in her life. Her childhood experience strengthens herself to be a tough woman. Furthermore, she grows to be mature because of many encountered problems in her life. The fact is that every trial makes us stronger and braver to face our life. If we pass for one trial, it means that our emotion develops and we are able to be more mature and better people than before. If we fail for one trial, it means we get the lesson, which can be the mirror for our life.

1.2 Problem Formulation

In order to obtain a complete idea of this thesis, the following problems are formulated:

1. How is the main character, Maya Angelou, portrayed?
2. What attitude does Maya Angelou have that reflects the emotional development in facing her life in *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*?
3. How does Maya Angelou manage her emotion in order to better her life?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is the readers are able to learn the life of Maya Angelou, which reflects the emotional development. The readers can also understand the portrait of the main character, Maya Angelou. Besides, they can recognize some attitudes of Maya Angelou that reflect the emotional development in her life. Furthermore, the readers know the way Maya Angelou manages her emotion.

1.4 Benefit of the Study

This study aims to emphasize the importance of emotion. Emotion plays an important role in our life. It helps us to think, to behave, and to take one decision, which is good or bad for ourselves. We also become more sensitive and sensible toward our emotion. It means, once we experience a miserable condition we can feel that emotion influences and takes part in it. Sometimes we avoid the bitterness, the unpleasant condition and only accept the sweetness, the pleasant one. If our emotion develops we can perceive happiness and sorrow and make them in balance. In other words, we are able to face and manage our emotion appropriately.

1.5 Definition of Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, I define the following definitions:

a. Analysis

According to *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, analysis is an examination of a complex, its elements, and their relations (1993: 41).

b. Emotion

Emotion is primarily a psychic reaction to stimuli from the world around us. As we are part of that world, too, we can also feel an emotion in response to our own thoughts, memories, and bodily feelings (Baars, 1979: 23).

c. Development

According to *Chambers Essential English Dictionary*, the meaning of development is the process of growing, changing, and progressing (1995: 250).

d. Emotional Development

Having known the definition of emotion and development, I can infer that emotional development is the changing process of psychic reaction to every encountered problem and situation to be better. This study tells about Maya Angelou as the main character who undergoes emotional development. Her own inner psychic world always reacts to every encountered problem and situation in her life. She always gives good reactions to them although they are not simple.

e. Attitude

Since an attitude is always directed toward some objects, it may be defined as a state of mind of the individual toward a value (Jahoda, 1966: 19).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter discusses the review of related literature. Two parts are presented in this chapter. First is the theoretical review. It contains five theories. They are theory of character, theory of character development, theory of psychology of character, theory of plot, and theory of emotion. Second are some criticisms on the life of black women, especially the life of Maya Angelou and her works.

2.1. Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Theory of Character

Character is the fundamental and significant element in the literary work. Character must be credible; that is, the reader must accept them as believable people. Characters have particular personalities and physical attributes that distinguish them from other characters (Rohberger, 1971: 20).

In the book entitled *Understanding Unseen* by M.J Murphy there are some elements in which an author attempts to make his character understandable to, and come alive for his readers.

a. Personal Description

The author can describe a person's appearance and clothes, such as the colour or type of his dress, his blue eyes, and his pointed nose.

b. Character as Seen by Another

Instead of describing the character directly, the author can describe the characters through the eyes and opinions of another. The reader can understand the character from what other characters say about him.

c. The Speech

Whenever a person speaks, whenever he is in conversation with another, whenever he puts forward an opinion, the author is giving us some clues to his character.

d. Past Life

The readers can learn about the characterization of the character through his past life. The author can give us a clue to events that have helped to shape a person's character.

e. Conversation of Others

The author gives us clues to a person's character through the conversations of other people and the things they say about him.

f. Reactions

The author describes a person's character by letting us know how that person reacts to various situations and events.

g. Direct Comment

The author can describe or comment on a person's character directly.

h. Thoughts

The author gives direct knowledge of what a person is thinking about. In this respect he is able to do what we cannot do in real life. He can tell us what different people are thinking.

i. Mannerism

The author describes a person's mannerism and habits, which may also tell us something about his character.

Through our knowledge of the characters, we understand their actions; through their actions, we understand the characters. In the forthcoming chapter, I apply the theory from Murphy in order to analyze the character. This theory helps me to portray the character of Maya Angelou as the main character.

Characterization is the process by which an author creates a character. There are two principle ways an author can characterize the character (Rohberger, 1971: 20).

1. Direct Means

The author describes the character's physical appearance, or describes the intellectual and moral attributes or explains the degree of sensibility.

2. Dramatic Means

The author places the character in one situation to show the way he behaves or speaks.

In *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* the main character described through direct and dramatic means. For example, the character

of Maya Angelou is obviously seen through her physical appearance. Besides, from the way she behaves or speaks, her character can be analyzed.

Holman and Horman in their book *A Handbook to Literature* state that characterization is the creation of the imagery personages who exist for the readers as lifelike. There are three basic methods of characterization (1986: 81) :

1. The explicit presentation of the character through direct explanation, whether it is stated in a book's introduction or its work.
2. The presentation of the character in action; therefore the reader will be able to conclude the attributes of the character from its actions.
3. The presentation from within character, without comments on the character by the author of the impact of actions and emotions on the character's inner self. The readers are expected to have a clear understanding of the attributes of the character.

2.1.2 Theory of Character Development

A character may develop or not. The change may be good, bad, large or small. On the basis of importance, characters are categorized into:

1. Major Character

A Major character can be the center of the story. He or she is the most important character in the story. Usually, the acts of the story are focused on this character from the beginning to the ending parts.

2. Minor Character

Minor character appears in a certain setting, just necessarily to become the background for the major characters. Their roles are less important than those of the major character (Abrams, 1981: 56).

The main character in the novel is categorized as a major character. She is the center of this story. The acts of the story are focused on her character from beginning to the ending parts.

Based on the internal complexity, characters can be classified into two, namely:

1. Round Character

This character often appears as the center of the story and looks like real human being. With his or her complex aspects in temperament and motivation, sometimes the character grows and changes during the story.

2. Flat Character

Sometimes, flat characters are also called a type. They are captured by the author's view in one side. The author usually does not develop them as fully as the major characters. Throughout the story, the author does not present them with much individuality details. They remain static and do not grow or change the story (Abrams, 1981: 20).

Maya Angelou can be classified as a round character because she does not remain stable or static. The character grows and changes during the story.

Based on their development changes, character is also categorized into two types (Perrinne, 1974: 71).

1. Static Characters

Static characters are characters that do not undergo any changes in their looks or personalities during the course of the story. They remain stable and have the same sort of people at the end of the story as at the beginning. They are described without many details and they are not changed by circumstances.

2. Developing or Dynamic Character

Developing characters undergo changes in some of their aspects, like personalities or outlooks, from the beginning to the end of the story. The change could be for better or worse, maybe a large or a small one, but it is something important and basic.

The main character in the novel undergoes developing or dynamic character. She does not remain stable; she moves to be better. There are better changes, like personalities from the beginning to the end of the story.

2.1.3 Theory of Psychology of Character

According to *The Psychology of Character* by Rudolf Allers, in order to appreciate the character of a man, it is necessary first of all to concentrate on what he does. Hence, one always stressed the deeds of a man as an index of his disposition, his real thoughts in fact what is commonly called his "character" (1943: 5-7).

The concept of act or deed must be made to include not only deeds in the special sense of the term, but also all movements, gestures, expressions, looks,

postures and his behaviour in various situations. In short, all factors that go to make up the general term "conduct", form the basis of the estimation of character (Allers, 1943: 5).

It is true that there are also involuntary forms of behaviour. The examples of these are the motor responses to a sudden violent and unexpected stimulus, such as the involuntary gesture on being startled and the blush of shame. There is indeed strong support for the view that man's conduct at any given moment, his every action, is an expression of the whole man, and that a single observation should enable us to interpret the man (Allers, 1943: 6).

Allers states that ordinarily, in order to arrive at a further understanding of a man or his character, we are compelled to observe him over a long period of time, if possible for his whole lifetime for a complete understanding. The development of man and the form of his activities depend not merely on existence, but also on the condition of his life and experience (1943: 7).

2.1.4 Theory of Plot

Plot and character are inseparable. Plot is not simply a series of happenings that come out of character, that reveal character, and that influence character (Barnet, 1988: 712). E.M Forster offers a comment, distinguishing a plot from story. A story, he says, is something alleged to have happened; a plot is a story containing a strong sense of causality (1927: 55). Stanton states that plot is a story containing sequence of events. However, the sequence must have causal connection. A plot has three essential elements in its development (1965: 14-16).

1. Event

Stanton states that the events may not include only physical occurrences, live speech or action, but also a character's change of attitude, a decision anything that alters the course of the affairs.

2. Conflict

Stanton divides conflict into two types; they are internal and external conflict. Internal conflict is a conflict between a character and him. External conflict is a conflict that a character encounters with something outside him, such as with nature or with other characters.

3. Climax

According to Stanton, a climax is a situation when a conflict reaches its highest intensity. The climax happens because the conflict is a point where two or more conditions that are contradicted meet one another. Climax determines how the contradiction is solved.

I apply the theory of plot in the analysis because it may help to get a vivid understanding of the sequence of events in the novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*. Furthermore, in chapter four, I discuss the development of main character, especially her emotional development as the object of this study. I divide it into three parts, namely the main character's childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

2.1.5 Theory of Emotion

2.1.5.1 Theory of Woman's Emotion

I apply the theory of woman's emotion in order to analyze the emotion of Maya Angelou, the main character, as my object of this study. Here, I apply the theories from Clifford T. Morgan, Rochelle Semen Albin and Douglas K. Candland.

The popular and traditional idea is that the woman is more emotional of the two sexes. This difference may also be interpreted in terms of social group and expectancies. In our particular society the boy is expected to repress his manifestation of emotion, whereas the girl is expected to manifest emotion under appropriate conditions. The research on younger children shows a tendency toward greater emotional responsiveness in boys than in girls, particularly in the direction of more aggressive, negativistic, assertive, and angry responses. Boys may be more emotional than girls originally but be exposed to stronger constraints. Girls may be less emotional in their younger years and more emotional when they grow older because the glandular and psychological changes, which appear with puberty, may increase the emotionality of the girls (Morgan, 1950: 424-425).

Woman is sensitive. Feeling and emotion influence her personality. She can place herself in a different position as the person who suffers from one problem. She is able to be someone else by perceiving "If I were him or her". In the first time, if she gets a problem she will use her emotion rather than mind. Then, if she gets the same problem, mind and emotion influence her action toward it. She will be cautious when she experiences the same problems in the future.

Woman is said mature if she owns the responsibility for herself, for her own fate, and for her own life (Albin, 1986: 27).

The special status of emotion in Jung's thought can also be expressed in terms of the archetypes of masculinity and femininity. Every individual must deal with both archetypes. In Jung's view, thinking and sensing are the characteristic of masculine consciousness, but for femininity it still remains unconscious. The popular idea of woman is more emotional (Candland, 1977: 222).

The feminine archetype appears in such varied forms as the mother, the sister, the angel, the goddess, the witch, the whore, the virgin, the lover, and so on. The feminine consciousness has always been symbolized as lunar, referring to the moon's mysterious light, contrasted with the sun's bright which symbolizes masculinity in its solar consciousness (Candland, 1977: 223).

2.1.5.2 Theory of General Emotion

I include this theory because it supports the analysis of the study. I want to understand deeper and better about human's emotion in general. I apply the theory of emotion from Clifford. T. Morgan, Conrad W. Baars. M.D, Douglas K. Candland, CM. Fleming and Elizabeth Hurlock. T.

Individual development consists of a blossoming of the body. Followed by a maturing of the emotions or appetites and terminated by the growth of the intellect. It can be seen that emotion is one of components that influences the growth of individual's maturity (Fleming, 1987: 33).

Emotions are realities, which move and motivate the individual. The individual is a complex action system, which assumes constantly changing patterns of tension and equilibrium. These changes are determined by three major factors: maturity, life experiences, and the constitutional make-up of the individual. Evidence is available that there is a progressive change in emotionality with age. As the person moves to maturity, he becomes less suggestible, less responsive, and more critical and gains control over his emotion. The expression of emotions reflects not only age, sex, and social status, but also the particular problems that the individual faces in his own life (Morgan, 1950: 425-426).

The common emotional patterns include fear, worry, anxiety, anger, annoyance, frustration, jealousy, envy, curiosity, affection, grief, and happiness in the forms of euphoria and joy. There are three types of emotional action according to Bindra (1) aggressive actions, such as attack, fighting, and temper tantrums. (2) fearful responses, such as withdrawal and avoidance and (3) what he terms affectional responses, such as preferences for certain objects, places, and people (Candland, 1977: 106).

Emotion in the theories of Freud and Jung are the following points. (1) That emotion is qualitatively different phenomenon from thought. (2) That emotion is motivational in human life and most of the time more powerful than thought. (3) That emotion, more than thought refers to some additional, invisible (unconscious) psychic processes. (4) That emotion expresses those aspects of a person's fundamental nature that are not readily apparent to the conscious mind (Candland, 1977: 218).

Derived from the Latin, the word emotion has to do with motion, movement, and motor. According to Baars, the easiest way to understand the different kinds of movement or function which emotions can cause or have is by distinguishing two kinds of emotions or motors (1979: 14-20).

One group of emotion causes inner movement within the psyche. This inner movement may be compared to that occurring in a light bulb when we flip the switch on. Electrons begin to move which create light and warmth. When we recognized something as being good and pleasurable for us, that sense of object will stimulate in us. It becomes the first and fundamental emotion of pleasure appetite, namely the emotion of love. This feeling may grow into the emotion of desire, and when we come to possess that sense object we will experience the emotion of joy. To give an example, we fall in love with beautiful dress; the longer we admire it in the window, the stronger our desire to wear it; finally when we can afford to buy it, or someone presents it to us as a gift, we feel joyful (Baars, 1979: 14-15).

The emotions which does not constitute a sense good or an object of pleasure for us, in fact just the opposite, a sense evil. Here, the word 'evil' has nothing to do with morality. It means what is occurring on the level of the senses. Those are hate, aversion, and sadness. When doctor tells us we must take a bitter liquid for our disease, we feel hate, dislike for this medicine. As we open the bottle we feel aversion and when we swallow it we feel anything but joy. Based on the above explanation, there are six emotions include in the inner movement. Love, desire, and joy in response to whatever our senses recognize as a sense

good; hate, aversion, and sadness in response to a sense of evil (Baars, 1979: 16). The second kind of movement is comparable with an electric motor. When the key is turned, the motor begins to run and provides the source of energy for a car. Likewise, the emotions of this type provide the energy for our action and deeds. The second kind of emotions provides the energy for our actions. They stimulate us to move, to act, whether it is by talking, walking, studying or other activities. These actions are aimed doing and obtaining something that will give us joy. Working in order to earn money, studying in order to obtain useful knowledge. There are five emotions include in this emotion, namely hope, despair, courage, fear, and anger. These five basic emotions are very useful and necessary psychic motors in giving us the energy to overcome obstacles that separate us from the things we desire and which promise to make us joyful (Baars, 1979: 20).

To sum up the explanation about emotion above, the emotions of our pleasure appetite or our humane emotions cause us to be moved. Whereas the emotions of our utility appetite or our utilitarian emotions cause us to move, to act, and to do.

According to Hurlock, emotions have both favorable and unfavorable effects on the personal and social adjustment. On the favorable side, emotions provide excitement and relaxation, body strength and endurance, and motivation (1949: 60).

a. Excitement and Relaxation

Emotions give an excitement to daily life. Even if an emotion is unpleasant, the aftermath is a state of relaxation, which is always pleasurable.

b. Body Strength and Endurance

Under emotional stress, a person can often bring a good performance that would otherwise be impossible. Even when the activity is completed, the person is not tired or physically exhausted.

c. Motivation

In their milder forms, all emotions serve as a drive to action related to the emotions that have been aroused. In the stronger forms, emotions tend to paralyze related action.

Whereas, on the unfavorable side emotions provide physical debility, efficiency loss, personality maladjustment, and emotional habits (Hurlock, 1949: 60).

a. Physical Debility

Emotional tension upsets body homeostasis and leads to digestive disturbances, loss of appetite, and headaches. The longer emotional tension leads to loss of weight, loss of energy, and generally run-down condition.

b. Efficiency Loss

Emotional stress results in flightiness, instability, and inconsistency of performance. It leads to errors in motor skills, speech disturbances, and accidents. Poor concentration becomes the obstacle in memorizing, reasoning, and recall.

c. Personality Maladjustment

Unpleasant emotions make a person irritable and moody. Irritability leads to impatience and an uncooperative attitude, while moodiness results in either withdrawal or aggressive behavior.

d. Emotional Habits

With repetition, unpleasant emotional responses tend to become habitual. The result is a worried, anxious, or angry adolescent, whose responses even to happiness are blended with displeasure.

Hurlock offers some criteria of emotional maturity, namely socially approved control, self-knowledge, and use of critical mental faculties (1949: 66).

a. Socially Approved Control

The emotionally mature person is able to control socially disapproved expressions of his emotions or to relieve himself of stressed physical and mental energy in a socially acceptable manner.

b. Self-knowledge

The person who is emotionally mature learns how much control is required to satisfy his own needs and yet conform to social expectations. Only a zombie expresses no emotion.

c. Use of Critical Mental Faculties

An emotionally mature person assesses a situation critically before responding to it emotionally. He then decides how to react to it.

With repetition, emotions develop into habits. Thus, if the pleasant emotions become habitual, they can be aids to adjustment; if the unpleasant emotions become habitual, they become liabilities to adjustment.

