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A LITMAG

Ten writers
Ten pieces
All from the
length grade



NARRATIVE

Kyrel Henderson

CUB

There was once this little cub who stumbled across a house in the middle of the woods. Mama Bear always told the baby cub if he saw something that seemed strange, "leave it alone, people are crazy."

The cub was curious and also hungry, so when he saw that the door window was wide open he jumped through hurting his back. In the house there were two buckets of chicken, a candy bar, and two bowls of soup. When the cub saw all the food and goodies his eyes lit up. He ate it all as expected, but when he was about to eat the candy bar, he heard keys jangling at the door, so he ran into the bathroom taking the candy bar with him. Walking in the door there was a man, a little girl and a little boy. The man said, "Okay kids I'm going upstairs to go to sleep, you two behave." The kids replied back saying they would behave.

While the boy was looking for his bucket of chicken and bowl of soup and the girl was looking for her candy bar, the cub was eating in a panic, trying to figure out how to get out of the house. He tried to climb through the window but he was too big now, so he opened the door and crept into the dining room.

The boy was telling the girl,

"The bowls and buckets are here but where is your candy bar "

"I'll check the dining room," the girl replied. When the cub heard this he quickly stood still to make it seem like he was a statue. The girl walked back to the dining room and quickly realized that something was not right and called the boy right there. They poked the cub multiple times to see if its fake or real, the boy then gets a big knife to stab the cub, as soon as the boy lifts the knife, the cub cried out, "Please no do not kill me."

The boy and the girl asked the bear why he was in the house he told them that, "His mama bear was sick and cannot cook or pick up any food, so he is wandering around trying to find anything to feed himself and his family." Everyone stopped when they heard footsteps coming down the stairs. The two children tell the bear to go back into the bathroom and stay quiet so they can distract their dad. The boy and girl start distracting their dad by asking him numerous questions " How was your nap?" "Are you hungry ?"

The man quickly realizes that the boy and girl are hiding something from him.

"So what is really up, what are you guys hiding?" says the man. The girl quickly came clean, much to the cub's chagrin.

"There is a cub in our bathroom." The cub came out of the bathroom and said, "please do not kill me." The man asked why the cub was there and the boy told him "the cubs mother is ill and he just needs food to feed his... " But before the boy could finish his sentence the man pulled a shotgun out and started to chase the cub out into the woods with the boy and girl following behind. They ran and ran for several miles until they bumped straight into the cub's brother bear. Reacting quickly brother bear hits the shotgun out of the man's hands and starts to claw him to death.

The cub runs over to the boy and girl to cover their eyes. "I truly apologize for what my brother has done to your father but it was a life or death situation." The boy replies and says, "that is not our father we don't know him."

The cub shrugged and thought how Mama Bear was always right, *people were crazy.*

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Loyalty I Cannot Promise You

Rahkeam Pickens

LOYALTY I CANNOT PROMISE

Los Angeles, 1943

Two young sisters lived together, the eldest being Vivan, the youngest being Judy. They moved to Los Angeles in hopes of finding a way to the silver screen, making it big, and

appearing on film. The two sisters left their humble beginnings behind in a far forgotten, dreadful place in North Dakota. The only thing that had made their life there bearable was each other's company and the stories and scripts they wrote together, bouncing ideas around, laughing and writing by candlelight until the sun came up.

When the two sisters left, they made the long journey by rail, walking, and hitchhiking until they came upon a gypsy trailer. Rusted and worn down, its golden days were no longer. On the window hung a sign, seemingly hastily written and hung by a nail. The two girls saw the trailer and walked off the dimly lit road to follow a beaten and cracked stone path to the trailer. Once they reached the trailer, Vivan stepped forward and knocked on the door.

"We hate to intrude," she said softly, "We're traveling, and we're looking for a place to sleep tonight," Judy called out but no reply.

As they walked through the trailer, burnt-out candles and melted wax lay everywhere. Tape and old newspaper clippings adorned the windows and walls, acting as an insulator of some sort. At the very back of the trailer was a room, and in replacement of the once existent door, was a bead curtain. An old, pale, and humanoid-like hand grabbed onto a bead strand, pushing the curtain back. The sisters paused and began to step back in fright. As the curtain continued to be pushed back, out appeared an older woman, a veil on her hair, and a glass eye that stared into

the distance behind the two sisters. The old woman motioned to a table. The table seemed to be the single place in the trailer not covered in candle wax.

