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Instructor Name

Course Number

16th January, 2020

Their Eyes Were Watching God

The novel has been written by Zora Neale Hurston. The novel follows the life of Janie Crawford who belonged to a mixed race heritage of Black and White. In her adolescence, she sees a bee on a flower in her backyard. This attracted Janie. She was intrigued by how a little bee is pollinating a flower. She said that I want to be a pear tree and begin my new life just the way this bee is starting her new life (Hurston). So, she set out to find true love. This novel shows her emotional growth along with her maturity with three marriages.

Janie’s idea of happiness is shown in the novel through a pear tree that represents nature. The tree represents Janie’s views of nature as a romantic character who is trying to seek love. The novel shows the spiritual development of the protagonist throughout the novel. Her ultimate goal is to find herself a place in the world. She wants to understand her purpose of being in this world. She also wants to be at peace with her surroundings and with the environment. The novel depicts great influence of God through nature. It shows the pear tree as a calm and beautiful aspect of nature. At various points in the novel, Hurston describes the sun and the moon, sky and sea, and horizon with its pure forms of divinity. The title itself reflects the influence of God’s power through beautiful and threatening forces of nature. Religion and life are two shelters for Janie.

The pear tree scene appears many times in the novel. It seems like it has a close relationship with Janie and she has put her faith in the tree. There is some spiritual connection with God through the tree. She puts her belief in the tree that it would understand all her feelings and the changes through which she is going. The pear tree was an inspiration for Janie and it showed a path of God; the path of divinity and submitting herself to his endless powers. God made her realize that there are more things in life and not just domestic and financial stability. At the end of the novel, Janie finally entrusts herself to God and her prayers also show her belief that in order to have a good life, you need to do your part and leave the rest on God.

The role of God is shown through the Hurricane and other aspects of nature in the novel. The Hurricane depicts the destructive elements of Mother Nature. The writer shows the sea as the most destructive element of nature. Sea is personified as a monster, “It had left the bed”. Furthermore, the novel shows the thoughts of Janie and her perception of God through the imagery of the Hurricane. The Hurricane causes the characters to experience God’s power through nature. It implies that they should submit themselves to God as he is the most powerful and humans are inferior beings.

The writer tries to convince her readers that Tea Cake and Janie were meant to meet each other as it was God’s will. That is why he brought devastation through the Hurricane and showed to them that they are powerless in front of him. They were both standing in the middle of the storm and their eyes were watching God (Hurston). Both Janie and Tea Cake were perplexed and they started questioning all the love and protection God has given to them. They realized that God’s power has surpassed their own and they cannot achieve that level of power. The destructive side of nature marks the conclusion of the book and foreshadows her dark future. God showed his plan for her through devastation and she knew at the end of the novel that she had to be contented with whatever she had.

# **Works Cited:**

Hurston, Zora neale. *Their eyes were watching God* . New York : HarperCollins Publishers Inc. , 1937.