2.2 Criticisms on Maya Angelou and Her Works

Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas is the third autobiography of a marvelous black woman, Maya Angelou. Below, are some criticisms toward her life and works. These criticisms are taken from *Black American Women's Writing* by Eva Lennox Birch and Internet, especially Maya Angelou's web site (www.mayaangelou.com/voices from the gaps).

I include some of Angelou's autobiographical novels and its criticisms because each of novels has a strong relationship with one another. Furthermore, from each novel the readers can understand the life of Maya Angelou's better.

Angelou said that her writings are autobiographies not novels. A clear difference between the definition of novel and autobiography: the former is a fiction in which the author employs narrative techniques to disguise authorial control, the latter where the author is subject. An autobiography is a kind of life journey in which mostly tells about past events and past selves. As such it gives the reader an image of the author's self, which is self-reflective, the eye is the "I" (Birch, 1994: 121).

According to Holman and Horman, autobiography is the story of a person's life as written by that person. It is connected narrative of the author's life, with some stress on introspection (1986: 43).

Stephanie M. Demetrakopoulos, in Jelinek's *Women's Autobiography in America: Essays in Criticism*, points:

Certain kinds of autobiographies have flourished and clustered around specific historical events. The large number of American female autobiographies recently published can be connected to a new self-consciousness in women, attributable to the latest feminist movement, which centers in the United States (p. 181).

In his account of black autobiographical writing, Stephen Butterfield distinguishes between the male and female autobiographic traditions which evolved from the slave narratives. In this, he describes the male struggle to encounter slavery, which is revealed through the expression in the black male 'protest' novels such as Wright's *Native Son*. In contrast to the black man's desire to speak for a whole race, Butterfield sees the trigger in black women's narratives that their literature as being personal rather than social. The obstacles presented by class, race and gender as they are described in the slave narratives still exist, but in Angelou's handling they can be surmounted and overcome. The reader of Angelou's works has no doubt that she sees her own experiences as a part of her people's (Birch, 1994: 123).

Angelou stresses that individual recognition is denied by misnaming, and this damages self-esteem. Hence her given name Marguerite is transformed to 'Maya', her brother's name for her, and her surname Johnson into the show business of her first married name, 'Angelos', to 'Angelou'. In this sense, she named herself. However, identity is more complex than familial naming, and shaped by an awareness of social identity of how the individual is perceived within a community (Birch, 1994: 127).

According to Wright, Angelou's works seem to be an interesting blending of male and female qualities identified by Jelinek, and have some special ingredients. Stephen Butterfield, in his account of black American autobiography, identifies the dimension of Angelou's works: 'She also speaks of the special problems encountered by black women and affirms life in a way that no male author could duplicate'. Angelou's autobiographical works always portray a positive female image (Birch,1994:124).

Angelou shows that girls can have experience of adventure and success and further, it can happen to a black girl. Sexism, racism and classism are all ingredients in Angelou's life. One significant feature of her works is life experiences always become her pattern and spirit, which are poured into her wonderful works (Birch, 1994: 124) :

All my work, my life, everything is about survival. All my works are meant to say 'You may encounter many defeats, but you must never be defeated'. In fact, the encountering might be the very experience, which creates the vitality and the power to endure.

Birch states that Angelou's autobiographies as the example of the persistent spirit of the African ancestor. Within a multi-ethnic society, whites are always politically dominant in a class system, they are as the superiority. For blacks in such a society, colour is the dimension for marking them as 'the other'. Blackburn writes in an essay (1994: 124-125):

Most African women autobiographies confess to one incident in their early lives that awakened them to their colour; this recognition scene evoked an awareness of their blackness and its significance, and it had a lasting influence in their lives.



Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas is a novel that takes up the problems faced by a black woman named Maya Angelou, who lived among white society. She admitted that she had no attraction of physical appearance. She dreamed of waking up one day as a little white girl. Regina Blackburn associates Angelou's then self-loathing with her hatred of her colour (Birch, 1994: 128) :

All of these here encountered, Maya Angelou expressed the most severe self-hatred derived from her appearance. Beaten down by massive self-loathing and self-shame, she felt her appearance was too offensive to merit any kind of true affection from others (Jelinek, p.103).

Blackburn suggests that Angelou hated being black. Sondra O'neal argues differently, that Angelou's dissatisfaction with her appearance was a natural response to early self-examination and feelings of guilt. Michelle Wallace states in her book *Black Macho and the Myth of Superwoman*, that:

America had room among its beauty contestants for the buxom Mae West, the bug eyes of Bette Davis, and masculinity of Joan Crawford. But, the black woman was only allowed entry if her hair was straight, her skin light, and her features European. In other words, if she was as nearly indistinguishable from a white woman as possible (p. 158).

Beauty, propagated in the US culture by the media, with its assumption of whiteness implies that black is not beautiful. Like others, black men internalize the white ideal image of 'beautiful' often abusing black women because of their inability to live up to this externally imposed, impossible standard (Bhavnani, 1994: 202).

This statement is not true at all. In my opinion, black is beautiful. Oprah Winfrey's own size acts as a reminder of now women's bigness can be a

form of power, perhaps especially when they are black women in a field dominated by men (Bhavnani, 1994: 67).

Below, are some criticisms on Maya Angelou's works cited from www.mayaangelou.com/voices from the gaps. Angelou's first work of literature, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, is an autobiography. Her miserable life inspired her to write this book. It truly reflects the essence of her struggle to overcome the restrictions that were placed upon her in a hostile environment. Angelou writes with a twist of lyrical imagery along with a touch of realism. The title of this book is taken from the poem "sympathy" by the great black poet Paul Laurence. Sidonie Ann Smith praised Angelou, saying that "like Richard Wright, she opens with a primal childhood scene that brings into focus the nature of the imprisoning environment from which the self will seek escape" (Smith 10).

Her second book, *Gather Together in My Name*, centers on Angelou and her brother's move away from their grandmother. Annie Gottlieb states that Angelou "writes like a song, and like the truth" (Gottlieb 223). Another reader, Doris Grumbach, states, "it is apparent that Angelou is keen, sharp, earthy, imaginative, lyrical, spiritually bold, and seems destined for distinction" (Grumbach 12). But according to Frank L. Phillips, "Maya Angelou is not the stylist that Himes is, nor a Richard Wright" (Phillips 12).

Angelou's third novel, *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*, covers about five years of her life from the ages of twenty-two to twenty-seven. June Jordan states that this novel "frequently borders on a light and fantastical style of comic opera that is sometimes delightful reading, and

sometimes not" (Jordan 13). In Allen P. Nilsen's opinion "this book might make an exciting introduction to Angelou's poetry" (Nilsen 14).

The title of her fourth novel *The Heart of a Women*, comes from a poem that was written during the Harlem Renaissance by the poet Georgia Douglas Johnson. Once again Angelou is in search of her identity and place. Adam David Miller states that this is a book that "covers one of the most exciting periods in recent African and Afro-American history" (Miller 23).

Angelou's fifth autobiography, *All Gods Children Need Traveling Shoes*, exemplifies an awareness of an even greater sense of connectedness with her African past. She states, "our people had always longed for home. In the yearning, heaven and Africa were inextricably combined. So I finally come home" (19). One reviewer, Barbara T. Christian describes the book as "a thoughtful yet spirited account of one Afro-American woman's journey into the land of her ancestors". She goes on to say that it is "an important document drawing more much needed attention to the hidden history of a people both African and American." Also according to Barbara T. Christian, Angelou's sojourn in Africa strengthens her bond to her ancestral home even as she concretely experiences her distinctiveness as an Afro-American" (Christian 23).

The life and work of Maya Angelou are fully interrelated each other. Angelou's poetry and personal narratives form a larger picture wherein the symbolic Maya Angelou rises to become an example for African-American people, and especially for black women seeking to survive and erase an assumption that Black is lack of power (www.mayaangelou.com)

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I discuss three things, namely the subject matter, the approach, and the procedure. The subject matter concerns the reason I write this study. The approaches are used for analyzing the study while the procedures are used for explaining the steps that I take in doing the analysis.

3.1 Subject Matter

Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas was written by Maya Angelou in 1976. This novel was published by Bantam Books in 1976. It consists of 30 chapters and 242 pages. I learn much about the life of Maya Angelou, as the author. This book gives me a vivid understanding and some information about Maya Angelou. This book is an autobiography.

3.2 Approaches

I apply the biographical and psychological approaches in order to answer the problems. I adopt biographical approach because the novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* is an autobiography, which reflects the author's life journey. Proponents of the biographical approach assert the necessity for an appreciation of the ideas and personalities of the author to an understanding of the literary object. I can learn the life and development of the author, which leads to the understanding of her writing. It is far better to try to

find out what the author did say than to try to find out what he intended to say (Rohberger, 1971: 8).

The psychological approach is a means to study the human thought and behaviour. The psychological approach involves the effort to locate and demonstrate certain recurrent patterns. Freud's exploration of the unconscious area of the human mind led him to the conclusion that thought and behavior and the contents of this region of the mind found expression in symbolic words, thoughts, and action. There exists a set of symbols which are common to all men and which can be interpreted in light of individual's experience. The human personality develops from infancy through childhood until adolescence (Rohberger, 1971: 14). Talking about emotion is related to the psychic world of individual. That is why, I adopt the psychological approach in order to analyze this study.

3.3 Procedures

This thesis employs library or desk research. There are two kinds of sources used in this study. The primary source is obtained from the novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*. The secondary sources are obtained from books on literature and books on psychology. The procedures in this study concerned the steps that I take in doing the analysis, so that I can obtain the solutions for the problem formulation of this study.

There are some procedures that I have taken in order to analyze this study. Firstly, I read *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*, as the primary resource, for many times in order to obtain a good understanding of the

content of the story. Secondly, I make a summary and points would like to discuss. Thirdly, I read another book to support the answers in the problem formulation. I also seek the appropriate information as the secondary data by using the library indexing system. The indices to this information are available in an electric format, a computerized search or a manual search. Some computerized searches are also done through Internet. A manual search is also done through books and documents.

There are some books used to analyze this study. I referred to *Literature for Composition* from Sylvan Barnet and *Understanding Unseen* from M.J Murphy to analyze the theories on character. To analyze the theories of characterization, I read *Reading and Writing About Literature* from Mary Rohberger and *A Handbook to Literature* from Hugh C. Holman and William Horman.

To analyze the theory of character development, I use *Literature: Structure, Sound and Sense* from Laurence Perine and *A Glossary of Literary Terms* from M.H Abrams. The reference book that can support the theories of plot is *An Introduction Fiction* from Robert Stanton.

In order to have a good understanding about emotion, I read *Psikologi Wanita: Gadis Remaja dan Wanita Dewasa* from Kartini Kartono, *Adolescent Development* from Elizabeth B. Hurlock, *Feelings and Emotions* from Clifford T. Morgan , *Emosi* from Rochelle Semmel Albin, *Emotion* from Douglas K. Candland, *Feeling and Healing Your Emotions* from Conrad W. Baars, and *How to Get Rid of Emotions* from Merrill Harmin.

Besides, I use *Psychology of Character* from Rudolf Allers in order to have the character's explanation viewed from the psychological point of view. I also read *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, the first Maya Angelou autobiography, which aims to enrich my knowledge about her life. Furthermore, I read *Shifting Identities Shifting Racism: A Feminism and Psychology Reader* from Kum-kum Bhavnani and *Black American Women's Writing* by Eva Lennox Birch in order to have a broad understanding about the life of black women, especially Maya Angelou.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

In this chapter I will answer the questions formulated in the problem formulation. To study Maya Angelou's emotional development I will discuss the character of Maya Angelou, the attitudes that reflect her emotional development and the method how she could manage her emotion in order to better her life.

4.1 Characterization of Maya Angelou

In order to have a vivid characterization of Maya Angelou as the main character in *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*, I apply the elements discussed in the book entitled *Understanding Unseen* by Murphy. They are personal description, the speech, and past life.

Maya Angelou was born as a black woman who lived among whites. One desire that she always dreams about is to be a white girl. She believes that white is beautiful. All men adore white women. Angelou feels inferior with her physical appearance, nothing can be proud of. She admits her lack of beauty.

.....I had to admit that I was greatly lacking in the popular attractions of physical beauty and womanly wiles. All my life, my body had been in successful against my finer nature. I was too tall and raw skinny. My large extroverted teeth protruded in an excitement to be seen, and I, attempting to thwart success, rarely smiled (p.4).

From that statement we know that she has no attraction of physical appearance. On the other hand, although her physical appearance is far from beauty she is very brilliant and smart. It can be seen from the statement:

My mind, it was a certain, was a well-oiled mechanism which worked swiftly and seminoiselessly. I often competed with radio contestants on quiz programs and usually won hands down in my living room. Oh, my mental machine could excite anyone. I meant anyone interested in a person who had memorized the presidents of the United States in chronological order, the capitals of the world, the minerals of the earth and the generic names of various species (p.4).

From the explanation above, although Angelou has no physical attraction, she has an excellent brain. Actually God creates His mankind with positive and negative sides. In short, every human being has strengths and weaknesses. Nobody is perfect. So that, we have to accept all the negative and positive sides of ourselves and other people. Angelou covers her weakness by her strength that is her brilliant brain.

Some women are beautiful and some are not beautiful. Frequently the beautiful woman has been satisfied to enjoy the male's admiration with the result that she has not bothered to develop character, personality, adaptability, and valuable skills . The woman who is not beautiful should realize that while beauty may not be possible for everyone, an attractive presence is (Faherty,1967: 132).

Angelou is an independent woman. She is always reminded of it by her mother. Her mother always advises her to be independent, never becomes dependent to someone else and never regrets with she has done in her life, as long as it is good for her.

My beautiful mother taught me to row my own boat, paddle my own canoe, and hoist my own sail. She warned in fact "If you want something done, do it by yourself" (p.11).

The little Angelou lived in a hard situation. In her childhood she had never been treated as a sweet little girl. She had never been spoiled by money, beautiful clothes and candies like other children. Everything had to be done by herself.

Besides, she is strong and brave to face her life. The hardship in her childhood teaches her to be strong and brave.

At three years old I had been sent by train from California to Arkansas, accompanied only by my four year old brother.....(p.25).

In her early age, she had to live separately from her mother. Unlike other children, she never tasted an affection from her mother. She had to help her grandmother who ran a small shop. This hardship was supported by the condition at that time. Laziness was not accepted. Little Angelou had to work in order to survive.

Maya Angelou is a tough woman. She feels all right and proud to raise her son alone.

.....Raped at seven and returned to California at thirteen. My son was born when I was seventeen and determined to raise him (p.25).

From the statement above, we know that Angelou is a tough woman. It is common for a woman having a feeling of shame if she raises her baby alone, even the mother aborts her baby. But, Angelou does something dare. She has a big sense of motherhood, she does not feel ashamed to raise her son.

Angelou is a hard worker. Her efforts aim to support her family's need. She has a lot of experiences in doing various jobs. She realizes although she has no strength financially, she is able to satisfy her family's needs by getting some jobs.

I had worked as a shake dancer in night club, fry cooking hamburger joints, dinner cook in a Creole restaurant and once had a job in a mechanic's shop, taking the paint off cars with my hands (p.25).

But sometimes, she still feels afraid and inferior toward her society, especially whites. She always becomes suspicious and curious if there is a white who wants to approach her and offer a normal friendship.

.....She couldn't have been seeking friendship, after all she was white. And as far as I knew, white women were never lonely, except in books. White men adored them, Black men desired them and Black women worked for them. Maybe she offered friendship because she pitied me. A white woman? Feeling sorry for me? (p.3-4).

The past always reminds her of the oppression. The stereotype about black is always kept in her memory. Being slave and poor are natural for black. The superiority is for white whereas the inferiority is for black. The core theme of black women in American work is a shared history of struggle. Black women are seen as models of strength, directness, and integrity.

Angelou is a good mother for her only son. She loves him much. Although over half of her time spent for working, she tries to be a good mother for him.

.....I had to have two jobs to pay the baby sitters fees and my own rent. I boarded him out six days and five nights a week.

.....After dinner, cooked in the communal kitchen, I would read to him and allow him to try to read to me. The next day was always spent at the park, the zoo, the San Fransisco Museum of Art, a cartoon movie house or any cheap of free place of entertainment (p.9-10).

She always gives affection for her son. Her miserable past becomes the shadow. In her childhood she never gets enough affection from her mother, so that she does not want to do the same treatment toward her son as her mother does.

Maya Angelou is a religious woman. She is a good Christian although her husband, Tosh, is an atheist.

The spirituals and gospels songs were sweeter than sugar. I wanted to keep my mouth full of them and the sounds of my people singing fell like sweet oil in my ears (p.28).

As a religious woman, Angelou realized that her marriage would not last forever without a religion base. After a year of marriage, she finds there is no happiness anymore, so that she chooses to live separately from Tosh. Now, she becomes a single parent for her son, Clyde.

Later, Angelou tries to look for another job. Angelou is given a good opportunity to dig her singing and dancing talent. Being a great singer and dancer are her dream. Her job makes her famous. She has a dense schedule to travel around the world. On the other side, she feels unhappy because she has to leave her son during the tour. As a good mother she has responsibility for her son needs.

I sent my dollars home to pay for Clyde's keep and assuage my guilt at being away from him (p.153).

Since Angelou has to travel around the world, she meets various people with different languages. She loves learning something new. She learns some languages by herself.

I wanted to travel, to try to speak other languages, to see the cities I had read about all my life (p.128).

I bought a French-English dictionary and packed it with the Italian-English phrase book and other belongings and had them taken to the bus, which waited in the square (p.150).

The description above shows that Angelou is eager to learn something new. Although she does not master some languages she tries to learn them by herself. Her quick intelligence for learning are seen in her claim that no matter where her travels take her, she endeavours to communicate in the language of that

country. To be able to understand one language is good but to be able to speak one language is better.