The sisters looked at each other, confusion, panic, and curiosity all racing through their thoughts. The old woman spoke, and a raspy voice came through.

"You two yearn for a home, undying love, and success?" The girls looked at each other again. With no words to say, the girls nodded. Feeling slightly at ease, Judy let go of her bag and placed it on the table. The old woman spotted the bag, and with both veiny, wrinkled hands she reached for it. Judy tried to pull away, and in doing so, a newspaper clipping of a house for rent fell from the bag.

The old woman gave a deathly, menacing stare. "If it's shelter you seek, I can provide." The girls shifted in their chairs, something about this woman put them at ease. Still fairly concerned they nodded and smiled.

The old woman grinned. "I too can provide undying love and success." She reached into her pocket and placed two locket on the table. One was in the shape of the sun, and another in the shape of a crescent moon. Judy reached for the crescent moon locket, and Vivan was left for the sun-shaped one.

The sisters put the locket on, and the old woman placed both hands on the table. Leaning over, she looked at them both and in a soft voice she muttered "I can promise you material, but loyalty I cannot promise." The old woman walked back to the bead curtain, and slowly pushed the beads away, as she pushed them she began to disappear into the darkly lit room behind. The girls grabbed their bags, clutched onto their coats, and walked to the door, and outside they went. As they walked back onto the beaten path, they spotted a train making its way to a train station. The girls ran and ran until they made it to the platform. The teller's booth seemingly closed.

The girls boarded the train and came to find they were the only passengers in their car. Expecting a ticket master to come back and check their ticket, the girls laid low in their seats almost on the floor. The ticket master never came. While Judy began to nod off to sleep, Vivan was busy furiously scratching and scribbling on a stack of papers in a manilla folder she took from her bag.

As daylight approached, the girls began to see the skyscrapers, the mansions in the hills surrounded by waving palm trees. Welcoming them into a new chapter in their lives. The train came to a stop at an underground station in downtown Los Angeles. As the girls walked off the train, they walked to the stairs. Never realizing anyone boarded the train or even got off. The girls made their way to the surface, talking of their wildest dreams as they surfaced. When they made it to the top, the two sisters took in everything around them: the hustle and bustle of cars passing by, a policeman's whistle, and men crowding a shoe shining cart. The city came busting to life.

The girls found a newspaper stand and put a coin in. Vivan picked up a newspaper and immediately looked for real estate listings they could afford with their meagre savings. After finding a one-bedroom apartment she let Judy know. Vivan expected the apartment to be run down, filled with holes and rodents, and on the wrong side of the tracks. Judy, thinking the best of the situation, decided to have hope.

After an hour of walking, and near-constant stopping for directions. The sisters approached the apartment complex, as they looked up at the building, they noticed a casting agency on the first floor. Ecstatic, and proud the girls rushed upstairs to the apartment, found the door, and let themselves in. The apartment was a dimly lit studio. Bricks peaking through the once patterned but now torn wallpaper.

Without a realtor's insight, Vivan rushed to the bathroom to freshen up. Leaving Judy at the door to bang furiously. "Let me in, I need to get ready too!" Judy cried. Vivan continued to freshen up, humming and singing to her favorite tune. Vivan opened the door fifteen minutes later and found Judy leaning against the wall. "I'm getting my break, I deserve it," Vivan muttered as she tossed the makeup bag to Judy. Judy rushed into the bathroom to freshen up and yelled out for Vivan to wait up.

Vivan had other plans and made her way downstairs to the casting agency. She expected, rows of other girls there waiting for their break, but was surprised when she tapped into the hallway. It was just her with a desolate row of chairs. At the end of the hallway was a single white door. As Vivan approached, the door began to creak open slowly. Cigar smoke pouring from the cracked door. At the sturdy wooden desk sat a large man, cigar in hand and a dim reading light reflecting on an ashtray.

In a smoker's voice, the man called out "Sit down dearie, welcome to the silver screen. This is all of your dreams, this is the place where they'll come true. I saw you go up to the apartment upstairs. But do tell, you came in with another young lady-where is she?" he said.

