"Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes is a very symbolic poem, for the mother relates the hardships faced by African Americans throughout history to an old, worn down flight of stairs. The mother is speaking to her son strictly about the obstacles she has faced in life, but how she has not let those obstacles overcome her. The mother constantly says, "Life for me ain't been no crystal stair" (2, 20), indicating her life has not been simple and she has endured several struggles. However, the mother encourages her son to withstand the hardships in life by simply saying, "Don't you fall now / For I'se still goin', honey / I'se still climbin" (17-19). I was extremely touched by this poem, for it reminded me of the several times my mother would look me in the eye when I was suffering and say "Do NOT let this simple struggle get the best of you."

The poem certainly given a precise description about how mother and son used to interact and share a relationship with certain restrictions and limitations. However, what about their actual relation, their strength and their commitment to each other. What was the reason that son wasn’t shocked or hurt on the news of death of his mother? Was she such a stranger and alien for him?

I believe distances and separation played its toll and took love and caring aspect of the motherly love away from the relationship. Now neither son nor mother were actually attached to each other emotionally.

Langston is probably one of the most different poets from all of the ones we have studied. He not only was influenced by the cultural implications such as Negros in his poems, but also was modernist in approach. His excellence for writing jazz poetry has made him one of the most cherish writers and I like the way his poetry sound. Along with the jazz tone, Hughes used extensive symbolism specifically for the African Americans.

*Works Cited*

Hughes, Langston. "Mother to son." *Selected poems of Langston Hughes* (1926): 165.