Maya Angelou was born as a black woman. Although she has no physical attraction and inferior feeling, she is a great black woman. Her brain is amazing and she is independent. She does everything by herself.

Besides, she has strength and bravery to face her life. She is also a tough woman. She is willing to raise her son alone in a hard economic condition. She is a good mother for her son and she loves him much. Angelou is responsible for her son. Besides, she is a religious Christian. Further, she loves something new. She likes to learn everything by herself.

4.2 The Attitudes of Maya Angelou that Reflect the Emotional Development

Emotion is a kind of experienced feeling. We name every emotion appeared from ourselves, such as sad, happy, angry, love, and hate. When we are able to distinguish one emotion and another, we also begin to think about our feeling. We do not only feel sad or angry, but furthermore we start to ask what the source of our sadness or anger is (Albin, 1986: 13).

We cannot control all our emotion. As a mature human being, sometimes we get confusion with our feeling and hesitation to express and respond it. Being mature means able to develop some techniques in order to reveal the emotion in an appropriate way.

In the novel *Singing and Singing and Getting Merry Like Christmas*, Maya Angelou is the model of a black woman who has experienced emotional

development. Although it is complicated to manage emotion, Angelou shows her success to face the problems in her life.

Woman is tough because she is expert in developing the psychological power to satisfy her needs in one relationship with other people, for example the ability of sharing something with other people, the sensitivity of understanding other people and the ability of being a shoulder to cry on for other people (Albin, 1986: 53).

In explaining Maya Angelou's emotional development, I divide it into three parts, starting from her childhood, adolescence until adulthood. Every phase of her life portrays the emotional development.

4.2.1 Maya Angelou's Childhood

Maya Angelou was born in a poor and unhappy family in Saint Louis, Missouri. She finds no happiness in her childhood. Her life is miserable. She has to work in order to support her family needs. Then she was raped at seven. After that sexual molestation, little Angelou becomes mute; refuse to speak nearly five years. Finally she can find herself again only through Mrs. Flowers' tender encouragement. She begins to speak again. It shows that her emotion develops. The unstable emotion turns to be stable emotion.

Bambang states that if we examine the children deeper, their psychological aspects have not been mature yet. They have no experience and maturity in facing one problem in their life. Based on this statement, we know that Angelou faces her problem unwisely because she is not ready to have it in her early age. One of

children 's human needs is love. There are many ways to express love, like giving a present, kiss, and appraisal and appreciated words. The other need is safety. Children feel safe if there is a comfortable relationship arises between children and family. Love and affection make children safe. Then, it brings them to happiness (1990: 21).

Little Angelou does not have the feeling of love and safety. She is away from her mother. She has no trusted friend, except her brother who is willing to be a good listener for her. That is the reason why by having the sexual molestation, she is very shocked and bewildered. Then she refuses to speak to other people.

Children with their sense of safety will do various activities that trigger the development of their physic and psychic. The primarily safety comes from their family and surrounding people. By having the sense of safety from the environment, children can face their life with full confidence (Bambang, 1990: 23).

4.2.2 Maya Angelou's Adolescence

In her young age Angelou tries to prove her womanhood. Soon, she finds herself pregnant because of the sexual encounter with a young man. At the age of seventeen she delivers her son, Clyde. She becomes a single mother without a father of his son. It is hard to be a mother, even a single mother in a young age. Being a mother is not simple. It needs much time to devote everything, like energy, patience, love, and affection in order to be a good mother for the baby.

Angelou has proved it, she has done something wonderful. It shows us that she has experienced emotional development.

In the book *A book for Girls*, it is stated that between the ages of fifteen and seventeen, a girl becomes much more conscious of herself, as an individual, in relation to those around her. She feels the attraction of the opposite sex. Sex attraction, as it is called, is a natural healthy desire and has been created by Almighty God. It is perfectly normal and right, and it is part of the processes of growing up, or adolescent as it is called (1957: 10).

In having a special relationship, a man has to know how to behave properly when he is going about with a girl. He knows for instance that there are certain liberties he must not take with her, as they are sinful. If he is a kind of man who will make a good husband, he keeps his passion under control when with her. The girl on her part can help him in this respect if she tries to realize and remember the man's passion are usually much stronger than woman's. She should make her natural attractiveness and charming behaviour (A Catholic Woman Doctor, 1957: 37).

4.2.3 Maya Angelou's Adulthood

In her adulthood, Angelou gets some complicated problems. She marries Tosh, a Greek man. He is one of her companion in the place where she works. Having married Tosh, Angelou feels as a woman completely. She tries to be a good wife for her husband and a nice mother for her son.

Her happiness does not last long. After a year, Angelou finds no happiness within her family. Tosh is an atheist whereas Angelou is a good Christian. Angelou becomes a good pretender whenever she goes to church. She never tells Tosh about it. At last Tosh finds her falsehood. After that, some quarrels often happen within their family. Angelou prefers to live separately from Tosh. She becomes a single mother for her son.

The other complicated problem is her neglect toward her son nearly makes her to end the life. Having divorced Tosh, Angelou tries to seek a job for satisfying her family's needs. She has a big opportunity to conquer the world by her talent of dancing and singing. Her travelling around the world makes her to live separately from her son. The past memory is always kept in her mind. At the age of three, little Angelou has to live separately from her mother. In fact, she does not want to treat her son like her mother treats her in a very early age. The choice between career and family makes her in doubt. Furthermore, she is the economic provider for the family.

Her neglect of her son makes her guilty. She judges herself that she fails to be a good mother for her son. She wants to end her life. Then she visits her friend, Wilkie, in order to pour her feeling. Wilkie is a good friend, he helps Angelou to surmount her problem. At last, Angelou realizes her fault. Angelou is able to face all the problems in her life although there is no husband in her side. She shows us that her emotion develops.

4.3 Maya Angelou's Ability in Managing Her Emotions

According to Albin, every human being has various emotions, not only good emotion but also bad emotion. The emotion like anger, guilt, envy, and hatred are known as bad emotions. We prefer to express love, happiness, and affection but tend to keep bad emotion. Then, it will evoke the difficulty to bear the bad emotion (1986: 76).

Maya Angelou undergoes some emotions, such as the feeling of guilt when she gets the sexual molestation and neglects her son, the feeling of anger when she has some quarrels within her family, the feeling of happiness when she can be a good wife and mother.

At last I was a housewife. I had a son, a father for him, a husband and a pretty home for us to live in. My life began to resemble a Good Housekeeping Advertisement (p. 26).

To distinguish and process emotion are a complicated things. We often have a bewilderment about our feeling. We are able to experience every emotion, but we do not know the way to control it in everyday life. As a mature human being, we always want to balance between the good emotion and the bad emotion. Furthermore, we want to express and hide all emotion in balanced capacity. It is very hard to reach the perfect balance because we have to fight with all our emotion and accept all the condition in us, that is the good side and the bad side. Emotional development always grows as we are getting older and more mature (Albin, 1986: 78). It also happens to Angelou. She cannot balance between the good and bad emotions. She tends to keep her bad emotion. For example, she keeps her feeling of guilt toward her son, which leads her to try to end her life.

My responses to Clyde, however, did alarm me. I wanted to hold him every minute. To pick him up and carry his nine-year-old body through the streets, to the store, to the park. I was the mother who, in desperate thrust for freedom, left her only child, who became sick during her absence. A mother who, upon her return, felt so guilty she could think of nothing more productive than killing her self and possibly even the child? (p. 233-234).

Baars explains that emotion develops like we have a cultivation in our garden. When we cultivate our garden, we provide the proper amounts of fertilizer, water, and air, while we remove the harmful elements, like weeds that would hinder the healthy growth of plants. We then leave it up to the plants to grow naturally. The same applies to our emotions. We do everything reasonable to enable them to grow at their own speed, so they will serve us best in their fully developed state (1979: 94-95).

In the novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*, Maya Angelou, as the main character experiences emotional development in her life. It starts from childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. In order to explain Maya Angelou's ability in managing her emotion, I apply the theory of plot by Stanton. I divide the plot into three parts, namely Maya Angelou's childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

4.3.1 Maya Angelou's Childhood

Maya Angelou was born in a black family on April 4, 1928 in Saint Louis, Missouri. At that time the condition of life was very hard. In order to survive, every member of family had to work. Angelou's mother and father got

divorced when she was only three. Her mother sent Angelou with her brother, Bailey, to live with their grandmother in Stamps, Arkansas.

Because of the parting, she did not know her mother well. Bailey became her shelter. Angelou grew up as a smart and active girl. She never expressed her complaints and sighs about the miserable life. A child had to know the meaning of life, without working, life came to an end. Children should not be a burden for family. This description was always attached to little Angelou. She never became a spoiled child. Furthermore, she did not know the meaning of love because at three years old she lived far apart from her mother. When Angelou was seven, she and Bailey returned to live with their mother and her boyfriend back in Saint Louis.

Everything turned to be worst, when the little Angelou was raped at the very early age. Her emotion changed to be unstable. She did not know what she had to do. She felt ashamed, angry, bewildered, and worried about herself. Because of her feeling of guilt, she decided not to speak for nearly five years. Her emotion remained unstable.

In my opinion, little Angelou is only a victim of sexual molestation by Mr. Freeman. She never gets affection from her mother. All children need love and affection from their beloved parents, but poor little Angelou does not have them. From children psychology, she will perceive peaceful, comfortable, and safe if she has an ideal parents. She wants to be treated like the other children. That is why she tries to look for someone who can give love and affection.

The children need's for feeling loved is a fundamentals as their need for food, air, and shelter. They cannot live if this need is not satisfied. Exist, yes, but not really live as a human being should live. Without this fundamental of being loved by people around them, especially their family they will continue to seek it (Baars, 1979: 110).

Not surprisingly, Angelou's search for reassurance, her measure of self-worth, depended upon how much she felt loved. Her need to be loved, warmed, and held by a loving parent accounts for her bewildered reaction to her sexual molestation by Mr. Freeman. His initial embrace has given her pleasure as expressions of affection from a trusted adult.

Then, as a result of her silence she was sent back to Stamps because no one could handle her. After the horror of her rape, she thought that no one would love her anymore. It can be understood if she keeps a feeling of guilty after doing something wrong and sinful. As an adult, we understand about that matter.

Later, there is a white teacher, Mrs. Flower, who believed in her and encouraged her. She helped little Angelou to develop her enthusiasms for reading and language. With the constant help of Mrs. Flowers, Angelou began to evolve into the young girl who had possessed the pride and confidence she once had. Gradually, she recovered from the trauma of her experience. Mrs. Flower's love, affection, and patience could change her behaviour. She finds someone who really knows her, who wants to be a good listener and a guide for her life.

In general, children are more emotional than adult. They cannot control their emotion wisely. The emotions of children are unstable because they do not

have a certain value of life to hold. The expression of anger, happiness and hatred are obviously seen. On the other hand, if they have a problem they just keep it for themselves because their emotions are not mature yet.

The feeling of worry and scare appear after the wrong action. Children cannot solve the problem by themselves. They need someone who is able to guide and lead their life. Children should be given enough opportunity to play with other people, especially children with the same age. This teaches them to feel comfortable with their emotions of others, and to share their own. It will develop their sensitivity to the feelings of others as well as their own (Baars, 1979: 92).

Having sexual molestation, little Angelou decides not to speak nearly five years. She does this action because she feels guilty and sinful. Then she has no feeling of trust toward people. Once, there is Mrs. Flower, a white teacher, who teaches and encourages her to speak. With her guidance, Angelou feels there is one who loves and to be trusted. Mrs. Flower's patience of guiding her brings a result. Gradually, Angelou tries to have a communication with others. She cannot keep the problems alone by closing communication with other people. It will not help to overcome her problem; furthermore she is more depressed. Angelou is able to manage her emotion with the help of Mrs. Flower.

4.3.2 Maya Angelou's Adolescence

Again, Angelou and her brother were sent to San Francisco to live with their mother. She grew to be a black girl. Soon, she proved she was a woman and began to rush toward maturity. Gradually, Angelou as young adolescent, now a

sexually mature person, adjusts to the physical and psychological upheavals. She shows an interest in members of the opposite sex. Making the transition from childish to adult sexuality is never easy.

Emotion always grows as our development to be a mature human being. The feeling of anxiety and doubt will be diminished gradually. Both man and woman start to have courage in doing something in their life. In the adolescent age, man and woman want to search their self, "who I am exactly". Woman will try to seek her womanhood whereas man will try to seek his manhood. It leads them to a kind of trial.

In the book entitled *Adolescent Development* it is stated that since girls reach puberty sooner than boys, their attitudes improve sooner. Girls generally show signs of changed attitude toward boys during their thirteenth year. When young adolescents cannot get adequate information about sex, they may try to satisfy their curiosity by experiment. Adolescent sex difficulties are found among those whose home life has been lacking in satisfaction of the basic human needs. For example individuals from broken homes and from homes where the children were unwanted (Hurlock, 1949: 277).

Angelou's curiosity about sex leads her to the experiment with a black guy. Once she had a sexual encounter with another man. Her baby was born when she was seventeen.

I had loved one man and dramatized my losing him with all the exaggerated wailing of a wronged seventeen-year-old (p.14).

Later, she raises her son alone. We know that woman is a caretaker. She has a sense of motherhood. It also happens to Angelou. She is still young at that time.

She should have enjoyed her life, do whatever she wants to do, get a lot of experiences in her life, make a lot of friendships. Unfortunately, she cannot have them all. In the young age she has to prepare to be a mother. It is not only physical but also emotional preparation. She decides to raise her son alone.

Some women would feel ashamed if they bring their baby up alone. Even, the mother does something without worrying about the consequences; she aborts the baby because the society will mock her. Further, only a few women who devote their life to raise their baby. But it is different from Angelou, she does something different and dare. She is willing to take care of her son. She is ready to have a new baby. Her pregnancy is the result of what she has done. She realizes that the baby is purely her flesh and bone.

It is stated in *A book for Girls* that when we are looking as the perfect little body of a newborn child, the greatest gratitude expressed to God. Giving birth is a miracle process. It is miracle because it only comes from the tiny cells, further it can only be seen under a magnifying glass. Almighty God in His wisdom and creative power has planned the whole process (1957: 19).

Kartono explains that giving birth is the most wonderful experience for a woman. She feels as a woman completely. She feels proud because she is able to surmount all the difficulty, and pain with her own effort and power. Besides, there is a great relationship between a mother and her baby (Kartono, 1977: 500).

Angelou tries to prove her womanhood, in which she does a sexual encounter with another man. This action brings her pregnant. Her pregnancy does not really bother her life. She knows that the pregnancy is the result from her

sexual encounter. She is able to manage her emotion. Although she has a feeling of anxiety and guilt, she lets the baby see the new world because its her purely flesh and bone. She can also feel the struggle and sacrifice of a woman for bringing the infant in her body for about nine months.

4.3.3 Maya Angelou's Adulthood

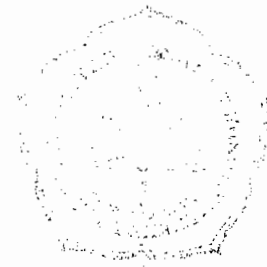
Faherty states that men and women are equal but not identical. Men and women can make their greatest mutual contribution to society's welfare by developing their own personal characteristics and fulfilling their own nature. Men and women are created having different characteristics. They have to fulfil each other, so that they are united in a sacred marriage (1967: 48). As a normal woman, Angelou sometimes wonders to have a good husband for her family. It is natural for her to have someone to rely on.

.....If I were married, "my husband" would set me up in a fine house, which my good taste would develop into home. We would all play chess and Chinese checkers and twenty questions and whist. We would be a large, loving and hilarious family (p.10).

In my next castle-building session, I would dream about a husband who would take our sons to the park to play baseball, football, basketball and tennis.....(p.22).

From Angelou's psyche, having someone to rely on helps her to support the life. If there is a husband, the burden of her life is not as heavy as that time. She is not only as the single mother but she is also as the economic provider for her family.

In her place of work, Angelou has some companions; one of them is a Greek man. His name is Tosh. Having known each other, Angelou is interested in



Tosh. Later, they get married. They live happily. Angelou is contented with her condition now. She feels complete, being a wife for her husband and a mother for her son. Besides, she manages the household and also takes care of the family.

Every woman has a noble job. She is able to be a nice sister for her brother, a good wife for her husband, and a great mother for her children. Faherty states that the eternal destiny of woman points to her high dignity and worth. She is free, intelligent, and responsible human being (Faherty, 1967: 48).

.....Tosh and I were married in the Courthouse on a clear Monday morning. We rented a large flat, and on Tosh's orders I quit my job (p.27).

But, after a year, Angelou finds there is no happiness anymore. Tosh is an atheist whereas Angelou is a good Christian. Tosh told Clyde that there is no God. Angelou believes that there is God. We know that religion is deeply rooted in the minds of woman. It gives meaning to her life. It provides her a clear view of external destiny to know love and serve God in this world and to be happy forever in the next. Angelou has to be a good pretender whenever she goes to church. She always tells a lie when she gets out from her house. At last, Tosh finds her falsehood.

I planned a secret crawl through churches. First, I took a nice dress to Ivonne's house, my best friend's house. And left it, explaining my intent. Then, on at least one Sunday a month, I would prepare a good breakfast for my family and an equally good lie in order to get out the house. Leaving Clyde at home (he hadn't the experience of lie), I would hurry to Ivonne's put on the Sunday dress and rush to church. I changed sites each month, afraid that too many repeated visits would familiarize my face and that on some promenade with Tosh I would be stopped by a church member and possibly asked about last week's sermon (p.28).

Midweek, Tosh stood before me, voice hard and face stony. "A mother Bishop called here from the Evening Star Baptist Church. She said Mrs.