Vivan ignored the question and placed a manilla folder on the desk. Vivan handed the man a pen, "This is what I wrote, my sister helped a little. But not enough to get her share." As the man glimpsed over the pages, Vivan waited anxiously for his response, watching his face contort as the pages flew by. On the pages was a dialogue the girls wrote together, but now seemingly only Vivan did.

Now out of the bathroom, Judy looked around the cold, tattered apartment. Each step she took the wooden floorboards creaked, reminding her of home. Leaving her wishing for a marvelous home with marble floors. Judy walked downstairs and invited herself into the still empty lobby of the casting agency. At the end of the hall, she heard a girl's laugh-that girl being Vivan.

Vivan laughed and repeatedly thanked the gentleman. She was offered a part in a short television program. Judy, now excited and smiling, decided to walk as if she were on a cloud.

She made it to the end of the hallway before the door swung open. Nearly knocking her to the ground, the manilla folder flew in the hair and papers gently fell. As the papers fell, Judy made notice of scratched out parts of the pages, specifically the parts with her name. Vivan hurried to close the door and began picking up the papers. Not caring to sort them.

Judy now betrayed, bothered, and bewildered, headed to the apartment. Vivan continued with her day and she took herself out for lunch alone sitting at the counter of a diner, where she was joined by a row of girls, all secretaries. She started talking to them and started to feel a little bit better. Later, Judy alone in the apartment figured it would be best to straighten up a little. Judy swept the dust-covered floors, cleaned the once white but now yellow-tinted doors.

Judy found an old radio, she plugged it up in the kitchen and out poured a slow, sad trumpet, a somber tune. Judy opened a window, as she peered over the ledge –down below was a damp, dark, and isolated alleyway. The fire escape was missing a rail.

Months past and the sisters barely spoke, existing in the same sphere of the apartment. Judy found a job as a secretary and Vivan had sold their scripts and was starting to get bigger and bigger parts. The bigger the part, the more it irritated Judy. Vivan had become more and more arrogant

One evening around eight pm, Judy was sweeping the floor after a meagre dinner of a peanut butter sandwich. Vivan made her way back in, after some big dinner with a casting director, not caring to bring her sister anything. Not even a crumb. Vivan threw her shopping bags and coat to the floor, disturbing the dust pile Judy had swept. In the corner sitting contently on a hard wooden chair, Judy glanced out the window.

In a seemingly silent invitation, Vivan invited herself over to sit with Judy. Judy, now clutching the locket the old woman had given her, looked up at Vivan.

"You're an awful person," Judy said. Vivan looked down, trying to find it in herself to muster the courage to talk to her sister about the whole situation coldly looking at the floor.

"You've gotta make it one way or another," Vivan blurted out.

"That doesn't mean leaving me behind, we worked together," Judy snapped back.

"Teamwork doesn't get you anywhere here. Smell the flowers, success isn't always friendly," Vivan shouted.

"Not everyone succeeds, look at the moon—so bright tonight," Judy replied as she opened the window all the way. Pointing at the crescent-shaped moon, so bright in the sky she pulled Vivan closer. Vivan unknowingly peeked out the window, looking up at the luminescent moon. Vivan looked down at the rusted fire escape and a missing banister. Before Judy knew it, Vivan was on the fire escape.

As Vivan sat on the fire escape, Judy quickly closed the window. The once dirty window now was clear enough to look someone in the eye. Vivan banged on the window and pleaded for Judy's forgiveness.

The rusted nails on the fire escape began to give way, hearing the old metal creak Vivan pleaded more, and more but to no avail. Judy sat up from the chair and gave a blank look into Vivan's eyes.

After coming to Los Angeles for stardom, and to begin their lives. An unborn star was already beginning to burn out, its wax leaving trails and puddles. Finally, the last nail and bolt on the escape began to give out. Vivan pleaded, "I'll be loyal!" she screamed in one final attempt. Judy closed the blinds. As Vivan closed the blinds, the fire escape completely gave way. As the escape passed four stories and plunged into the damp concrete below—Vivan went with it. The sound of bones crushing, and metal bending played a dark symphony.

