



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 4. Issue.3., 2017 (July-Sept.)

INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INDIA  
2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

LOVE, THE COLD SHOULDER IN *THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD*

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ABSTRACT

Janie Crawford, the protagonist of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* searches for unconditional, true and everlasting love. In all her life, she comes across several kinds of love. However, her marriages failed to fulfill her dreams, which is unfruitful. Janie has her own caring affection and love for her grandma. Out of her love for her grandma she married, an old man named Logan Killicks. Logan gives security but fails to appreciate her and he is the first man who broke all her dream in the marriage life and led a very plain life. With so much expectation about love, she moves with Joe Starks. Joe on the other hand, provides her a dignified life in the society that he failed to provide her in private life. He even restricts her freedom showing his male domination. Things are different with Tea Cake. When Tea Cake is able to give her love, freedom and whatever she expects from the man and treats her equally to him. He feels that women are not a weaker than men and they can do whatever men can do. She enjoys the love that Tea Cake showers on her. However, the love does not last longer. When Tea Cake dies of rabies Janie feels alone and it remarks love is a reverie for a black woman. It is clear even God is partial towards black woman's desires. Janie is a victim in search of true love.

Key Words: Love, Freedom, Marriage, Rabies, Victim.

The focus of this article is on the protagonist from her childhood to a matured woman. As a black girl, men subjugated Janie Crawford. Here I would like to determine how love is colder for Janie where she deserves true love.

"A deeply soulful novel that comprehends love and cruelty and separates the big people from the small of heart, without ever losing sympathy for those unfortunate who don't know how to live properly" (Zadie smith)( name the novel with pg no)

Janie Crawford, the protagonist of the novel is a light-skinned girl who is the daughter of raped mother. Her nanny who was also a victim brought up Janie. Janie is unaware of the society where discrimination and gender domination plays a huge role and love is a hallucination for them. Janie's heart is pure yet she is not conscious about rational attitude of the men. Whites treat black badly and black men treat the black women more badly.

Janie spends her whole life finding, losing and admiring love. Her first husband Logan never finds beauty in her life, where as her second husband admires her beauty in the beginning ultimately become jealous tries to control her nature and restricts showing her beautiful hair in the public. It is her third husband Teacake who gives her the love, which she desires yet not a long-lasting one. Somehow, she finds a love in Teacake who reciprocates her love. Still the fate made her kill him with her own hands who suffers out of rabies. Thus, her love does not last longer.

Her nanny who sincerely looks after Janie wants her to get married to a black man because she does not want Janie to be a victim like herself. There is no such thing like true love in the life of black women. They are widely exploited by the whites. Janie dreams about marriage life. The happiness and reciprocated love in the marriage were her long-time dream and it is just a reverie in her first two marriages. Her dreams are merely a complete failure.

Janie accepts to marry Logan Killicks after her Nanny's wish. Logan was twenty years older than Janie. As he is very old, he is not aware of appreciating real beauty of Janie. He satisfies all her needs but fails to prove himself as a good husband. She feels that she is trapped in a net. She works hard with him to earn more money. However, she never gains any kind of happiness from him nor she has an affectionate feeling for him. "She knew now that marriage did not make love. Janie's first dream was dead, so she became a woman" (Their Eyes Were Watching God 25)

When she realized that she does not have any feeling for Logan Killicks, Janie stays away from him and it is a bitter marriage life and do not yield any fruit in the future too. Janie's detachment towards Logan made her to fall for Jody Starks as he approaches her. Joe came to the place to develop his business and falls for the beauty of Janie. He admires and appreciates her beauty especially her hair. Later, after getting married to Janie he never let her to set her hair free and she was asked to bound up her hair in the public.