Angelos had joined their church last Sunday. She now must pay twelve dollars for her robe.....(p.34).

Then everything becomes mess. The harmony in their family is disappeared. Tosh always gives complaints and blame to his family.

.....One new morning Tosh screamed from the bathroom, "Where in the hell are the goddamn dry towels?" I went to the bathroom and handed him the thickest towel we owned.....(p.35).

.....Tosh turned, looking directly at him and said. "Shut up will you. I'd like a little fucking peace and quiet while I eat". The statement slapped Clyde Quiet; he had never been spoken to with such cold anger.

.....Tosh looked at me. "The eggs are like rocks. Can't you fry a decent goddamn egg? If not. I'll show you.....(p.36).

Angelou cannot bear her marriage. She has been a good wife and mother.

She has done her best for her family.

What had I done? I was everything the magazines said a wife should be. I had been a good wife, kind, and compliant. And that wasn't enough for him? (p.38).

Because of the serious condition and nothing can be maintained, they get divorce.

She does not want to beg Tosh's mercy. Then for the second time, Angelou has to be a single mother for Clyde, her son. She never regrets with her decision. She wants to reform her life to be better, accompanied by her son.

My marriage was over. I could have thrown myself and my son on Tosh's mercy; he was a kind man, and he might have tolerated us in his home and on the edges of his life. But begging had always resisting in my throat. I thought women who accepted their husbands' inattention and sacrificed all their sovereignty for a humiliating marriage more unsavory than the prostitutes who were drinking themselves awake in the noisy bar (p.39).

Angelou always faces some complicated problems in her life. She is proud of being woman completely, to have a family, which in this sphere, she becomes a wife and mother. But, unfortunately she cannot bear the marriage because the

family is suffered from serious problems. Getting divorced Tosh, she starts to live her life to be better. The experience in her childhood makes her to be a mature woman. Her emotion takes part in her life. It helps her to think, to behave, and to take one decision in every problem.

According to Faherty a woman's happiness does not depend on something external such as a wedding or a monastic veil. A woman with her own true nature will try to make the work of healing, teaching, and of revealing the distressed condition. Women can excel in almost any fields of creative endeavor. Still the majority of women prefer certain occupation, which give greater play to her feminine characteristics (1967: 48).

Angelou tries to look a job to fulfil her family's need. She does not want to beg Tosh's mercy although he has already left some money for her. The first job she gets is a dancer. Every woman will try to make her own distinctly feminine contribution. The woman who is emotionally mature will find fulfillment regardless of her state of life (Faherty, 1967: 53).

Later, she joins with Purple Union, the place where she can dig her singing and dancing talent. She never regrets with her decision, lives alone with her son. As a mother she wants the best for her son, although there is no husband who accompanies her in happiness and sorrow moment.

.....I taught my self to skate so that we could go to the rink together. At home, I cooked his favourite foods, in portion that would please a cowpuncher and surrendered my reading time to play scrabble and twenty questions and any other diversion he chose (p.43).

Woman wishes to give of herself in order to cherish, protect, and preserve others. Faherty states that when a woman considers any problem, her first thought

is how people will be affected by it. She concerns herself more with the warmth of personal relationship, with values of love, morality, and culture (1967: 48).

Her real career goes with *Porgy and Bess*. *Porgy and Bess* has shown her the greatest array of Negro talent she has ever seen. With *Porgy and Bess* she travels around the world, giving a great dancing and singing performance. Her career has just begun.

....Newspaper reporters began to ask for interviews. I was invited to talk on radio and sing on television. Fans began to recognize in the street.....(p.88).

At the top of her career, she gets everything she dreams, fame and glory. But, the past always reminds her of the painful separation from her mother. She does not want it happens to her son.

The past revisited. My mother had left me with my grandmother for years and I knew the pain of parting. My mother, like me, had her motivations, her needs. I did not relish visiting the same anguish on my son, and she, years later, had told me how painful our separation was to her. But, I had to work and I would be good. I would make it up to my son and one day would take him to all the places I was going to see (p.129).

The choice between a developing career and her desire to be with her son proves a difficult one to make, but Europe wins in spite of the anxiety heightened by memories of her own feelings when she separated as a child from her mother. She devotes her talent in order to have a good career. Although she cannot live together with her son, she wants to be a great mother. She always sends some money to her family. She wants Clyde, her son, to taste a prosperous life.

And I could continue sending the same amount of money home. Mom could buy something wonderful for Clyde every other week and tell him I'd sent it. Then perhaps he would forgive my absence (p. 156).

But, as a mother she feels nothing without her son. She neglects her son. She judges herself that she is far from an ideal mother.

I missed my son and he needed me. His letters, printed in a large letters, arrived regularly, and each one ended: "When are you coming home mother? Or can I come to visit you?". (p.221).

The parting with her son makes her guilty. She is longing for him much. Angelou realizes that her son is the most precious thing in her life. All mothers in the world are the same. When they are apart from her children the only thing they want is to meet and to be near with their children. Finally, she can meet her son. She goes home to pour her emotion and feeling toward her son.

I swear to you, I'll never leave you again. If I go, when I go, you'll go with me or I won't go.....(p.232).

In the *Psychology of Character* by Rudolf Allers, it is known that the relationship between mother and child is possibly the most intimate of all the forms of association between two people, its closeness not being equaled even by the greatest love between man and woman. The intimate association is deepened by the experience of giving birth (1943: 245).

Guilt is the common lot of women torn between the conflicting responsibilities of childcare and economic need to earn money. Angelou wants to be the economic provider and protector of her son. She wants to end her career, but her friends always support her because dancing and singing are Angelou's world. She judges herself that she has no responsibility for her son.

.....I had ruined my beautiful son by neglect and neither of us would ever forgive me (p.233).

She thinks about her guilt over her neglect of her son nearly drives her to suicide.

.....It was time to commit suicide, to put an end to accusations and guilt. And did I dare die alone? What would happen to my son? If my temporary absence in Europe caused such devastation to his mind and body, what would become of him if I was gone forever? I brought him into this world and I was responsible for his life. So must the thoughts wind around the minds of insane parents who kill their children and then themselves (p.233).

Angelou is suffering from serious depression. Her spirit of life is diminished. The way of her thinking is not realistic anymore, even she judges herself to be a wicked mother for her son.

According to Albin, someone who suffers from depression wants to injure and end his or her life. The serious depression is one of the emotional diseases which really needs a professional help. Moreover the sufferer tends to surrender, to end his or her life by suicide (1986: 46).

Then, Angelou decides to visit her friend to share everything she feels. She cannot keep it alone, she has to find someone who really knows her situation and condition. She tries to consult the problems to Wilkie, his friend.

....."Wilkie, I can't see any reason for living. I couldn't talk. I'm so unhappy. And I had done such harm to Clyde....."
 "Now, write down what you have to be thankful for. Start to write. First, write that you heard me tell you that. So you have the sense of hearing. And that you could tell the taxi driver where to bring you and then tell me what was wrong with you, so you have the sense of speech. You can read and write. You have a son who needs nothing but you".....(p.235).

I picked up the pencil and began. I can hear. I can speak. I have a son. I have a mother. I have a brother. I can dance. I can sing. I can cook. I can write.....

When I reached the end of the page I began to feel silly. I was alive and healthy. What on earth did I have to complain about? (p.235).

Because of her willingness to express and share her guilty feeling, then Angelou realizes her mistake. Now, she is aware of the meaning of life, that life is

precious. She has a good career, glory, fame, and beautiful son. She has put a lot of effort in order to gain that. She has devoted herself to have a good career and to be a nice mother. So that she has to keep her precious things in her life, because they give a strength and spirit in facing her life.

I had said all I wanted was to be with my son. And now I could hug and kiss him anytime the need arose. What the hell was I whining about? I feel I'm blessed and I'm grateful (p.236).

In general, a woman is created to be a wife and mother. She is a caretaker for the family. It is not a simple thing. In a process of taking care of family, there are always many difficult tasks to confront. Nothing goes and runs smoothly. One of the important elements in confronting the problems is emotional maturity. Emotion plays as the controller in every way of life, for example in thinking, doing, and taking decision of something.

Having married Tosh, Angelou leaves her career in order to take care of her family. Their happiness does not last long. After a year, they get divorced because there is no harmony anymore. Angelou is a good Christian. The need for spiritual anchorage makes her choosing to live alone with her son. Religion gives meaning to her life. The faith gives her a personal savior to face the life tougher and braver.

Later, Angelou finds the place where she has an opportunity to perform her talent well. Fame and glory put her in a hard choice, between career and family. Her career makes her to live far apart from her son. She decides to end her life because of the neglect of her son. Then she is aware of her fault by the help of her friend.

Every human being cannot be individual, he or she needs other people. Angelou also needs a friend in order to lessen her burden. By sharing her problem with a friend, she realizes that she is not insane. She is grateful for her life. Her love for her son makes her stronger to face her problems.

Albin states that emotion can be managed in order to alter life to be better. If we have a certain problem, we can share our emotion with a sensible person who is sincerely able to be a good listener. We do not have to keep our emotion because it will destruct our activity. We will have no spirit for studying, working, and doing any activities because we judge ourselves ignorant and useless (1986: 18).

Emotion can enrich the new thought, new imagination, and new attitude. The more we understand about emotion, the more we try to overcome our emotion and choose the right time and place to express our emotion. The ability of thinking one emotion also develops the ability of controlling the emotion. We are able to understand well what the cause of the emotion is and decide whether we will keep one emotion or express it (Albin, 1986: 13).

Based on a book *Emosi*, we all encounter the difficulties in our life. There are no people who are free to live without having problems in their society. We do not live alone, separated from other people. It is the same with emotion. Emotion is not separated from our social relationship (1986: 19). Maya Angelou undergoes the sweetness and bitterness in her life. She gets through the good and bad times. In fact, nobody is perfect. That is why we need friends with whom we can share everything, especially our problems.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter consists of two parts. Firstly is the conclusion from the analysis in a previous chapter and secondly is the suggestion of teaching implementation through this novel, namely reading and speaking.

5.1 Conclusion

The novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* shows us the example of a woman who is emotionally mature. Maya Angelou, as the main character is successful to face some complicated problems in her life.

Her success in overcoming problems cannot be separated from her emotional maturity. The process of having emotional development is not simple. It also happens to Angelou. In her early age, she got a sexual molestation. Then, she decides to keep silence toward people for about five years. She finds herself again with the help of her white teacher, Mrs. Flower. It is seen that little Angelou has a big spirit to recover from her trauma. The other is, she delivered a baby into the world when she was seventeen. Her baby is the result from her sexual encounter with a black guy. She determines to bring her baby up alone. Sometimes, the common thing is that the mother has a heart to abort her baby. But here, Angelou does something wonderful. She insists to raise her son because he is purely her flesh and bone.

Later, she gets married and gets divorced after a year of her marriage. She feels all right to live alone with her son. She has to be a single mother for her son and an economic provider for her family's need. The worst thing is she wants to end her life. She judges herself as a wicked mother because she neglects her son. She has to stand between her family and career. She is in dilemma, which one has to be chosen. With the help of Wilkie, she realizes that her life is precious. She has a good career and beautiful son. She has to be grateful for that gift. Her spirit of life reveals in the efforts to have a better life. Angelou presents herself as a dazzling example, as one of along line of strong, fighting female survivors.

As a young mother her perception of life has been governed by a series of polarities, black and white, up and down, alive and die, rich and poor, love and hate, happy and sad, and successful and fail.

Every human being confronts a certain condition in his or her life. For example happiness is perceived when someone gets success. He or she deserves to get happiness because he or she has put a lot of effort to gain a success. On the other hand, sadness is perceived when there is a death of someone. Nothing in the world is eternal. Everything will return again to its Owner.

We have to prepare ourselves in order to confront such various conditions in life. One important preparation is having an emotional maturity. Emotion plays an important role in every activity. Emotion helps someone to support his or her life to be wiser and more mature.

From the conclusion stated above, I can see that there are some complicated problems encountered Maya Angelou's lives. She struggles to have a

better life. Based on what she has endeavored, she can be considered as a feminist. She struggles to achieve her rights, such as having an authority to decide something good for her life, to taste a better life, and to have a job in order to satisfy her family's needs.

5.2 Suggestion

5.2.1 Suggestion for the Next Researchers

There are a lot of aspects we can learn from the novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*. One of the interesting aspects is the relationship between mother and her child. I suggest for the next researchers to analyze or study about the relationship between Maya Angelou, as the mother and her child, Clyde. Its relationship is very deep and firm. Then, the next researchers can adopt the psychological approach to support the study. The other suggestion is analysis of Maya Angelou's characters that are influenced by her social and cultural background. Those backgrounds support her character development. The approach can be applied is socio-historical approach. Further, the next researchers can adopt the feminism approach in order to analyze Maya Angelou's struggle to better her life. Based on what she has done, she can be regarded as a feminist. I think this is an interesting topic, because a woman is endless topic to be discussed.

5.2.2 Suggestion for Teaching English

Lazar states some reasons why a teacher should use literature in language classroom (1993: 15-19).

a. Motivating Material

Literature is varied from each country. Then, for students, studying some literature in English may provide an interesting experience.

b. Access to Cultural Background

Literary texts in English are written by authors living in many different countries. Literature provides the students to learn the culture of people whose language they are studying.

c. Encouraging Language Acquisition

Many students have limited ability to speak and write in English. Literature may provide the appropriate way of stimulating these acquisitions. Within the classroom, the students are expected to share their feeling and opinion, such as discussion and group work for discussing one literary text.

d. Expanding Students' Language Awareness

The language used in literary text sometimes differs from any other texts. It is more difficult to be understood and uncommon to be used in a daily conversation. Through literature, students will be more aware and sensitive to some of the features of English.

e. Developing Students' Interpretative Abilities

There are written and unwritten meaning in the literary text. The students will get the meaning easily if it is explicitly stated in the text, but they get difficulty if the meaning is implicitly written in the text. The unstated meaning will develop and evoke the students' ability to make interpretation.

f. Educating the Whole Person

Literature may help to stimulate the imagination of the students to develop their critical abilities and to increase their emotional awareness. The theme of literary text is not far from human relationship.

In giving a novel for teaching implementation, the criteria for selecting text to be our concern. We cannot give any kind of texts, which are not suitable for the students. In general, the criteria for selecting texts are based on the students' background, namely the age of students, their emotional and intellectual maturity, their interest, and hobbies. The difficult problem when applying these categories to a whole class is that individual students within a group may have different background (Lazar, 1993: 52).

In a book *Language and Literature*, Lazar offers some suggestion for selecting the appropriate text for the students (1993: 52-54).

a. The Students' Cultural Background

We have to consider how much background we will need to provide for our students to have at least a basic understanding of the text. Sometimes, the text may appear to be remote in time and place, which is unfamiliar for the students. But, it does not seem to be a serious problem for the students. The texts deal with human relationships and feelings, such as conflict between parents and children touch the student's life.

b. The Students' Linguistic Proficiency

The teacher should choose or give a certain text by considering his students' level of linguistic proficiency. If the text is difficult, the students will

feel reluctant to comprehend the text because their linguistic proficiency is not ample to comprehend one text.

c. The Students' Literary Background

For the students who already have a high level of literary competence will find easiness to comprehend a literary text even though the linguistic competence is rather limited. But, for the students who have linguistic competence with little literary knowledge, may get problems and difficulties in comprehending the text.

d. Availability of Texts

The teacher should choose the text based on its availability. It means that the texts should be easy for the teacher to get or obtain it.

e. Length of Text

The teacher should consider about the length of the literary text before giving them to the students. If the texts are too short, the teacher has to be able to use and to conduct the class activity efficiently. But, if the texts are too long, it takes much time for the students to read.

f. Exploitability

The teacher should understand and consider how far he can use the text in teaching learning activities. Furthermore, the teacher should know the advantages and obstacles in implementing the texts for the students.

5.2.2.1 The Implementation in Teaching Reading

According to Finnochiaro, in the reading from textbook there are two types of reading lessons are recommended, namely intensive and extensive reading. In intensive reading, as the term indicates, each vocabulary and structural item is explained and made part of the students' active language; pronunciation

and intonation are stressed; and each concept is clarified. In extensive reading, the principal aim is comprehension. Students are expected to get meaning primarily from the context. Students silently read the text. In order to make sure that the students have read the text with purpose and meaning, teacher may give them some questions related to the text (1958: 140). In this teaching implementation, I only apply the extensive reading activity for the students in the semester four.

Since the novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* is quite thick, the teacher should divide it into some parts for each meeting. The novel contains 36 chapters. It may divide into six meetings. In one meeting the students are expected to accomplish and comprehend the text completely. That is why the reading is done silently out of class time. Reading the whole of texts aloud in class is impossibility done because it takes much time. Each meeting will be conducted in 90 minutes.

PROCEDURES

-Introduction

Before the first meeting, the teacher has already distributed the text, five chapters, chapter one until five from the novel *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas*. This method aims to give sufficient time for the students to read the text out of class time.

- The Activity in the Classroom

1. The teacher gives the pre-reading question, what the text tells about in order to check whether the students have already read.

2. The teacher can begin by reading aloud for a bit, especially for some the important parts.
3. The teacher gives time to the students to ask questions related to the text.
4. Teacher gives some questions related to the text.
5. The teacher assigns the students to answer the questions within work in pair or group discussion.
6. The teacher and the students discuss the answers together.
7. The teacher gives some conclusions related to the text.
8. The teacher asks the students to read chapter six until ten out of class as the preparation for the second meeting.

The model is taken from *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* chapter 1-5 page 1-42 (see appendix 3 on page 78).