Loyalty I cannot promise.



Amber Stokes

BLACK CAKE

Culture to me is the memory,

The smells, and the taste,

My grandmother baking her black cake

Like she does every Christmas,

Her, letting me pour the rum in, and mixing the fruits in

She would let me dip my finger in just to get a taste

And it would always be bittersweet

The love she put into each cake as she bagged

And curled ribbon,

I remember how we would send off a cake to Jamaica

For family I had never met but she had known a life time a life ago,

For family that I probably will never met and she will never see again

Culture to me is the tears my grandmother would shed as she told stories

Of the childhood she had in Kingston with her brothers and sisters,

How her father would come home and give her a big hug only to turn and leave again,

Culture to me is my grandmother



PERSUASION/ ARGUMENT

Savannah Stewart

THE CASE OF ADNAN SYED

Defense's Opening

Good morning ladies and gentlemen of the jury, and also hello to the Min Lee family. My name is Savannah Stewart, and I am here to open the defense of the Hae Min Lee case. Today we will be discussing why Mr. Adnan Syed is not guilty of the murder of Hae Min Lee. First of all, an apology to the Min Lee family, I am so sorry for this tragic loss. Hae Min Lee was an intelligent, and kind-hearted young lady. We will set out to find who would kill an innocent young teenager?

What do we know? We know that Hae Min Lee was born on October 15th, 1980, born in Baltimore Maryland. Police state that she disappeared on January 13, 1999, and her body was discovered dead in Leakin Park on February 9, 1999. Her cause of death was manual strangulation. We know that Hae was a beautiful, responsible, intelligent, person.

We know she had friends and family that loved and cared about her but we also know she had boyfriends, in secret, that people may say aren't the best in people's eyes.

Adnan Syed is a Muslim-American man who was the ex-boyfriend of the late Ms. Hae Min Lee. Adnan was a good kid. Described as a community golden child, honor roll, track star, prom prince, led prayers at the mosque, EMT. Everyone thought Hae and Adnan were the dream couple. But perhaps there were people who got jealous and said Hae just had to go...but, WHO?

We'll show the answer to who would kill Hae, and frame Adnan and we will show you through three key pieces of evidence.

You will hear from an alibi witness who saw our defendant at the time of the murder. Our witness says on January 13, 1999, she recalled " seeing her classmate, Adnan Syed, in the library that afternoon, and chatting briefly with him about his recent breakup."

We will show you, an alternative suspect, much more likely to be responsible for Hae's murder. Now our suspect was a friend to Adnan. We'll call him #1 for now.

We asked #1 questions about what happened, and he had some stories that were kind of mixed up. We have the police interview tapes with him, in his tape, and you will hear how he describes how he buried Hae and how he knew where Hae's car was. Sound suspicious to you? I couldn't agree more.

We will also hear different stories #1. We will hear different versions of what happened and you will wonder why is #1 lying? We will prove to you why #1 is lying. He is lying because he is involved and when you see his lies, you will wonder what I wondered. Did #1 kill Hae?

We will prove how the State's case to support #1's lies is full of holes and inconsistencies. We will show you not just #1 as a suspect, but #2 and #3. Three suspects the police should have zoomed in on in their investigation. We will prove to you that Adnan is innocent with what we know, and what we know is the truth



Tariq Craig

THE CASE AGAINST ADNAN SYED

On January 13th of 1999 at approximately 2:30 in the afternoon, the young Baltimore teenager Hae Min Lee was brutally murdered by someone whom she trusted and loved. Eighteen year old Hae Min Lee was very friendly and kind hearted to anybody she met. The bright student was a part of the advanced placement program at Woodlawn High School. She was extremely scholarly, athletic, and responsible. In the months prior to her death, Hae Min Lee pursued a relationship with a student that went to her school named Adnan Syed. The two got together in the spring yet could not survive the dead of winter.