After Joe's death, she kept her hair free and lives according to her wish. She feels happy rather than sad. Because, now Joe is not alive to suppress her. She feels ecstasy is back in her life. "The young girls was gone, but a handsome woman had taken her place. She tore off the kerchief from her head and let down her plentiful hair. The weight, the length, the glory was there" (Their Eyes Were Watching God 87)

Joe is a masterminded person who tries to control and rule over his wife and failed to understand her love. Not only this, he had many constraints like snatching the freedom from her. He rejects that Janie should not address the audience. In addition, the job of the women is to be in the kitchen and not to discuss with the crowds. "Thank yuh fuh yo 'compliments, but mah wife don't know nothin' 'bout no speech makin' Ah never married her for nothin' lak dat. She's uh women and her place is in de home." (Their Eyes Were Watching God 43)

Joe is a strong man rather than a loving husband. Earlier he admires her beauty and loves her later the same man dominates her never permit her to come out with her talents. It is not a big deal for Janie rather she looks forward for the mutual understanding, which is not ideal in their marriage life.

Both Joe and Logan fails to give her the life, which she wishes. She feels that nanny is the reason for her loveless life. Logan is busy bee and Joe is a greedy man. The men try to work harder to prove themself and forget to make their wife happy. When Logan failed to do so, she comes with Joe and this time it is Joe himself. She kept her all anger within her. Moreover, when he tries to scold her for other mistakes, she burst out. Joe is unbearable to take sudden burst out and dies. "Here nanny had taken the biggest thing God ever made, the horizon for no matter how far a person can go the horizon is still way beyond you and finched it in to such a little bit of a thing that she could tie it about her grand-daughter's neck tight enough to choke her" (Their Eyes Were Watching God 89)

Nanny saved her from being molested but she failed in giving her romantic, happy married life to her granddaughter. As a young woman, Janie expected more than a fulfilling romantic life. Yet nanny disappoint her.

Janie feels true love with Johnny Taylor and Teacake. She is very happy in the communion of flowers and bees and she expects the same with the humans.

*"She was stretched on her back beneath the pear tree soaking in the alto chart of the visiting bees, the gold of the sun and the breath of the breeze when the inaudible voice of it all came to her. She saw a dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom; the thousand sister-calyxes arch to meet the love embrace and the ecstatic shiver of the tree from root to tiniest branch creaming in every blossom and frothing with delight. So, this was a marriage"( Their Eyes Were Watching God58)*

Janie's knowledge about love is smeared with physical attraction and sex. Janie as a teenager tries to apply this in her life. She had experienced the same with the neighbor boy Taylor. When Nanny found them kissing she calls Janie and warns her by saying that white men make use of the blacks and once their desire been fulfilled they leave these black women.

"Honey, de white man is de ruler of everything as fur as ah been able tuh find out. May be ittssomeplace way off in de ocean where de black man is in power, but we don't know nothin' but what we see. De nigger woman is de male uh de world so far as he can see" (Their Eyes Were Watching God 14)

This is the major reason that she never involves herself with man. When Mrs. Turner allures her to marry her brother, she rejects it plainly that love is not with the color but with the character. Therefore, it is clear that Teacake might able to give her what she desires. Teacake is rather simple but a loving person. He praises her beauty, admires her hair, respects her character and always ready to give whatever she plumps for. Janie feels the communion of flower and bee with Teacake.

"He looked like the love thoughts of women. He could be a bee to a blossom pear tree blossom in the spring. He seemed to be crushing sent out of the world with his footsteps. Crushing aromatic herbs with every step he took. Spices hung about him. He was a glance from God" (Their Eyes Were Watching God 106)

Janie loves her new life with Teacake. When Teacake gets close to a girl called Chunky. Janie doubts about him whether he truly loves or cheat him. Earlier her love life gave many frustrations than adding her sorrows. But Teacake clears her that he loves only her.

"What would I do with that lil chunk of a woman wid you around? She ain't good for nothing exceptin' tuh set up in uh corney by de kitchen store and break wood over her head. You're something tuh make ah man forgit tuh git old forgit tuh die"( Their Eyes Were Watching God 82)

Even though she finds true love in Teacake it doesn't last longer when he died out of rabies. Hurston clearly mentions that love is a cold shoulder extensively rejected for the black women. It is the hardest part in their life to find a true love like Teacake but in the end, it is difficult to hold it. We learn that they often are involved in physical love not out of affection for the black women but out of desire. Love is purposefully rejected for them because they are not treated as human beings. The protagonist who tries to find the true love ultimately fails and becomes a victim. The first two marriages fail to show the true love and when she gets in her third marriage it doesn't last longer.

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