5.2.2.2 The Implementation in Teaching Speaking

Novel is one of literary works, which can bring a lot of ideas for speaking activity. Speaking aims to make students speak and participate actively in a class. Sometimes, in a speaking class the teacher becomes the dominant whereas the students become the passive participants. This condition is one of tasks encountered by the teacher. In order to create an active speaking class, the teacher should select an interesting material and give enough opportunity for students to share their idea and opinion. The more interesting the material the more active the students to participate or join in a speaking class activities.

Paulston and Bruder say that there are two objectives in a speaking activity. First, communicative performance. The teaching point is simply to get meaning across and to be able to communicate some referential meaning in the target language. Second, communicative competence. The teaching point is to get meaning across in a socially acceptable way and typically these exercises contain culturally relevant information (1976: 59).

In implementing *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* in a speaking class, I suggest debate. A debate is a challenging activity. It encourages the students to share their different opinions about the topic given and to defend their ideas based on reasonable reasons from their point of view. Stern states that a novel can be used to obtain the objective of teaching English, that is language mastery (1987: 47).

This speaking class is for the students in the semester four, which consists of 12 until 15 students. It takes 90 minutes. In conducting the speaking class, below are the procedures to carry out the debate activity.

1. The teacher distributes the text to the students.
2. The teacher assigns the students to read the text carefully.
3. The teacher gives the topic or the question to the students.
4. The teacher divides the students into two groups. One group is the pro and the other is the contra. Each group consists of three students.
5. The teacher provides time for each group to have a short discussion.

6. The pro group has to share their idea about the topic and so does the contra group. The pro group has to defend their opinion and the contra group does the same thing. This activity is done in 15 minutes.
7. The teacher is the mediator. Finally the teacher gives some comments and conclusion from the topic discussed.

The model is taken from *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* chapter 5 pages 37-39 (see appendix 4 on page 79).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Maya Angelou's Life and Works

Maya Angelou was born as Marguerite Johnson in Saint Louis, Missouri, on April 4, 1928. She grew up in Saint Louis and Stamps, Arkansas. She is an author, poet, historian, songwriter, playwright, dancer, stage and screen producer, director, performer, singer, and civil rights activist.

She is best known for her autobiographical books: *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), *Gather Together in My Name* (1974), *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* (1976), *The Heart of a Woman* (1981), and *All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes* (1986) which were nominated for the National Book Award.

Among of her volumes of poetry are *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water Before I Die* (1971), *Oh Pray My Wings are Gonna Fit Me Well* (1975), *Shaker, Why Don't You sing?* (1983), *I Shall Not be Moved* (1990) *Now Sheba Sings the Songs* (1987), *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now* (1993), *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou* (1994), and *A Brave and Startling Truth* (1950), which were nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

In the 1960s, at the request of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Maya Angelou became the northern coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. From 1960 to 1962 she was associate editor of *The Arab Observer* in Cairo, Egypt, the only English language news weekly in the Middle East. From 1964 to 1966 she was the feature editor of the *African Review* in Accra, Ghana.

She returned to the US in 1974 and was appointed by Gerald Ford to the Bicentennial Commission and later by Jimmy Carter to the Commission for International Woman of the year.

She accepted a lifetime appointment in 1981 as Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In 1993, Angelou wrote and delivered a poem, *On the Pulse of the Morning*, at the inauguration for President Bill Clinton at his request.

Becoming the first black woman director in Hollywood, Angelou has written, produced, directed, and starred in productions for stage, film, and television. In 1971, she wrote the original screenplay and musical score for the film *Georgia*, and was both author and executive producer of a five part television miniseries *Three Way Choice*.

She has also written and produced several prize winning documentaries, including *Afro-American in the Arts*, in which she received the Golden Eagle Award. Maya Angelou was twice nominated for a Tony award for acting. Once for her Broadway debuts in *Look Way* (1973), and again for her performance in *Roots* (1977).

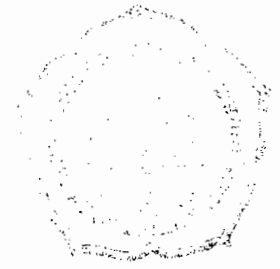
Below, is the chronological order about Maya Angelou's life:

- 1928 Born Marguerite Johnson on April 4, in St. Louis, Missouri.
- 1931 Parents divorced. Sent with her brother, Bailey, to Stamps, Arkansas to live with their grandmother.
- 1935 Moved to Chicago with Bailey to live with their mother.

- 1936 Traumatized by a sexual molestation when she was seven. The man who assaulted her was murdered. Refused to speak to anyone but her brother. Sent back with Bailey to live with their grandmother in Stamps, Arkansas.
- 1940 Began speaking after nearly five years of silence.
- 1941 Moved to San Francisco with Bailey to live with their mother.
- 1944 Dropped out of high school and worked as the first black cable car conductor in San Francisco.
- 1945 Graduated from Mission High School. Besides, she became a single mother for her son, Clyde.
- 1952 Married Tosh Angelos.
- 1953 Performed at the Purple Onion night club in San Francisco.
- 1954-1955 Toured internationally with the Everyman's Opera Company production of Porgy and Bess.
- 1959 Wrote lyrics, which turned into poetry and short stories and her singing career blossomed to Brooklyn, New York, to join the Harlem Writers Guild.
- 1960 Became the Northeast Regional Coordinator for Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).
- 1961-1962 Became an associate editor for Arab Observer in Cairo, Egypt.
- 1963-1965 Served as assistant administrator at the school of music and drama, University of Ghana. Worked as feature editor for the African Review and contributor to the Ghanaian Broadcasting Company.

- 1968 *Black, Blues, Black*, her 10 shows series, was produced on San Francisco National Educational Television.
- 1969 Published *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, an autobiographical novel nominated for National Book award. Became a writer at University of Kansas. Gained a Yale University Fellowship.
- 1971 Published *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water Before I Die*, her first volume poetry.
- 1972 *Georgia Georgia*, her screenplay, was produced and nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.
- 1973 Received Tony nomination for acting in *Look Away*, a two character play which she played Mary Todd Lincoln's dressmaker.
- 1974 *Gather Together in My Name*, a second autobiography was published. Became distinguished visiting professor at two universities.
- 1975 *Oh Pray My Wings are Gonna Fit Me Well*, a collection of poems about her life, was published.
- 1976 A third autobiography, *Singing and Swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas* was published. Selected by Ladies Home Journal as woman of the year in communication.
- 1978 *And I Still I Rise*, a book of poems was published. *Sister Sister*, two hours television program and one of the first to feature African-American actors in drama was broadcast.
- 1981 *The Heart of a Woman*, her fourth autobiographical novel was published.

- 1982 Appointed chair in American studies at Wake Forest University, North Carolina. Wrote *Sister Sister* for NBC.
- 1983 Published collection of poems, *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?*
- 1986 *All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes* was published as the latest volume of her autobiography and feature tales of her life in Africa.
- 1990 Published *I Shall Not be Moved*.
- 1993 Delivered her poem *On the Pulse of Morning* at the inauguration of President Bill Clinton.
- 1996 Directed the film *Down in the Delta*.



Appendix 2

The Summary of Novel

Singing and swinging and Getting Merry Like Christmas is one of Maya Angelou autobiographical works. Actually half of this book covers about Angelou's journey in maturity world. But, in this novel she also tells about her childhood and adolescence.

Maya Angelou was born on April 4, 1928 in Saint Louis , Missouri. The life was very hard. Her mother sent Angelou with her brother, Bailey, to live with their grandmother in Stamps, Arkansas. She lived apart from her mother. Besides, she helped her grandmother who ran a small shop.

When Angelou was seven, she and Bailey returned to live with their mother. Everything turned to be worst, when the little Angelou was raped at the very early age. Because of her feeling of guilt, she decided not to speak. She avoided from people's contact. Later, there was a white teacher, Mrs. Flower who helped and encouraged her. With Mrs. Flower's tenderness, gradually Angelou recovered from her trauma.

When she grew up to be a young girl, she wanted to prove her womanhood. Her desire led her to have a sexual encounter. This action brought her pregnant. At the age of seventeen, she gave birth to her only son, the result of a single sexual encounter with a young man who had no interest in maintaining relationship with the mother of his son. Then Angelou determined to raise her son alone.

Years passed by. Angelou still became a single mother for her son. Once, she worked at Melrose Record shop whose the owner was Louise Cox, a white woman. At the first time, she felt doubt whether she took the opportunity or not. She was still inferior toward whites. In her place of work, Angelou had some companions, one of them was a Greek man. His name was Tosh. Having known each other, Angelou was interested in Tosh.

Finally they got married then they lived happily. Angelou felt completely as a wife and mother. But, after a year, she found there was no happiness anymore. Tosh was an atheist, whereas Angelou was a good Christian. As a religious woman, Angelou realized that her marriage would not last long without religion base. She preferred to live separately from Tosh. She became a single parent for her son, Clyde.

Later, Angelou tried to look for another job. She joined the Purple Onion, the place where Angelou could dig her singing and dancing talent. She never regretted what she had chosen, living alone with her son. As a mother she wanted the best for her son, although there was no husband to accompany her in happiness and sorrow moments.

Her real career went with Porgy and Bess. It had shown her the greatest array of Negro talent she had ever seen. With Porgy and Bess she traveled around the world, giving a great dancing and singing performance. At the top of her career, Angelou got everything she dreamed, fame and glory. But, as mother she felt nothing without her son at her side. She realized that she neglected her son. Angelou knew that her precious son was above of all.

She wanted to end her career, but her friends always supported her to continue it because singing and dancing were Angelou's world. She thought about her guilt over her neglect of her son nearly drove her to suicide. Then, she visited her friend to share everything she felt. Her love for life and motherhood sent her to her beloved son.

Appendix 3

The Material for Teaching Reading

This reading text is taken from chapter 1-6, page 1-42.

The questions:

1. Why is Angelou suspicious with the offer of friendship from Lucia Cox?
2. Explain about Maya Angelou's family!
3. At last Angelou marries Tosh. Why does she accept Tosh as her husband?
4. What do you think the cause of their divorce?

Appendix 4

The Material for Teaching Speaking

Situation: After a year of marriage, Maya Angelou finds no happiness anymore. Quarrels often happen within her family.

He held the door open and turned at last to face me. His voice was soft again and tender. "I think I'm just tired of being married". There is a shock that comes so quickly and strikes so deep that blow or internalized even before the sin feels it. What had I done? I had placed my life within the confines of marriage. I was everything the magazines said a wife should be, constant, faithful and clean. I was economical. I was compliant, never offering a headache as excuses for not sharing the marital bed.

My marriage was over, since I believed the legal bonds were only as good as the emotional desire to make them good. If a person didn't want you, he didn't want you. I could have thrown my self and my son on Tosh's mercy; he was a kind man, and he might tolerate us in his home and on the edges of his life. But begging had always struck, resisting, in my throat. I thought women a who accepted their husband's inattention and sacrificed all the sovereignty for a humiliating marriage more unsavory than the prostitutes who were drinking themselves awake in the noisy bar. My pride had not allowed me to ask Tosh for money, but he had left me the small a bank account.

Pro Group:

You agree with Maya Angelou's action, that she leaves her husband. State your reason, and defend your opinion!

Con Group:

You disagree with Maya Angelou's action. You want her to reunite with her husband. State your reason, and defend your opinion!

knew she was sophisticated. Other people's sophistication tended to make me nervous and I stayed shy of Louise. My music tastes seasawed between the blues of John Lee Hooker and the bubbling silver sounds of Charlie Parker. For a year I had been collecting their records.

On one visit to the store, Louise came over to the booth where I was listening to a record.

"Hi, I'm Louise. What's your name?"

I thought of "Puddin' in tyme. Ask me again, I'll tell you the same." That was a cruel childhood rhyme meant to insult.

The last white woman who had asked me anything other than "May I help you?" had been my high school teacher. I looked at the little woman, at her cashmere sweater and pearls, at her slick hair and pink lips, and decided she couldn't hurt me, so I'd give her the name I had given to all white people.

"Marguerite Annie Johnson." I had been named for two grandmothers.

"Marguerite? That's a pretty name."

I was surprised. She pronounced it like my grandmother. Not Margarite, but Marg-you-reet.

"A new Charlie Parker came in last week. I saved it for you."

That showed her good business sense.

"I know you like John Lee Hooker, but I've got somebody I want you to hear." She stopped the turntable and removed my record and put on another in its place.

"Lord I wonder, do she ever think of me,

Lord I wonder, do she ever think of me,

I wonder, I wonder, will my baby come back to me?"

The singer's voice groaned a longing I seemed to have known my life long. But I couldn't say that to Louise. She watched my face and I forced it still.

"Well, I ain't got no special reason here,

No, I ain't got no special reason here,

I'm gonna leave 'cause I don't feel welcome here."

I

"Don't the moon look lonesome shining through the trees?"

Ah, don't the moon look lonesome shining through the trees?

Don't your house look lonesome when your baby pack up to leave?"

Music was my refuge. I could crawl into the spaces between the notes and curl my back to loneliness.

In my rented room (cooking privileges down the hall), I would play a record, then put my arms around the shoulders of the song. As we danced, glued together, I would nuzzle into its neck, kissing the skin, and rubbing its cheek with my own.

The Melrose Record Shop on Fillmore was a center for music, musicians, music lovers and record collectors. Blasts from its loudspeaker poured out into the street with all the insistence of a false mourner at a graveside. Along one wall of its dark interior, stalls were arranged like open telephone booths. Customers stood playing their selections on turntables and listening through earphones. I had two hours between jobs. Occasionally I went to the library or, if the hours coincided, to a free dance class at the YWCA. But most often I directed myself to the melodious Melrose Record Store, where I could wallow, rutting in music.

Louise Cox, a short blonde who was part owner of the store, flitted between customers like a fickle butterfly in a rose garden. She was white, wore perfume and smiled openly with the Negro customers, so I

Singin' and Swingin' and Gettin' Merry Like Christmas 3

The music fitted me like tailor-made clothes. She said, "That's Arthur Crudup. Isn't he great?"; excitement lighted her face.

"It's nice. Thank you for letting me hear it." It wasn't wise to reveal one's real feelings to strangers. And nothing on earth was stranger to me than a friendly white woman.

"Shall I wrap it for you? Along with the Bird?" My salary from the little real estate office and the dress shop downtown barely paid rent and my son's baby-sitter.

"I'll pick them both up next week. Thank you for thinking of me." Courtesy cost nothing as long as one had dignity. My grandmother, Annie Henderson, had taught me that.

She turned and walked back to the counter, taking the record with her. I counseled myself not to feel badly. I hadn't rejected an offer of friendship, I had simply fielded a commercial come-on.

I walked to the counter.

"Thank you, Louise. See you next week." When I laid the record on the counter, she pushed a wrapped package toward me.

"Take these, Marg-you-reet. I've started an account for you." She turned to another customer. I couldn't refuse because I didn't know how to do so gracefully.

Outside on the evening street, I examined the woman's intention. What did I have that she wanted? Why did she allow me to walk away with her property? She didn't know me. Even my name might have been constructed on the spot. She couldn't have been seeking friendship; after all she was white, and as far as I knew, white women were never lonely, except in books. White men adored them, Black men desired them and Black women worked for them. There was no ready explanation for her gesture of trust.

At home I squeezed enough from the emergency money I kept in a drawer to repay her. Back at the store, she accepted the money and said, "Thanks, Marg-you-reet. But you didn't have to make a special trip. I trust you."

"Why?" That ought to get her. "You don't know me."

"Because I like you."

"But you don't know me. How can you like someone you don't know?"

"Because my heart tells me and I trust my heart."

For weeks I pondered over Louise Cox. What could I possibly have that she could possibly want? My mind, it was certain, was a well-oiled mechanism which worked swiftly and seminoiselessly. I often competed with radio contestants on quiz programs and usually won hands down in my living room. Oh, my mental machine could have excited anyone. I meant anyone interested in a person who had memorized the Presidents of the United States in chronological order, the capitals of the world, the minerals of the earth and the generic names of various species. There weren't too many callers for those qualifications and I had to admit that I was greatly lacking in the popular attractions of physical beauty and womanly wiles.

All my life, my body had been in successful rebellion against my finer nature. I was too tall and raw-skinny. My large extroverted teeth protruded in an excitement to be seen, and I, attempting to thwart their success, rarely smiled. Although I lathered Dixie Peach in my hair, the thick black mass crinkled and kinked and resisted the smothering pomade to burst free around my head like a cloud of angry bees. No, in support of truth, I had to admit Louise Cox was not friendly to me because of my beauty.

Maybe she offered friendship because she pitied me. The idea was a string winding at first frayed and loose, then tightening, binding into my consciousness. My spirit started at the intrusion. A white woman? Feeling sorry for me? She wouldn't dare. I would go to the store and show her. I would roll her distasteful pity into a ball and throw it in her face. I would smash her nose deep into the unasked-for sympathy until her eyes dribbled tears and she learned that I was a queen, not to be approached by peasants like her, even on bended knees, and wailing.

Louise was bent over the counter talking to a

small Black boy. She didn't interrupt her conversation to acknowledge my entrance.

"Exactly how many boxes have you folded, J.C.?" Her intonation was sober.

"Eighteen." The boy's answer matched her seriousness. His head barely reached the counter top. She took a small box from a shelf behind her.

"Then here's eighteen cents." She pushed the coins around counting them, then poured them into his cupped palms.

"O.K." He turned on unsure young legs and collided with me. He mumbled "Thank you."

Louise rounded the counter, following the little voice. She ran past me and caught the door a second after he slammed it.

"J.C." She stood, arms akimbo on the sidewalk, and raised her voice. "J.C., I'll see you next Saturday." She came back into the store and looked at me.

"Hi, Marg-you-reet. Boy, am I glad to see you. Excuse that scene. I had to pay off one of my workers."

I waited for her to continue. Waited for her to tell me how precious he was and how poor and wasn't it all a shame. She went behind the counter and began slipping records into paper jackets.