Adnan was often very aggressive and controlling toward Hae. You will recall witnesses that revealed that he never gave her space. We will remind you that he displayed overbearing and obsessive behaviors. Remember how Adnan would constantly page Hae when she spent time with others, and would be angry when she didn't respond quick

enough? Adnan was also secretive. He would also invite himself to her friends house any time she didn't page him and talk to him. He was able to hide his and He's relationship from his parents, whose strict Islamic faith forbade Adnan from having romantic involvement with anyone... especially an individual who didn't share his spiritual beliefs. Adnan led a double-life. The way in which he conducted himself in school and in his home were total opposites. So when Hae decided to break up with Adnan, he felt betrayed. Remember, he was heartbroken, he was angry. How could she have done this to him? How could she have thrown away all of the effort that he put into their relationship?

Good Morning ladies and gentlemen of the jury, today it will be discussed how Adnan Syed took advantage of young Hae Min Lee's trust and love for him. I ask you to remember. Remember how Adnan prayed on her. How a ride home after school transformed into him grabbing her, forcing her into the backseat, wrapping his hands around her throat, squeezing, squeezing, squeezing, until innocent Hae was left lifeless. Adnan made Hae feel secure, he subdued her, and strangled her to death.

There is an overwhelming amount of evidence suggesting that Adnan Syed murdered Hae Min Lee. You must hold him accountable for his actions. You must do what is right and consider the facts proving that Adnan is guilty of committing this heinous crime.

You must recall that AT&T cell phone records show a phone call between Adnan and a young woman named Nisha from Silver Spring, Maryland. This phone call correlates with Adnan's associate Jay Wilds' testimony that he and Adnan had spoken with Nisha prior to Adnan showing Jay Hae's body at 3:32 pm. The phone call lasted two minutes and twenty two seconds. This proves Adnan was with his phone and proves that he is lying, that he does remember the events of January 13th.

You will remember that two incoming calls from Jenn Pusateri to Adnan's cell phone at 7:09 pm and 7:16 pm place him in close proximity to cell towers in Leakin Park where Hae Min Lee's body was found. Remember that this also supports Jay's testimony that he and Adnan were burying Hae at that time. Remember also that Adnan asked Hae for a ride afters chool which can be corroborated by classmates at the time.

Also, take into consideration the fact that Jay provided the Baltimore Police Department with the location of Hae Min Lee's missing car. Adnan's fingerprints were all over Hae's car.

Adnan Syed didn't just happen to forget the events that took place on January 13th of 1999.

It clearly was not a normal day. How could you not have an alibi for the day that the police call you asking if you'd seen your missing ex-girlfriend? How could you not try to make contact with her? The events that occurred on January 13th were not coincidental.

Adnan was strategic and calculated while Hae was unassuming and victimized. Thank you for your time and your patience.

Zayiquan Wallace

ROOM 101

The two things that I would want removed from the world and thrown into Room 101 permanently are raccoons. Raccoons really used to anger me when they would go inside of my trash cans at night and look for food. Not just normally looking for food but the mess these critters make. It would be trash all around the driveway and a horrible smell from the trash all over the place and I was the one who had to go and always clean it up. I don't think we need raccoons on earth because they attack people. They are like mini robbers pulling a heist.

I just saw one a couple of weeks ago standing beside my trash cans when I was about to pull them out so the garbage people can get them. Well, what I did was turn right back around and went straight into the house. I was not going anywhere near those raccoons. I was disgusted. He was standing there staring at me, and if I was to get close to it . . . it was gonna attack me.

Raccoons are also well known vandals. They destroy lawns and gardens by digging holes into them just to look for food. Most raccoons have over three diseases, one we all know about which is rabies. Room 101, do you think raccoons should exist? Because I sure don't, they are doing nothing to contribute to the world. Some people may think they're cute with those little faces and their stripes. But those stripes are a warning. Don't be fooled. They disgust me and make me build a lot of anger when they cause a mess outside of my house. Do raccoons help clean garbage? No. In fact there's one outside right now. Not again! Get off that garbage can! Not again! Not again! Not again! Not again! There's trash in the driveway!



Raniya Ball

ROOM 101

People who lie always end up getting caught in the end. People who lie about little things to avoid consequences. People who try to lie their way out of situations. People who lie to protect someone. These are all examples of what people lie for. I demand, I beg, I ask people to agree with me that liars ruin things for people because it makes people lose trust in each other because you wouldn't know if they're telling the truth or lying. Let's put liars in Room 101.

