[Name of the Writer]

[Name of Instructor]

[Literature ]

[26 July 2019]

Short Response to Reading

# Consider the Role(s) of betrayal and infidelity in the story.

Emotions are valued when they are pure in form and substance. Emotions are sometimes the biggest power and the biggest weakness as well depending upon the context. When pure emotion such as love and affinity is adulterated with infidelity and betrayal, it destroys all types of bonds and relationships. This is the theme of The Gilded Six-Bits, which is reflecting the nefarious concepts such as deception, betrayal, and infidelity in the story. The Gilded Six-Bits is a short story by an African-American author Zora Neale Hurston. The author portrays a couple in the story who were living with many of their ambiguities. In the Gilded Six Bits, Hurston takes inspiration from her life to depict the ongoing state of the Joe and Missie May marital affairs. This story is the reflection of several concepts, such as the power and function of money and the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation. Nevertheless, this feeling of infidelity and betrayal is quite obvious in the whole plot of The Gilded Six-Bits as May and Slemmons are both involved in it.

# Discussion

To begin with, Joe and Missy may are not happy living as their relationship is in turbulent waters. The author begins the story with the wife, who is anxiously waiting for her husband to return from work. They were living happily until the powerful riches come in between the couple. Joe has a modest income, but May wants to have more luxuries in life. This is the desire for more luxuries and extravagance that allows infidelity and betrayal to play havoc with their relationship as it is stated in "Good Lawd, Missie! You women sho are hard to

sense into things. “He’s got a five-dollar gold piece for a stickpin, and he got a ten-dollar gold piece on his watch chain and his mouf is jes’ crammed full of gold teeths” (Hurston, 3). So, the character of Slemmons appears in the story who is the one with an abundance of wealth and power. Naturally, Missy May gets inspired and cheats on her husband. Joe caught her red-handed in the story and discovered that her wife is not loyal to him by any means. She is much focused on wealth rather than loyalty or sincerity. However, in the end, she becomes cognizant of the fact that this wealth of Slemmons was just a deception.

Though Joe becomes eye-witness to her wife's misadventure, he forgives her with an open heart. It is manifested in one quote in the story, "Joe sank his face into the pillow for a spell, then he said huskily, “You don’t know de feelings of dat yet, Missie May” ( (Hurston, 5). He treats her just the normal way and this surprises May. May sobs and regrets here behavior. Joe even reconciles when May gets pregnant and accepts the child as his own. Joe saves his marriage by forgiving her wife and her obnoxious betrayal. This shows how positively Joe played in the whole quagmire of infidelity and betrayal that engulfed his marriage.

# Conclusion

To summarize, it may be concluded that the short story by Zora Neale Hurston depicts the infidelity and betrayal by wife for the lure of some tangible things. The writer tried to include her personal experience in the story as she is the victim of failed marriages. Hurston mentioned the power of wealth and income in any relationship as some people take its pretext to cheat on their partners. This is the bitter reality of life since people do not value true and good partners, and often compromise their marital life for the sake of luxuries. This is what May did in the Gilded Six Bits, which is the story of betrayal, deception, and infidelity.

# Works Cited

Hurston, Zora Neale. “The Gilded Six-Bits.” *Envisioning the New Adam: Empathic Portraits of Men by American Women Writers*, 1995, pp. 81–89.