"When I first opened the shop, all the neighborhood kids came in. They either demanded that I 'gi' them a penny"—I hated whites' imitation of the Black accent—"or play records for them. I explained that the only way I'd give them anything was if they worked for it and that I'd play records for their parents, but not for them until they were tall enough to reach the turntables."

"So I let them fold empty record boxes for a penny apiece." She went on, "I'm glad to see you because I want to offer you a job."

I had done many things to make a living, but I drew the line at cleaning white folks' houses. I had tried that and lasted only one day. The waxed tables, cut flowers, closets of other people's clothes totally disoriented me. I hated the figured carpets, tiled kitchens and refrigerators filled with someone else's dinner leftovers.

"Really?" The ice in my voice turned my accent to upper-class Vivien Leigh (before *Gone With the Wind*).

"My sister has been helping me in the shop, but she's going back to school. I thought you'd be perfect to take her place."

My resolve began to knuckle under me like weak knees.

"I don't know if you know it, but I have a large clientele and try to keep in stock a supply, however small, of every record by Negro artists. And if I don't have something, there's a comprehensive catalog and I can order it. What do you think?"

Her face was open and her smile simple. I pried into her eyes for hidden meaning and found nothing. Even so, I had to show my own strength.

"I don't like to hear white folks imitate Negroes. Did the children really ask you to 'gi' them a penny? Oh, come now."

She said, "You are right—they didn't ask. They demanded that I 'gi' them a penny." The smile left her face. "You say it."

"Give me a penny." My teeth pressed my bottom lip, stressing the *v*.

She reached for the box and handed me a coin. "Don't forget that you've been to school and let neither of us forget that we're both grown-up. I'd be pleased if you'd take the job." She told me the salary, the hours and what my duties would be.

"Thank you very much for the offer. I'll think about it." I left the shop, head up, back straight. I tried to exude indifference, like octopus ink, to camouflage my excitement.

I had to talk to Ivonne Broadnax, the Realist. She was my closest friend. Ivonne had escaped the hindrance of romantic blindness, which was my lifelong affliction. She had the clear, clean eyes of a born survivor. I went to her Ellis Street house, where she, at twenty-five, was bringing up an eight-year-old daughter and a fifteen-year-old sister.

"Vonne, you know that woman that runs the record store?"

"That short white woman with the crooked smile?" Her voice was small and keen and the sound had to force itself past white, even teeth.

"Yes."

"Why?"

"She offered me a job."

"Doing what?" I knew I could count on her cynicism.

"Salesgirl."

"Why?"

"That's what I've been trying to figure out. Why? And why me?"

Ivonne sat very still, thinking. She possessed a great beauty which she carried nonchalantly. Her cupid's-bow lips pursed, and when she raised her head her face was flushed pink and cream from the racing blood.

"Is she funny that way?"

We both knew that was the only logical explanation.

"No. I'm sure that she's not."

Ivonne bent her head again. She raised it and looked at me.

"Did you ask her?"

"No."

"I mean did you ask her for the job?"

"No. She offered it." I added just a little indignation to my answer.

Ivonne said, "You know white people are strange. I don't even know if they know why they do things." Ivonne had grown up in a small Mississippi town, and I, in a smaller town in Arkansas. Whites were as constant in our history as the seasons and as unfamiliar as affluence.

"Maybe she's trying to prove something." She waited. "What kind of pay she offering?"

"Enough so I can quit both jobs and bring the baby home."

"Well, take it."

"I'll have to order records and take inventories and all that." The odor of an improvement in my life had barely touched my nostrils and it made me jittery.

"Come on, Maya" (she called me by the family name). "If you could run a hook shop, you can run a record shop."

Once when I was eighteen in San Diego I had managed a house of prostitution, where two qualified workers entertained and I, as financial backer, took a percentage. I had since layered that experience over and over in my mind with forgiveness and a conscious affectation of innocence. But it was true, I did have a certain talent for administration.

"Tell her you'll take the job and then watch her like a hawk. You know white women. They pull off their drawers, lay down first, then scream rape. If you're not careful, she'll get weak and faint on you, then before you know it you'll be washing windows, and scrubbing the floor." We cackled like two old crones, remembering a secret past. The laughter was sour and not really directed at white women. It was a traditional ruse that was used to shield the Black vulnerability; we laughed to keep from crying.

I took the job, but kept Louise under constant surveillance. None of her actions went unheeded, no conversation unrecorded. The question was not if she would divulge her racism but when and how the revelation would occur. For a few months I was a character in a living thriller plot. I listened to her intonations and trailed her glances.

On Sundays, when the older people came in after church services to listen to the Reverend Joe May's sermons on 78 rpm records, I trembled with the chase's excitement. Large, corseted women gathered around the record players, their bosoms bloated with religious fervor, while their dark-suited husbands leaned into the music, faces blank in surrender to the spirit, their black and brown fingers restive on clutched Bibles.

Louise offered folding chairs to the ladies and moved back behind the counter to her books. I waited for one smirk, one roll of her eyes to the besieged heavens and I would have my evidence that she thought her whiteness was a superior quality which she and God had contrived for their own convenience.

After two months, vigilance had exhausted me

zoo, the San Francisco Museum of Art, a cartoon movie house or any cheap or free place of entertainment. Then, on our second evening he would fight sleep like an old person fighting death. By morning, not quite awake, he would jerk and make hurtful noises like a wounded animal. I would still my heart and wake him. When he was dressed, we headed back to the sitter's house. He would begin to cry a few blocks from our destination. My own tears stayed in check until his screams stabbed from behind the closed doors and stuck like spearheads in my heart.

The regularity of misery did nothing to lessen it. I examined alternatives. If I were married, "my husband" (the words sounded as unreal as "my bank account") would set me up in a fine house, which my good taste would develop into a home. My son and I could spend whole days together and then I could have two more children who would be named Deirdre and Craig, and I would grow roses and beautiful zinnias. I would wear too-large gardening gloves so that when I removed them my hands would look dainty and my manicure fresh. We would all play chess and Chinese checkers and twenty questions and whist. We would be a large, loving, hilarious family like the people in *Cheaper by the Dozen*.

Or I could go on welfare.

There wasn't a shadow of a husband-caliber man on my horizon. Indeed, no men at all seemed attracted to me. Possibly my façade of cool control turned them away or just possibly my need, which I thought well disguised, was so obvious that it frightened them. No, husbands were rarer than common garden variety unicorns.

And welfare was absolutely forbidden. My pride had been starchy by a family who assumed unlimited authority in its own affairs. A grandmother, who raised me, my brother and her own two sons, owned a general merchandise store. She had begun her business in the early 1900's in Stamps, Arkansas, by selling meat pies to saw men in a lumber mill, then racing across town in time to feed workers in a cotton-gin mill four miles away.

and I had found no thread of prejudice. I began to relax and enjoy the wealth of a world of music. Early mornings were given over to Bartok and Schoenberg. Midmorning I treated myself to the vocals of Billy Eckstine, Billie Holiday, Nat Cole, Louis Jordan and Bull Moose Jackson. A piroshki from the Russian delicatessen next door was lunch and then the giants of bebop flipped through the air. Charles Parker and Max Roach, Dizzy Gillespie, Sarah Vaughan and Al Haig and Howard McGhee. Blues belonged to late afternoons and the singers' lyrics of lost love spoke to my solitude.

I ordered stock and played records on request, emptied ashtrays and dusted the windows' cardboard displays. Louise and her partner, David Kosenbaum, showed their pleasure by giving me a raise, and although I was grateful to them for the job and my first introduction to an amiable black-white relationship, I could exhibit my feelings only by being punctual in coming to the shop and being efficient at work and coolly, grayly respectful.

At home, however, life shimmered with beautiful colors. I picked up my son from the baby-sitter's every evening. He was five years old and so beautiful his smile could break the back of a brute.

For two years we had spun like water spiders in a relentless eddy. I had to be free to work for our support, but the baby-sitters were so expensive I had to have two jobs to pay their fees and my own rent. I boarded him out six days and five nights a week.

On the eve of my day off, I would go to the baby-sitter's house. First he'd grab the hem of my dress, then wrap his arms around my legs and hold on screaming as I paid the weekly bill. I would pry his arms loose, then pick him up and walk down the street. For blocks, as I walked, he would scream. When we were far enough away, he'd relax his strangle hold on my neck and I could put him down. We'd spend the evening in my room. He followed my every turn and didn't trust me to go to the bathroom and return. After dinner, cooked in the communal kitchen, I would read to him and allow him to try to read to me.

The next day was always spent at the park, the

My brother, Bailey, who was a year older than I and seven inches shorter, had drummed in my youthful years: "You are as intelligent as I am"—we both agreed that he was a genius—"and beautiful. And you can do anything."

My beautiful mother, who ran businesses and men with autocratic power, taught me to row my own boat, paddle my own canoe, hoist my own sail. She warned, in fact, "If you want something done, do it yourself."

I hadn't asked them for help (I couldn't risk their refusal) and they loved me. There was no motive on earth which would bring me, bowed, to beg for aid from an institution which scorned me and a government which ignored me. It had seemed that I would be locked in the two jobs and the weekly baby-sitter terror until my life was done. Now with a good salary, my son and I could move back into my mother's house.

A smile struck her face like lightning when I told her I had retrieved my son and we were ready to come home. There was a glaze over her eyes. It was unnerving. My mother was anything, everything, but sentimental. I admired how quickly she pulled her old self back in charge. Typically she asked only direct questions.

"How long will you all stay this time?"

"Until I can get a house for us."

"That sounds good. Your room is pretty much as you left it and Clyde can have the little room in back."

I decided that a little bragging was in order. "I've been working at the record shop on Fillmore and the people down there gave me a raise. I'll pay rent to you and help with the food."

"How much are they paying you?"

When I told her, she quickly worked out a percentage. "O.K. You pay me that amount and buy a portion of food every week."

I handed her some cash. She counted it carefully. "All right, this is a month's rent. I'll remember."

She handed the money back to me. "Take this downtown and buy yourself some clothes."

I hesitated.

ing "one man's woman." We found ourselves too often unmarried, bearing lonely pregnancies and wishing for two and a half children each who would gurggle happily behind that picket fence while we drove our men to work in our friendly-looking station wagons.

I had loved one man and dramatized my losing him with all the exaggerated wailing of a wronged seventeen-year-old. I had wanted others in a ferocious desperation, believing that marriage would give me a world free from danger, disease and want.

In the record store, I lived fantasy lives through the maudlin melodies of the forties and fifties.

"You'd be so nice to come home to."

Whoever you were.

"I'm walking by the river
'cause I'm meeting someone there tonight."

Anyone—that is, anyone taller than I and who wanted to get married. To me. Billy Eckstine sang,

"Our little dream castle with everything gone
Is lonely and silent, the shades are all drawn
My heart is heavy as I gaze upon
A cottage for sale."

That was my house and it was vacant. If Mr. Right would come along right now, soon we could move in and truly begin to live.

Louise Cox and her mother were practicing Christian Scientists. I accepted an invitation to visit their church. The interior's severity, the mass of quiet, well-dressed whites and the lack of emotion unsettled me. I took particular notice of the few Blacks in the congregation. They appeared as soberly affluent and emotionally reserved as their fellow white parishioners. I had known churches to be temples where one made "a joyful noise unto the Lord" and quite a lot of it.

In the First Church of Christ, Scientist, the con-

gregation wordlessly praised the Almighty. No stamping of feet or clapping of hands accompanied the worship. For the whole service, time seemed suspended and reality was just beyond the simple and expensive heavy doors.

"Did you like it?"

We sat in Louise's kitchen, eating her mother's homemade-from-scratch biscuits.

"I don't know. I didn't understand it."

After a year of relentless observation, I trusted her to think me unexposed, rather than ignorant.

Her mother gave me a copy of Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health*. I began to wrestle with new concepts.

The tough texture of poverty in my life had been more real than sand wedged between my teeth, yet Mary Baker Eddy encouraged me to think myself prosperous. Every evening I went home to a fourteen-room house where my son and seventy-five-year-old Poppa Ford awaited my arrival. Mother usually was out dining with friends, drinking with acquaintances or gambling with strangers. Had she been there, her presence would not have greatly diminished my loneliness. My brother, who had been my ally, my first friend, had left home and closed himself to me. We had found safety in numbers when we were young, but adulthood had severed the bonds and we drifted apart over deep and dangerous seas, unanchored.

In Mother's house, after dinner, I would read my son to sleep and return to the kitchen. Most often, the old man dreamt over an outsized cup of heavily sugared coffee. I would watch his aged ivory face, wrinkled under ghostly memories, then go to my room where solitude gaped whale-jawed wide to swallow me entire.

Science and Health told me I was never alone. "There is no place God is not." But I couldn't make the affirmation real for me.

The sailor wandered around the store. He was reading the bulletins and scanning the posters. His

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The sailor wandered around the store. He was reading the bulletins and scanning the posters. His

dark hair and oval, sensual face reminded me of Italian Renaissance paintings. It was strange to see a white military man in the Black area in broad daylight. I decided that he had gotten lost. He walked to the counter. "Good morning."

"Have you got 'Cheers'?"

Maybe he wasn't lost, just found himself in our neighborhood and decided to buy some records. "Cheers"? I thought of all the white singers—Jo Stafford, Helen O'Connell, Margaret Whiting, Dinah Shore, Frank Sinatra, Bob Crosby, Bing Crosby and Bob Eberle. Tex Beneke. None had recorded a song entitled "Cheers." I ran my mind over Anita O'Day, Mel Tormé, June Christy. No "Cheers" there. He had looked like a vocal man, but then maybe he was looking for a white Big Band instrumental. Stan Kenton, Neal Hefti, Billy May. No "Cheers" in their catalogs.

"I don't know if we have it. Who cut it?" I smiled. "Cut it" showed that I was so much a part of the record business that I wouldn't say "Who recorded it?" The man looked at me and said dryly, "Charlie Parker."

Although I lived in a large city, in truth I lived in a small town within that city's preserves. The few whites I knew who were aware of Charlie Parker were my brother's friends and were wrapped away from me in a worldly remoteness. I stumbled to get the record. When I shucked the jacket off he said, "You don't have to play it." He went on, "I'll take 'Well You Needn't' by Thelonius Monk and 'Night in Tunisia' by Dizzy Gillespie."

My brain didn't want to accept the burden of my ears. Was that a white man talking? I looked to see if maybe he was a Creole. Many Negroes from the bayou country could and did pass for white. They, too, had hank-straight black hair, dark eyes and shell-cream skin.

There was nothing like a straight question: "Are you from Louisiana?"

"No, I'm from Portland."

There is a textured grain that colors the Black voice which was missing when he spoke. I wrapped

a large aquarium, floating effortlessly in their own element.

Ivonne and I went to the night spot as often as possible. She would take money from her catering business and I from my savings; we would put on our finest clothes, and hiding behind dignified façades, enter the always crowded room. Unfortunately, our attitudes were counterproductive. We projected ourselves as coolly indifferent and distant, but the blatant truth was we were out to find any handsome, single, intelligent, interested men.

I told Tosh I didn't know of any places like that in my neighborhood. When he left the store, I was certain he'd find his way to the downtown area, where he would be more welcome.

Louise continued encouraging me toward Christian Science. I gingerly poked into its precepts, unwilling to immerse myself in the depths because, after all, Christian Science was an intellectual religion and the God its members worshiped seemed to me all broth and no bones. The God of my childhood was an old, white, Vandyck-bearded Father Time, who roared up thunder, then puffed out His cheeks and blew down hurricanes on His errant children. He could be placated only if one fell prostrate, groveled and begged for mercy. I didn't like that God, but He did seem more real than a Maker who was just thought and spirit. I wished for a Someone in between.

Louise's partner was Jewish, so I spoke to him of my need and asked him about Judaism. He smiled until he sensed my seriousness, then said he attended Beth Emanu-El. He told me that there was a new rabbi who was very young and extremely modern. A Black singer had recorded "Eli Eli" and I listened to the song carefully. The beautiful high melodies and the low moaning sounded very close to the hymns of my youth. It was just possible that Judaism was going to answer my need. The Torah couldn't be as foreign as *Science and Health*.

For hundreds of years, the Black American slaves had seen the parallels between their oppression and that of the Jews in Biblical times.

his selections and he paid for them and left. I wondered that he had been neither amiable nor rude and that he didn't remind me of anyone I'd ever met.

My two employers and Louise's handsome friend, Fred E. Pierson, cabdriver and painter, were the only whites I knew, liked and partially understood. When I met Fred, his friendliness had caused my old survival apparatus to begin meshing its gears. I suspected him (perhaps hopefully) of being personally (which meant romantically) interested in me. He helped me to paint the seven downstairs rooms at Mother's house and told me of his great and sad and lost love affair and that he liked having me for a friend.

The next weekend the sailor returned. He browsed for a while, then came to the counter and interrupted my preoccupation with papers.

"Hi."

I looked up as if startled. "Hello."

"Have you any Dexter Gordon?"

"Yes, Dexter's Blues." Another Negro musician.

"I'll take that."

I asked, "How about a Dave Brubeck?"

"No. Thanks, anyway." Brubeck was white. "But

anything by Prez? Do you have Lester Leaps In?"

"Yes."

He waited. "Do you know of any jam sessions around here?"

"Oh, you're a musician." That would explain it. Members from the large white jazz orchestras visited Black after-hours joints. They would ask to sit in on the jam sessions. Black musicians often refused, saying, "The white boys come, smoke up all the pot, steal the chord changes, then go back to their good paying jobs and keep us Black musicians out of the union."

He said, "No, I just like jazz. My name is Tosh. What's yours?"

"Marguerite. What kind of name is Tosh?"