My first problem with liars are those who literally lie over the dumbest things and then become a hypocrite when someone does the same to them. Don't you agree that lying is unnecessary? Imagine, you're talking to someone and they tell you something, and you ask the person that it happened to and they lie, and you already know the truth. You already know that that person is lying, but you don't want to bust out the person that told you with evidence that you know the truth because you don't want to ruin that friendship too. So, you begin to ask questions and they start acting suspicious but because you don't want to bust your friend out you'll be quiet and listen to the lies they're telling you, and just think about other things they might've lied to you about while trying to make yourself seem like you hadn't known. After they say what they have to say, you have to be the one that acts like you understand and you don't have any problems about what they're saying. Suddenly you're lying. Does that sound like something you'll want to keep doing?

My second problem with liars is when people lie to avoid getting themselves in some trouble. Since when has it been okay to lie about something you did, that can lead to serious trouble? If you're bold enough to cause or make trouble you should be bold enough to tell the truth, because in the end you might get caught and it'll cause even more trouble. When you get consequences they make it seem like you're doing something wrong. It's like people can't bear telling the truth for once or owning up to things they did .

Finally my last reason on why lying should be banned is because it irritates me and causes me not to have trust in anyone because I wouldn't know if it's the truth or not. Lying always messes up people who genuinely tell the truth and every time those "true" people feel like they're being lied to they're actually telling you the truth. We become suspicious of the truth even when it is true. We are not people who don't want to trust people, we are just now used to people lying. When we actually listen and care and my facial expression says, "Stop lying or I don't even want to hear it anymore," why would you keep the lie going? Trying to let me know why you said what you said is ok, I'll probably understand, but constantly lying when I ask something isn't right.

I don't care to hear from you

You had your chance

You told me lies instead of being true

I may forgive but I won't forget

This damage you've caused is hard to undo

Letting you go is something I've had to get use to

When I felt that fire I should've knew

Now it's your turn

I hate liars, people just like you.

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LITERARY ANALYSIS

Dalia Short

IDENTITY IN 'ROOTS' AND 'BLACK MEN IN PUBLIC SPACES'

People are mostly judged by society on their appearance and not by who they really are. In the personal essays, 'Black Men in Public Spaces' by Brent Staples and 'Roots' by Tatu Yamato, the two narrators are often judged and mistreated by society and the environment based on their heritage and how they look. Both authors use outer conflict, character to character relationships, and flashbacks to show how their identities alter and change because of society.

Outer conflict is used in Black Men in Public Spaces and Roots. This is used to describe how the two characters had to adjust to the environment and the way society is towards them. For example, in Black Men in Public Spaces, Brent often gets looked at the

wrong and suspicious way. He changes actions and appearances so that he won't get misjudged.

"One day, rushing into the office of a magazine I was writing for with a deadline story in hand, I was mistaken for a burglar. I now take precautions to make myself less threatening." Staples shows how he knows that he cannot change the way people look at him, but he tries to make adjustments so that he won't get mistaken for somebody else in a bad way again. In *Roots*, Tatsu basically experiences discrimination. "As I try to take my seat, one of the kids slides over and puts out his arm to bar my way. With a nasty little hateful facial expression he tells me, 'You can't sit there.' 'But... why not? Nobody's sitting here. You already got your seat.' 'We don't want no half breeds sitting here.'" This shows how society doesn't judge a person on who they really are, but how they look and where they come from. Outer conflict creates change in both of the narrators characters.

Flashbacks are also used in the two essays "Black Men in Public Spaces" and "Roots" This is used to describe how the characters look back on their experiences. For example, in *Black Men in Public Spaces*, Staples explains a time where a girl was basically scared of him because of the way he looked. According to the text it states, "As I swung onto the avenue behind her, there seemed to be a discrete, uninflamatory distance between us. Not so. She cast back a worried glance. To her, the youngish black man-- a broad six feet two inches with a beard and billowing hair, both hands shoved into the pockets of a bulky military jacket -- seemed menacingly close." This shows how Brent was being normal and felt like he didn't do anything wrong, because he didn't, but the girl on the other hand felt threatened. An example in *Roots* was when Tatsu was talking about how he wanted his hair a certain way when he was a baby. He wanted his to look like his father, who is Japanese. In the text it states, "...I hoped that my hair would tell me which way to "swing", and even more secretly, I hoped it would swing toward the brown-black straightness of my faher's Japanese head." This proves how Yamato looks back and wishes his hair was straight instead of kinky and nappy.

Lastly, the conflict man vs self was also used in the two essays. In *Black Men in Public Spaces*, Brent realized what he had come into observing the changes in the environment. The passage states, "I was twenty-two years old, a graduate student newly arrived at the University of Chicago. It was in the echo of that terrified woman's footfalls that I began to know the unwieldy inheritance I'd come into -- the ability to alter public space in ugly ways." Staples witnesses how society has an impact on a person's life. In *Roots*, Yamato talks about how he becomes confident in who he really is. In the text it states, "Yeah, so see,

I wanted people to just know-- to feel uneasy as I walked around with my brown skin beneath a head of flowing samurai hair, messing with their conceptions of race. This proves how Tatsu talks himself into his heritage despite what anyone else thinks of him.

Both Staples and Yamato had a lot of judgment towards them. Staples is an African American man in a messed up environment where they accuse him of things because of the way he looks. Staples had to change his clothes and be more aware of his surroundings, so that he won't get mistaken in the wrong ways. Yamato was African American and Japanese. He often was discriminated against because discriminated because of his heritage and people did not want him around because he was "mixed." Now, Yamato has built up confidence to not care about what others think about him or what they have to say. He knows where he comes from and what he is, so he is not worried about judgmental things towards him.



Jeniya Moore

LOVE IN LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE

"No, Papa, I am going to marry with a great love for Tita that will never die."

A wild and intense love takes the central theme in the novel, *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel, between the confused lover Tita and her beau, Pedro. While Esquivel is exploring this wild love, she also uses the novel to explore motherly love, denied love, and

of course passionate love. Esquivel explores the theme of love through literary devices: character-character relationships, motif, and magical realism.

In the novel, the author expresses different types of love between character relationships. One of the types of love is motherly love. In the chapter published as 'February,' Tita was hurt that the man she loved was going to be marrying her sister and the worst part about it was that her mother made her prepare the whole meal as punishment. So, then Nacha—, the cook, gave Tita the comfort that she needed from her mother. "And so, arms around each other, Nacha and Tita wept until there were no more tears in Tita's eyes." This affects Tita later on in the novel because she has a bond with Nacha that nobody else has. Tita looks at Nacha as if she was her mother because she gave her the love that her mother didn't. The literary device that Esquivel uses was character-character relationship to express that love is the central theme.

Esquivel also expresses love using motifs, the use of symbolic imagery recurring in the text. Another type of love is brought up in the novel—denied love. In the chapter March, Gertrudis, one of Tita's sister's, ran away with a soldier on horseback, naked. Tita wonders if she is now happy or whether she is lonely. "She worried that Gertrudis was cold, as cold as she was, but then she decided, no, she wasn't. Most likely she was near a fire, in the arms of her man, and that would surely warm her." This is considered denied love because Tita wants to do the same thing her sister, Gertrudis did. She wants to run away with Pedro and just fall in love but she can't because her mother, Mama Elena wouldn't allow them to be together. This changes Tita later on in the novel because she starts to hate her mother even more than she did and she would start to sneak around with Pedro. The literary device the author used was motif and the motif was heat, to express the love that Gertrudis is feeling and the love that Tita wants.

The author, Laura Esquivel also expresses the theme of love by using literary devices character-character relationship and motif. Which brought up another type of love called secure love. For example in the chapter labeled July, Tita returned to the ranch to care for her mother. Her mother, Mama Elena didn't appreciate anything Tita did for her, it was like she was always doing something wrong. Tita was starting to regret coming back to the ranch but there was a little moment that she had with John, the family doctor. Tita was kind of dating John at this time and the little moment they had lifted her spirits. In the novel it states "John held her in his arms just long enough to keep her from falling. His warm embrace saved Tita from freezing." This is considered secure love because secure means to be fixed or attached and when John came along and held her for just a second it fixed

everything for Tita. She wanted to just leave and let her mother deal with everything herself but, that little moment helped her push through.