"It's Greek for Thomas—Epistatious. The short of it is Tosh. Are there any good jazz clubs here. Any place to meet some groovy people?"

There was Jimbo's, a blue-lighted basement where people moved in the slow-motion air like denizens of

Go down Moses
Way down in Egypt land
Tell old Pharaoh
To let my people go.

The Prophets of Israel inhabited our songs:

Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel?
Then why not every man?

Ezekiel saw the wheel, up in the middle
of the air.

Little David play on your harp.

The Hebrew children in the fiery furnace elicited constant sympathy from the Black community because our American experience mirrored their ancient tribulation. With that familiarity, I figured Judaism was going to be a snap!

Beth Emanu-El looked like a Tyrone Power movie set. Great arches of salmon-pink rose over a Moorish courtyard. Well-dressed children scuttled from shul and down the wide stairs.

I explained to a receptionist that I wanted to speak to Rabbi Fine.

"Why?" Her question really was. What are you doing within my hallowed halls? She repeated, "Why?"

"I want to talk to him about Judaism."

She picked up the phone and spoke urgently. "This way." Stiff-legged and stiff-backed, she guided me to the end of a hall. Her gaze rested on me for a still second before she opened the door.

Rabbi Alvin I. Fine looked like a young physical education teacher dressed up for an open house at school. I had thought all rabbis had to be old and bearded, just as all priests were Irish, collared and composites of Bing Crosby and Barry Fitzgerald. He invited me in and offered a seat.

"You want to discuss Judaism?" There wasn't a hint of a snicker in his voice. He could have been asking a question of a fellow rabbi. I liked him.

"I don't know anything about it, so I can't discuss it."

"Do you want to become a Jew?"

"I don't know. I'd just like to read up on your faith, but I don't know the titles of any books."

"What is the faith of your fathers?"

"Methodist."

"And what is it not giving you that you think Judaism would provide?"

"I don't know what Judaism's got."

"Can you say you have applied yourself to a careful study of the Methodist tenets?"

"No."

"Would you say you have totally applied the dictates of the Methodist church?"

"No."

"But you want to study Judaism, an ancient faith of a foreign people?"

He was systematically driving me to defense. If he wanted debate, I'd give him debate.

I said, "I want to read about it, I didn't say I wanted to join your church. I like the music in the C.M.E. Church and I like the praying, but I don't like the idea of a God so frightening that I'd be afraid to meet Him."

"Why does your God frighten you?"

It would sound too childish to say that when my minister threatened fire and brimstone, I could smell my flesh frying and see my skin as crisp as pork cracklings. I told him a less personal truth. "Because I'm afraid to die."

I expected the bromide: If a person lived a good life free of sin, he or she can die easy.

Rabbi Fine said, "Judaism will not save you from death. Visit a Jewish cemetery."

I looked at him and felt the full force of my silliness in being there.

He said, "I'll give you a list of books. Read them. Think about them. Argue with the writers and the ideas, then come back to see me." He bent over his desk to write. I knew I would enjoy talking with him about Life, Love, Hate and mostly Death. He gave me the paper and smiled for the first time and looked even more boyish. I thanked him and left, certain that we

would continue our discussion soon. I took a year to buy or borrow and read the books, but twenty years were to pass before I would see Rabbi Fine again.

3

Tosh became such a regular in the store that his arrivals raised no eyebrows and Black customers even began saying hello to him, although he only nodded a response. He had been discharged from the Navy and found a job in an electrical appliance shop. He had taken a room in the Negro neighborhood and came to the record store every day. We talked long over the spinning records. He said he liked to talk to me because I didn't lie.

I asked how he had come to like Black people so much.

"I don't like Black people," he said, dead serious. "And I don't like Italians or Jews or Irish or Orientals. I'm Greek and I don't like them either."

I thought he was crazy. It was one thing to be introverted, but another to admit to me that he disliked Black people.

"Why do you dislike people?"

"I didn't say I disliked people. Not to like people isn't the same as to dislike them."

He sounded profound and I needed time to mull over that idea.

I asked if he liked children. He said he liked some children.

I told him about my son, how bright he was and pretty and funny and sweet.

"Does he play baseball?"

I hadn't thought about the physical games Clyde could share with a father. A new world appeared with the question. In my next castle-building session, I would dream about a husband who would take our sons to the park to play baseball, football, basketball and tennis, while our daughter and I made cookies and other refreshments ready for their return.

"No, he doesn't play ball yet."

"Let's go to the park on your day off. I'll teach him what I know."

I had not really examined Tosh before. He had thick black hair and the slow, sloe eyes of Mediterranean people. His face was gentle and had an air of privacy. He was handsome, but he fell some distance from the mark I had set for a husband. He was two inches shorter than I and White. My own husband was going to come handsome, six feet three inches and Black. I snatched myself away from the vague reflection and set a date for the three of us to go to Golden Gate Park.

My son and Tosh liked each other. They played handball, and after a picnic lunch, Tosh took a portable set from a package and began to teach my son chess. The day ended at my house, where I introduced Tosh to my mother. She was hospitable, just.

"How did you come to meet Maya? Where are you from?" and "When are you going back?" Tosh held his own before that whirlwind of a woman. He looked directly at her, ignored the implied queries, answering only what he was asked outright. When he left, Mother asked me my intentions.

"He's just a friend."

She said, "Well, remember that white folks have taken advantage of Black people for centuries."

I reminded her: "You know a lot of white people. There's Aunt Linda and Aunt Josie and Uncle Blackie. Those are your friends. And Bailey has those friends Harry and Paul, the table tennis expert."

"That's what I'm saying to you. They are friends. And that's all. There's a world of difference between laughing together and loving together."

Singin' and Swingin' and Gettin' Merry Like Christmas

A few days later I agreed to allow Tosh to take Clyde out alone. They came to the store as I was leaving and Clyde was full of his afternoon.

"We rode on the cable cars and went to Fischer's Wharf. I'm going to be a ship's captain or a cable car conductor." His eyes jumped like targets in a game of marbles. "Mr. Angelos is going to take me to the zoo next week. I'm going to feed the animals. I might become a lion tamer." He examined my face and added, "He said I could."

Although Tosh had said nothing romantic to me, I realized that through my son he was courting me as surely as Abelard courted Héloïse. I couldn't let him know I knew. The knowledge had to remain inside me, unrevealed, or I would have to make a decision, and that decision had been made for me by the centuries of slavery, the violation of my people, the violence that whites. Anger and guilt decided before my birth that Black was Black and White was White and although the two might share sex, they must never exchange love. But the true nature of the human heart is as whimsical as spring weather. All signals may aim toward a fall of rain when suddenly the skies will clear.

Tosh grew up in a Greek community, where even Italians were considered foreign. His contact with Blacks had been restricted to the Negro sailors on his base and the music of the bebop originators.

I would never forget the slavery tales, or my Southern past, where all whites, including the poor and ignorant, had the right to speak rudely to and even physically abuse any Negro they met. I knew the ugliness of white prejudice. Obviously there was no common ground on which Tosh and I might meet.

I began to await his visits to the shop with an eagerness held in close control. We went to parks, the beach and dinners together. He loved W.C. Fields and adored Mae West, and the three of us howled our laughter into the quiet dark air of art movie houses.

One night, after I had put my son to bed, we sat having coffee in the large kitchen. He asked me if I could read fortunes and put his hand in mine.

I said, "Of course, you are going to be a great musician and be very wealthy and live a long, rich life." I laid his hand on the table, palm open.

He asked, "Do you see where I'm going to be married?"

I was thrust through with disappointment. While I hadn't ever seen him in the "my husband" role, his attention had been a balm for my loneliness. Now he was saying he was planning marriage. Some childhood sweetheart would arrive on the scene. I would be expected to be kind to her, and gracious.

I looked at the shadowy lines in his hand and spitefully said, "Your love line is very faint. I don't see a happy marriage in your future."

He caught my hand and squeezed it. "I am going to be married, and I'm going to marry you."

The sounds refused to come together and convey meaning. I am going to marry you. He had to be talking about me, since he was addressing me, yet the two words "you" and "marry" had never been said to me before.

Even after I accepted the content of his statement, I found nothing to say.

"A white man? A poor white man? How can you even consider it?" Disbelief struggled across her face. My mother's diamond winked at me as her hand flew about in the air. "A white man without a pot to piss in or a window to throw it out."

She was famous for temperamental explosions but she had never been angry enough at me to hurl her full thunderbolt of rage. Now, when I told her of Tosh's proposal, she was accelerating from an "ing bing" (her phrase for a minor riot) to a full-out tantrum. With alarming speed her pretty butter-colored face became tight and reddened.

"Think of your life. You're young. What's going to happen to you?"

I hoped not much more than had happened already. At three years old I had been sent by train from California to Arkansas, accompanied only by my four year-old brother; raped at seven and returned to

I had never been successful in keeping anything from Bailey.

"I guess so."

"He's in love with you. Did you know that?"

I said he hadn't told me.

Bailey leaned against the door; his dark, round face in the shadow was broken open by a white smile. "A smart man only tells half of what he thinks. He's a nice cat, Maya."

Bailey had been my protector, guide and guard since we were tots, and I knew, despite the disparity in our sizes, that he would remain my big brother as long as we lived.

"Bail, do you think it's all right if I marry him?"

"Did he ask you?"

"Yes."

"Do you want to?"

"Yes."

"What are you waiting for?"

"People will talk about me."

"Marry him, Maya. Be happy and prove them all fools and liars."

He gave me a typically sloppy Bailey kiss on the cheek and left.

Tosh and I were married in the Courthouse on a clear Monday morning. To show her displeasure, Mother moved her fourteen rooms of furniture to Los Angeles three days before the ceremony.

We rented a large flat, and on Tosh's orders I quit my job. At last I was a housewife, legally a member of that enviable tribe of consumers whom security made fat as butter and who under no circumstances considered living by bread alone, because their husbands brought home the bacon. I had a son, a father for him, a husband and a pretty home for us to live in. My life began to resemble a Good Housekeeping advertisement. I cooked well-balanced meals and molded fabulous jello desserts. My floors were dangerous with daily applications of wax and our furniture slick with polish.

Clyde was sprouting with independence and opin-

California at thirteen. My son was born when I was sixteen, and determined to raise him, I had worked as a shake dancer in night clubs, fry cook in hamburger joints, dinner cook in a Creole restaurant and once had a job in a mechanic's shop, taking the paint off cars with my hands.

"Think ahead. What the hell is he bringing you? The contempt of his people and the distrust of your own. That's a hell of a wedding gift."

And, of course, I was bringing him a mind crammed with a volatile mixture of insecurities and stubbornness, and a five-year-old son who had never known a father's discipline.

"Do you love him? I admit I'd find that hard to believe. But then I know love goes where it's sent, even in a dog's behind. Do you love him? Answer me."

I didn't answer.

"Then tell me why. Just why are you going to marry him?"

I knew Vivian Baxter appreciated honesty above all other virtues. I told her, "Because he asked me, Mother."

She looked at me until her eyes softened and her lips relaxed. She nodded, "All right. All right." She turned on her high heels and strutted up the hall to her bedroom.

Bailey came to the house at my invitation. He sat in the kitchen with Tosh as I made an evening meal. They spoke about jazz musicians and the literary virtues of Philip Wylie and Aldous Huxley. Tosh had studied literature at Reed College in Oregon and Bailey had dropped out of high school in the eleventh grade. My brother had continued to read, however, spending his days on the Southern Pacific run, waiting table in the dining cars and his nights with Thomas Wolfe, Huxley and Wylie. After dinner, Bailey wished Tosh a good night and asked to speak to me. We stood in the dim doorway.

"You invited me over for ^{sobering} more than dinner, didn't you?"



the wife of a husband who was angered at my belief. I surrendered.

I tucked away the memory of my great-grandmother (who had been a slave), who told me of praying silently under old wash pots, and of secret meetings deep in the woods to praise God ("For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"). Her owner wouldn't allow his Negroes to worship God (it might give them ideas) and they did so on pain of being lashed.

I planned a secret crawl through neighborhood churches. First I took a nice dress to Ivonne's house and left it, explaining my intent. Then, on at least one Sunday a month, I would prepare a good breakfast for my family and an equally good lie in order to get out of the house. Leaving Clyde at home (he hadn't the experience to lie), I would hurry to Ivonne's, put on the Sunday dress and rush to church. I changed sites each month, afraid that too many repeated visits would familiarize my face and that on some promenade with Tosh I would be stopped by a church member and possibly asked about last week's sermon.

The spirituals and gospel songs were sweeter than sugar. I wanted to keep my mouth full of them and the sounds of my people singing fell like sweet oil in my ears. When the polyrhythmic hand-clapping began and the feet started tapping, when one old lady in a corner raised her voice to scream "O Lord, Lordy Jesus," I could hardly keep my seat. The ceremony drove into my body, to my fingers, toes, neck and thighs. My extremities shook under the emotional possession. I imposed my will on their quivering and kept them fairly still. I was terrified that once loose, once I lifted or lost my control, I would rise from my seat and dance like a puppet, up and down the aisles. I would open my mouth, and screams, shouts and field hollers would tear out my tongue in their rush to be free.

I was elated that I could wallow in the ceremonies and never forsake control. After each service I would join the church, adding my maiden name to the roster in an attempt to repay the preacher and parishioners for the joyful experience. On the street I

ions. Tosh told him often and with feeling that he was absolutely the most intelligent child in the world. Clyde began calling Tosh "Daddy," although I had concocted and given him a dramatic tale during his younger years. The story told how his own father had died on the sands of some Pacific island fighting for his life and his country. I would cry at the telling of the fiction, wishing so hard it had been true.

Tosh was a better husband than I had dared to dream. He was intelligent, kind and reliable. He told me I was beautiful (I decided that he was blinded by my color) and a brilliant conversationalist. Conversation was easy. He brought flowers for me and held my hand in the living room. My cooking received his highest praise and he laughed at my wit.

Our home life was an Eden of constant spring, but Tosh was certain the serpent lay coiled just beyond our gate. Only two former Navy friends (white), one jazz pianist (Black) and Ivonne were allowed to visit our domestic paradise. He explained that the people I liked or had known or thought I liked were all stupid and beneath me. Those I might meet, if allowed to venture out alone, beyond our catacomb, couldn't be trusted. Clyde was the brightest, most winning boy in the world, but his friends weren't welcome in our house because they were not worthy of his time. We had tickets to silent movies and the early talkies, and on some Sundays, took our trash to the town dump. I came to love Tosh because he wrapped us in a cocoon of safety, and I made no protest at the bonds that were closing around my existence.

After a year, I saw the first evidence of a reptilian presence in my garden. Tosh told Clyde that there was no God. When I contradicted him, he asked me to prove His presence. I countered that we could not discuss an Entity which didn't exist. He had been a debater at his university and told me that he could have argued either side with the same power; however, he knew for a fact there was no God, so I should surrender the discussion.

I knew I was a child of a God who existed but also

felt cleansed, purged and new. Then I would hurry to Ivonne's, change clothes and go back to my own clean house and pretty, though ungodly, family.

After watching the multicolored people in church dressed in their gay Sunday finery and praising their Maker with loud voices and sensual movements, Tosh and my house looked very pale. Van Gogh and Klee posters which would please me a day later seemed irrelevant. The scatter rugs, placed so artfully the day before, appeared pretentious. For the first few hours at home I kept as tight a check on my thoughts as I had held over my body in church. By the evening meal, I was ready again for cerebral exercises and intellectual exchange.

4

During the first year of marriage I was so enchanted with security and living with a person whose color or lack of it could startle me on an early-morning waking, and I was so busy keeping a spotless house, teaching myself to cook and serve gourmet meals and managing a happy, rambunctious growing boy that I had little time to notice public reactions to us. Awareness gradually grew in my mind that people stared, nudged each other and frowned when we three walked in the parks or went to the movies. The distaste on their faces called me back to a history of discrimination and murders of every type. Tosh, I told myself, was Greek, not white American; therefore I needn't feel I had betrayed my race by marrying one of the enemy, nor could white Americans believe that I had so forgotten them the past that I was ready to love a member

Maya Angelou

of their tribe. I never admitted that I made the same kind of rationalization about all the other non-Blacks I liked. Louise was white American (but she was a woman). David was white (but he was Jewish). Jack Simpson, Tosh's only friend, was plain white (but he was young and shy). I stared back hard at whites in the street trying to scrape the look of efrontery off their cruel faces. But I dropped my eyes when we met Negroes. I couldn't explain to all of them that my husband had not been a part of our degradation. I fought against the guilt which was slipping into my closed life as sidiously as gas escaping into a sealed room.

I clung to Tosh, surrendering more of my territory, my independence. I would ignore the straightness of his hair which worried my fingers. I would be an obedient, dutiful wife, restricting our arguments to semantic differences, never contradicting the substance of his views.

Clyde stood flinching as I combed his thick snarled hair. His face was screwed into a frown.

"Mom—ouch—when am I going to grow up—ouch—and have good hair like Dad's?"

The mixed marriage bludgeoned home. My son thought that the whites' straight hair was better than his natural abundant curls.

"You are going to have hair like mine. Isn't that good?" I counted on his love to keep him loyal.

"It's good for you, but mine hurts. I don't like hurting hair."

I promised to have the barber give him a close cut on our next visit and told him how beautiful and rich he looked with his own hair. He looked at me, half disbelieving, so I told him about a little African prince named Hannibal, who had hair just like his. I felt a dislike for Tosh's hair because of my son's envy.

I began scheming. There was only one way I could keep my marriage balanced and make my son have a healthy respect for his own looks and race: I had to devote all my time and intelligence to my family. I needed to become a historian, sociologist and anthropologist. I would begin a self-improvement course at the main library. Just one last church visit,

then I would totally dedicate myself to Tosh and Clyde and we would all be happy.