Esquivel also expresses the theme love by using a literary device called magical realism. This literary movement brought up a different type called passionate love. For example in the last chapter, December, Tita and Pedro finally have a moment to be only with each other, a moment to make love freely. So, they start to get intimate and then Tita realizes that if a strong emotion lights up all the candles in their bodies, then their souls will return to the place it came from and would leave the body lifeless. Tita doesn't want to die, she wanted to be able to be with Pedro for a long time. "For the first time in their lives, Tita and Pedro could make love freely . . .she didn't want to die. She wanted to explore these emotions many more times." This is considered passionate love because Tita and Pedro are making love freely for the first time and a form of passionate love is by showing intense sexual love. This affected Tita later on in the novel because even though she was able to slow her heartbeat down, Pedro couldn't and he died making passionate love to Tita. Soon after that Tita killed herself by eating a box of candles that John gave her, to put fuel in her body and then she started to think about the "moving memories" of Pedro. Shortly after that, all of the candles ignited a fire in her body; burning the ranch down.. Esquivel uses magical realism because she was trying to make that moment seem very special and she added things that could never happen in real life. The author wanted the reader to see the love between the characters; she wanted us to see how important love was in the novel.

Laura Esquivel explores the central theme of love in so many different ways. She also explores these different types of love using literary devices, character-character relationships, motif, and magical realism. Throughout the whole novel the author covered a different type of love with different characters. Just to prove that love is what makes this novel flow; this novel was made to express the love that one receives in the kitchen and it also shows what love was denied.

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“TYPES OF LOVE IN LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE.”

“Within it lies the secret of love, but it will never be penetrated, and all because it wouldn't be proper.”

“Like Water for Chocolate” by Laura Esquivel, is about a girl named Tita who is bound by her family tradition. That her mother chose to carry that makes sure she is to not marry anyone because she is the youngest and has to take care of her mother. But Tita falls in love with a man named Pedro. Since she cannot marry he instead chooses her sister in hopes he can still be with her. But throughout the book, when is this going on Esquivel shows different types of love. The author is trying to convey that there are different types of ways to love someone and she does this through; motif, character to character relationship, and magical realism.

Motif is shown in “Like Water for Chocolates” as hot and cold. Hot means to love and passion. Then cold which means loneliness. In this part, the narrator was talking about Tita and how it would be wrong to be in love with Pedro. “And now she had to give him up. it wasn't decent to desire her sister's future husband...She had to get rid of that Terrible sensation of cold.”(19) This quote shows denied love for what it felt to Tita to see her sister and Pedro the person she loves to get married. This shows in the book how Tita starts to change little by little.

The next literary device used to show a type of love is character to character relationship. The most important relationship is between Tita and the cook, Nacha as it is the relationship that floats above the rest that Tita loves the most. Nacha acts like Tita's real mom since she has taken care of her since birth. In this section, Nacha has died and the reader sees what Tita thinks about her. “Her unfortunate death had left Tita in a very deep depression. With Nacha dead she was completely alone. It was as if her real mother had died.”(48) This shows motherly love between Nacha and Tita. When Nacha died Tita felt alone like a part of her missing this will change Tita because she still feels and sees Nacha is still there and around her like a ghost.

The last literary element that is used is magical realism. Magical realism is used when Tita is cooking like her emotions go into the cooking. Tita has cooked for her niece's wedding and everyone eats a part of the cake when something strange happens. "Again Gertrudis was the first to feel the symptoms... Everyone else, including the ranch hands, was making mad passionate love, whenever they had happened to end up."(241) This shows passionate love between everybody that went to Esperanza and John's son's wedding. In the last part of the book, they show Esperanza getting married to John's son and Tita made the cake like she did in February but had a happy tone with it. This was needed in the book because it showed how Tita became sad from not having love, but in the end of the novel she is happy due to her love with Pedro and shows hows she developed as a character.

Motif, character- character relationship, and magical realism help to show different types of love in Like Water for Chocolate. In the beginning of the novel, Tita was lonely and sad and felt like her real mother was against her because she was happy. She only had Nacha until she dies and then is extremely lonely until she learns about the different types of love and she learns to be happy and finally to gather with the person she loves.

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