The Evening Star Baptist Church was crowded when I arrived and the service had begun. The members were rousing a song, urging the music to soar beyond all physical boundaries.

"I want to be ready
I want to be ready
I want to be ready
To walk in Jerusalem, just like John."

Over and over again the melodies lifted, pushed up by the clapping hands, kept aloft by the shaking shoulders. Then the minister stepped out away from the altar to stand at the lip of the dais. He was tall and ponderous as befitted a person heavy with the word of God.

"The bones were dry." The simple statement sped through my mind. "Dry Bones in the Valley" was my favorite sermon. The song that whites had come to use in mimicry of the Negro accent, "Dem Bones" was inspired by that particular portion of the Old Testament. Their ridicule—"De toe bone connected to de foot bone, foot bone connected to de ankle bone, ankle bone connected to de . . ."—in no way diminished my reverence for the sermon. I knew of no teaching more positive than the legend which said that will and faith caused a dismembered skeleton, dry on the desert floor, to knit back together and walk. I also knew that that sermon, properly preached, could turn me into a shouting, spinning dervish. I tried for the first few minutes to rise and leave the church, but the preacher swung his head to look at me each time I poised myself to leave. I sat again. He told the story simply at first, weaving a quiet web around us all, binding us into the wonder of faith and the power of God. His rhythm accelerated and his volume increased slowly, so slowly he caught me off guard. I had sat safe in my own authority in so many churches and waited cautiously for the point in the service when the ignition would be

sparked, when "the saints" would be fired with the spirit and jump in the aisles, dancing and shaking and shouting their salvation. I had always resisted becoming a part of that enchanted band.

The minister's voice boomed, "These bones shall walk. I say these bones shall walk again."

I found myself in the aisle and my feet were going crazy under me—slithering and snapping like two turtles shot with electricity. The choir was singing "You brought my feet out the mire and clay and you saved my soul one day." I loved that song and the preacher's voice over it measured my steps. There was no turning back. I gave myself to the spirit and danced my way to the pulpit. Two ushers held me in gloved hands as the sermon fell in volume and intensity around the room.

"I am opening the doors of the Church. Let him come who will be saved." He paused as I trembled before him.

"Jesus is waiting." He looked at me. "Won't somebody come?"

I was within arm's reach. I nodded. He left the altar and took my hand.

"Child, what church were you formerly affiliated with?" His voice was clear over the quiet background music. I couldn't tell him I had joined the Rock of Ages Methodist Church the month before and the Lily of the Valley Baptist the month before that.

I said, "None."

He dropped my hand, turned to the congregation and said, "Brothers and sisters, the Lord has been merciful unto us today. Here is a child that has never known the Lord. A young woman trying to make her way out here in this cruel world without the help of the ever-loving Jesus." He turned to four old ladies who sat on the front row. "Mothers of the Church, won't you come? Won't you pray with her?"

The old women rose painfully, the lace handkerchiefs pinned in their hair shook. I felt very much in need of their prayers, because I was a sinner, a liar and a hedonist, using the sacred altar to indulge my sensu-

ality. They hobbled to me and one in a scratchy voice said, "Kneel, child."

Four right hands overlapped on my head as the old women began to pray. "Lord, we come before you today, asking for a special mercy for this child"

"Amen," and "Yes, Lords" sprang around the room like bouncing balls in a cartoon sing-along.

"Out, Devil," one old lady ordered.

"She has come to you with an open heart, asking you for your special mercy."

"Out of this baby, Devil."

I thought about my white atheist husband and my son, who was following in his nonbelieving footsteps, and how I had lied even in church. I added, "Out, Devil."

The raspy voice said, "Stretch out, child, and let the Devil go. Make room for the Lord."

I lay flat on the floor as the congregation prayed for my sins. The four women commenced a crippled march around my body.

They sang,

"Soon one morning when death comes walking
in my room,

Soon one morning when death comes walking
in my room,

Oh, my Lord,

Oh, my Lord,

What shall I do?"

They were singing of their own dread, of the promise of death whose cool hand was even then resting on their frail shoulders. I began to cry. I wept for their age and their pain. I cried for my people, who found sweet release from anguish and isolation for only a few hours on Sunday. For my fatherless son, who was growing up with a man who would never, could never, understand his need for manhood; for my mother, whom I admired but didn't understand; for my brother, whose disappointment with life was drawing him relentlessly into the clutches of death; and, finally, I cried for myself, long and loudly.

When the prayer was finished I stood up, and was enrolled into the church roster. I was so purified I forgot my cunning. I wrote down my real name, address and telephone number, shook hands with members, who welcomed me into their midst and left the church. Midweek, Tosh stood before me, voice hard and face stony.

"Who the hell is Mother Bishop?"
I said I didn't know.

"And where the hell is the Evening Star Baptist Church?"

I didn't answer.

"A Mother Bishop called here from the Evening Star Baptist Church. She said Mrs. Angelos had joined their church last Sunday. She now must pay twelve dollars for her robe, since she will be baptized in the Crystal Pool plunge next Sunday."

I said nothing.

"I told her no one who lived here was going to be baptized. Anywhere. At any time."

I made no protest, gave no confession—just stood silent. And allowed a little more of my territory to be taken away.

The articles in the women's magazines did nothing to help explain the deterioration of my marriage. We had no infidelity; my husband was a good provider and I was a good cook. He encouraged me to resume my dance classes and I listened to him practice the saxophone without interruption. He came directly home from work each afternoon and in the evening

after my son was asleep I found as much enjoyment in our marital bed as he.

The form was there, but the spirit had disappeared.

A bizarre sensation pervades a relationship of pretense. No truth seems true. A simple morning's greeting and response appear loaded with innuendo and fraught with implications.

"How are you?" Does he/she really care?

"Fine." I'm not really. I'm miserable, but I'll never tell you.

Each nicety becomes more sterile and each withdrawal more permanent.

Bacon and coffee odors mingled with the aseptic aroma of Lifebuoy soap. Wisps of escaping gas, which were as real a part of a fifty-year-old San Francisco house as the fourteen-foot-high ceilings and the cankerous plumbing, solidified my reality. Those were natural morning mists. The sense that order was departing my life was refuted by the daily routine. My family would awaken. I would shower and head for the kitchen to begin making breakfast. Clyde would then take over the shower as Tosh read the newspaper. Tosh would shower while Clyde dressed, collected his crayons and lunch pail for school. We could all sit at breakfast together. I would force unwanted pleasantries into my face. (My mother had taught me: "If you have only one smile in you, give it to the people you love. Don't be surly at home, then go out in the street and start grinning 'Good morning' at total strangers.")

Tosh was usually quiet and amiable. Clyde gabbled about his dreams, which had to do with Roy Rogers as Jesus and Br'er Rabbit as God. We would finish breakfast in a glow of family life and they would both leave me with kisses, off to their separate excitements

One new morning Tosh screamed from the bathroom, "Where in the hell are the goddamn dry towels?" The outburst caught me as unexpectedly as an upper cut. He knew that I kept the linen closet filled with towels folded as I had seen them photographed in the *Ladies Home Journal*. More shocking than his forgetfulness, however, was his shouting. Anger generally

rendered my husband morose and silent as a stone. I went to the bathroom and handed him the thickest towel we owned.

"What's wrong, Tosh?"

"All the towels in here are wet. You know I hate fucking wet towels."

I didn't know because he had never told me. I went back to the kitchen, not really knowing him, either.

At breakfast, Clyde began a recounting of Roy Rogers on his horse and Red Ryder, riding on clouds up to talk to God about some rustlers in the lower forty.

Tosh turned, looking directly at him, and said, "Shut up, will you. I'd like a little fucking peace and quiet while I eat."

The statement slapped Clyde quiet; he had never been spoken to with such cold anger.

Tosh looked at me. "The eggs are like rocks. Can't you fry a decent goddamn egg? If not, I'll show you."

I was too confounded to speak. I sat, not understanding the contempt. Clyde asked to be excused from the table. I excused him and followed him to the door.

He whispered, "Is Dad mad at me?"

I picked up his belongings, saw him jacketed and told him, "No, not at you. You know grownups have a lot on their minds. Sometimes they're so busy thinking they forget their manners. It's not nice, but it happens." He said, "I'll go back and tell him 'bye.'"

"No, I think you should just go on to school. He'll be in a better mood this evening."

I held the front door open.

He shouted, "'Bye, Dad.'"

There was no answer as I kissed him and closed the door. Fury quickened my footsteps. How could he scream at my son like that? Who the hell was he? A white-sheeted Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan? I wouldn't have a white man talk to me in that tone of voice and I'd slap him with a coffeepot before he could yell at my child again. The midnight murmuring of soft words was forgotten. His gentle hands and familiar body had become in those seconds the shelter of an enemy.

He was still sitting over coffee, brooding. I went directly to the table.

"What do you mean, screaming at us that way?"

He said nothing.

"You started, first with the towels, then it was Clyde's dream. Then my cooking. Are you going crazy?"

He said, "I don't want to talk about it," still looking down into a half-filled cup of near-cold coffee.

"You sure as hell will talk about it. What have I done to you? What's the matter with you?"

He left the table and headed for the door without looking at me. I followed, raising my protest, hoping to puncture his cloak of withdrawal.

"I deserve and demand an explanation."

He held the door open and turned at last to face me. His voice was soft again and tender. "I think I'm just tired of being married." He pulled the door closed.

There is a shock that comes so quickly and strikes so deep that the blow is internalized even before the skin feels it. The strike must first reach bone marrow, then ascend slowly to the brain where the slowpoke intellect records the deed.

I went about cleaning my kitchen. Wash the dishes, sweep the floor, swipe the splattered grease from the stove, make fresh coffee, put a fresh starched cloth on the table. Then I sat down. A sense of loss suffused me until I was suffocating within the vapors.

What had I done? I had placed my life within the confines of my marriage. I was everything the magazines said a wife should be. Constant, faithful and clean. I was economical. I was compliant, never offering headaches as excuses for not sharing the marital bed.

I had generously allowed Tosh to share my son, encouraging Clyde to think of him as a permanent life fixture. And now Tosh was "tired of being married."

Experience had made me accustomed to make quick analyses and quick if often bad decisions. So I expected Tosh, having come to the conclusion that marriage was exhausting, to ask me for a divorce when he returned from work. My tears were for myself and

my son. We would be thrown again into a maelstrom of rooflessness. I wept for our loss of security and railed at the brutality of fate. Forgotten were my own complaints of the marriage. Unadmitted was the sense of strangulation I had begun to feel, or the insidious quality of guilt for having a white husband, which surrounded me like an evil aura when we were in public.

At my table, immersed in self-pity, I saw my now dying marriage as a union made in heaven, officiated over by St. Peter and sanctioned by God. It wasn't just that my husband was leaving me, I was losing a state of perfection, of grace.

My people would nod knowingly. Again a white man had taken a Black woman's body and left her hopeless, helpless and alone. But I couldn't expect their sympathy. I hadn't been ambushed on a dark country lane or raped by a group of randy white toughs. I had sworn to obey the man and had accepted his name. Anger, first at injustice, then at Tosh, stopped my tears. The same words I had used to voice my anguish I now used to fan the fires of rage. I had been a good wife, kind and compliant. And that wasn't enough for him? It was better than he deserved. More than he could reasonably have expected had he married within his own race. Anyway, had he planned to leave me from the first? Had he intended in the beginning to lure me into trust, then break up our marriage and break my heart? Maybe he was a sadist, scheming to inflict pain on poor, unsuspecting me. Well, he didn't know me. I would show him. I was no helpless biddy to be beckoned, then belittled. He was tired of marriage; all right, then I would leave him.

I got up from the table and cooked dinner, placed the food in the refrigerator and dressed in my best clothes. I left the dinner pots dirty and my bed unmade and hit the streets.

The noontime bar in the popular hotel on Eddy Street was filled with just-awakened petty gamblers and drowsy whores. Pimps not yet clad in their evening air of exquisite brutality spent the whores' earnings on their fellow parasites. I was recognized by a few drinkers, because I was Clydell and Vivian's daughter, be-

He noticed that I was responding to the whiskey, and came near the bed. "Why don't you just stretch out and rest a little while? You'll feel better. I'll rest myself. Just take off your shoes and your clothes. To keep them from wrinkling up on you."

My troubles and memories swam around, then floated out the window when I laid my head on the single pillow.

When I awakened, the dark room didn't smell familiar and my head throbbed. Confusion panicked me. I could have been picked up by an extraterrestrial being and teleported into some funky rocket ship. I jumped out of bed and fumbled along the walls, bumping until I found the light switch. My clothes were folded neatly and my shoes peeked their tidy toes from under the chair. I remembered the room and the merchant marine. I had no idea what had happened since I passed out. I examined myself and found no evidence that the old man had misused my drunkenness.

Dressing slowly, I wondered over the next move. Night had fallen on my affairs, but the sharp edges of rejection were not softened. There was a note on the dresser. I picked it up to read under the naked bulb that dangled from the ceiling; it said in effect:

Dear Clara,

I tell you like I tell my own daughter. Be careful of strangers. Everybody smile at you don't have to mean you no good. I'll be back in two months from now. You be a good girl, hear? You'll make some boy a good wife.

Abner Green

I walked through the dark streets to Ivonne's house. After I explained what had happened, she suggested I telephone home.

"Hello, Tosh?"

"Marguerite, where are you?" The strain in his voice made me smile.

He asked, "When are you coming home? Clyde hasn't eaten."

I knew that was a lie.

cause I had worked at the popular record shop or because I was that girl who had married the white man. I knew nothing about strong liquor except the names of some cocktails. I sat down and ordered a Zombie.

I clung to the long, cold drink and examined my predicament. My marriage was over, since I believed the legal bonds were only as good as the emotional desire to make them good. If a person didn't want you, he didn't want you. I could have thrown myself and my son on Tosh's mercy; he was a kind man, and he might have tolerated us in his home and on the edges of his life. But begging had always stuck, resisting, in my throat. I thought women who accepted their husbands' inattention and sacrificed all their sovereignty for a humiliating marriage more unsavory than the prostitutes who were drinking themselves awake in the noisy bar.

A short, thickset man sat down beside me and asked if he could pay for my second Zombie. He was old enough to be my father and reminded me of a kindly old country doctor from sepia-colored B movies. He asked my name and where I lived. I told his soft, near-feminine face that my name was Clara. When I said "No, I'm not married," he grinned and said, "I don't know what these young men are waiting for. If I was a few years younger, I'd give them a run for their money. Yes siree bob." He made me feel comfortable. His Southern accent was as familiar to me as the smell of baking cornbread and the taste of wild persimmons. He asked if I was "a, uh, a ah a fancy lady?"

I said, "No." Desperate, maybe. Fanciful, maybe. Fancy? No.

He told me he was a merchant marine and was staying in the hotel and asked would I like to come upstairs and have a drink with him.

I would.

I sat on the bed in the close room, sipping the bourbon diluted with tap water. He talked about Newport News and his family as I thought about mine. He had a son and daughter near my age and they were "some kinda good children" and the girl was "some kinda pretty."

"Nor have I. I can't eat," he said. I wasn't concerned about his appetite.

I said, "You're tired of being married? Yes? Well, I'll be home when I get there." I hung up before he could say more.

Ivonne said, "Maya, you're cold. Aren't you worried about Clyde?"

"No. Tosh loves Clyde. He'll look after him. He loves me too, but I gave up too much and gave in too much. Now we'll see."

The thought of his loneliness in the large apartment made my own less acute. I slept badly on Ivonne's sofa.

I went home the next day and we resumed a sort of marriage, but the center of power had shifted. I was no longer the dutiful wife ready with floors waxed and rugs beaten, with my finger between the pages of a cookbook and my body poised over the stove or spread-eagled on the bed.

One day my back began to hurt with a sullen ache, the kind usually visited only on the arthritic aged. My head pulsed and my side was punished by short, hot stabs of pain. The doctor advised immediate hospitalization. A simple appendectomy developed complications and it was weeks before I was released. The house was weary with failure—I told my husband that I wanted to go to Arkansas. I would stay with my grandmother until I had fully recovered. I meant in mind, as well as body.

He came close and in a hoarse whisper said, "Marguerite. Your grandmother died the day after your operation. You were too sick. I couldn't tell you."

Ah, Momma. I had never looked at death before, peered into its yawning chasm for the face of a beloved. For days my mind staggered out of balance. I reeled on a precipice of knowledge that even if I were rich enough to travel all over the world, I would never find Momma. If I were as good as God's angels and as pure as the Mother of Christ, I could never have Momma's rough slow hands pat my cheek or braid my hair.

Death to the young is more than that undiscover-

ered country; despite its inevitability, it is a place having reality only in song or in other people's grief.

6

When our marriage ended completely, a year later, I was a saner, healthier person than the young, greedy girl who had wanted a man to belong to and a life based on a Hollywood film, circa 1940.

Clyde was heartbroken by the separation. He acted as if I were the culprit and he and Tosh the injured parties. His once cheerful face was a muddle of solemnity. He grumbled and whined, asked again and again, "Why did Dad leave us?"

My direct answer of "Because he and I didn't love each other anymore" frightened him, and when he looked at me his eyes held the wonder: Will you stop loving me, too?

I tried to soothe him by explaining that he was my son, my child, my baby, my joy. But his good sense told him that Tosh had been my husband, my love and his father, and I had been able to sever those bonds. What safety was there for him?

A few months before the separation my mother and her close friend, Lottie Wells, returned to San Francisco from Los Angeles. They opened a café with ten tables and a ten-stool counter where they shared soul-food cooking chores. Lottie was a strong, powerfully built woman the color of freshly made coffee. She spoke softly, hardly above a whisper and was so tender it was impossible to resist loving her. She folded Clyde and me into her care and became our beloved Aunt Lottie.

