

## **SETHE CHARACTERIZATION (Drama):**

### **1. If the characters are flat, what are their dominant traits? What is their function in the plot? How do they help establish the conflicts in the plot?**

Sethe is a round dynamic character because Beloved's presence changes Sethe. Sethe has many layers to her. On the surface, she seems crazy and unhinged but as we dig deeper into her personality and her motivations, we began to understand how adversely she views the white society and how she never wants to go back to slavery again because of the horrors she had to endure. Sethe has many internal conflict throughout the work. She wants to move forward with Paul D but she is still haunted by her past, shown through the constant presence of Beloved throughout the novel.

### **2. If the characters are dynamic, how do they change—from what to what?**

Sethe is dynamic because her personality changes. In the beginning, she is headstrong and won't change her beliefs for anyone, but after Beloved is introduced and realizes that she is the reincarnation of her daughter, she becomes more docile in trying to reconcile with the murder, such as how she gives Beloved all her food, starving herself to death in an attempt to make amends for what she has done.

### **3. If they are static, do their traits intensify or become clearer as the play moves on?**

Sethe is not a static character, she is a dramatic character that changes from a woman that rejects her past, to freed woman because Beloved, who represents slavery, is banished showing that she can finally move on with her life.

### **4. If the characters are round, what can you learn from the subtext of the play about their inner states?**

*"once Sethe saw it, fingered it and closed her eyes for a long time, the two of them cut Denver out of the games. ... Games her mother loved so well she took to going to work later and later each day until the predictable happened: Sawyer told her not to come back. And instead of looking for another job, Sethe played all the harder with Beloved ..."*

The readers see a gradual change in Sethe as she begins to ignore everything and everyone around her because she became so consumed by trying to love Beloved that she starts to leave out Denver, only caring for Beloved like feeding her most of the food and tending to her every needs. Sethe to cut Denver out of the games, in which Sethe "saw it, fingered it [the scar on Beloved's chin] and closed her eyes for a long time", would represent a turning point in which Sethe sees the damage that she has given Beloved, an actual tangible scar. When she finally sees the scar, Sethe slowly turns into the desperate person that wants Beloved's approval and forgiveness, seen when she sacrifices her job because she wants to please Beloved so much that she gives up her job and "played all the harder with Beloved" emphasize the turning point of Sethe's character. She disregards work which is described as going to "work later and later" instead of just going to "work later" because the author wants to emphasize the slow process that Sethe goes through which leads up to the significant response of Sawyer, the person hiring Sethe. Instead of firing her right away, Sethe is fired when "until the predictable happened".

### **5. What "masks" are the characters wearing? Who is hiding what from whom? When are the masks removed? What causes their removal, and what are the results?**

Sethe's mask is that she wore a "mask with mercifully punched out eyes" which meant that Sethe did not show her true feelings to the world instead she tried to cover up her emotions and keep a strong front

up which is a recurring theme because Sethe also tries to never appear weak in front of her neighbors or anybody else. Also Paul D mentions her eyes against as “mercifully punched out” which isn’t meant to be taken literally but is meant to portray that they are empty and lifeless. Her eyes are also described as “two wells” which shows that they were deep and endless to look into and it could entrap someone to stare at them for so long but it also help an “emptiness” that was discerning. This shows that Sethe’s mask with “mercifully punched out eyes” portrayed her as empty and lonely and trying to be strong for the world but instead showed how young and vulnerable she was by not letting anyone in. Sethe’s mask is removed

**6. How would you play a particular character if you were the actor? What physical devices would you use? If you were to act these characters, how would you present yourself physically to convey these qualities?**

Sethe is described as having eyes that are “two wells” or “mercifully punched out” which basically represents how dead her eyes are and how they represent no life whatsoever in them so if I were to play Sethe I would make my eyes seem sad, lonely, or as empty as possible. Physically, I would dress in clothing that is simple and nondescript because Sethe is a poor former slave and it is shown in the book that she never wore buttons so simple clothing is needed in order to keep up the facade of being Sethe. I would also be healthy looking in the beginning but I would slowly look small and more frail as the movie progressed because Beloved is supposed to be sucking the life out of Sethe like the succubus she is.

***Thinking on Paper About Characterization***

**1. List the character traits of each major character.**

The first hint that we get of Sethe’s character is from an omniscient narrator’s point of view on how Sethe treats Baby Suggs, “*And Sethe would oblige her with anything from fabric to her own tongue.*” This is meant to show that Sethe is extremely giving to those she deems close to her as she would give anything to her husband’s wife in order to placate her and when Beloved is taking over the house, she is seen giving Beloved all of the food and having the life sucked out of her rather than take something away from her beloved child. “*You forgetting how little it is,*” said her mother.

*"She wasn't even two years old when she died. Too little to understand. Too little to talk much even."*

*"Maybe she don't want to understand," said Denver.*

*"Maybe. But if she'd only come, I could make it clear to her."*

This conversation is between Denver and Sethe about Beloved’s ghost and shows Sethe’s stubborn love towards her daughters because although Beloved is raising Hell, she still defends her against Denver’s criticism. The last line in the conversation shows that Sethe still truly regrets the fact that she had to kill Beloved which shows Sethe’s inextinguishable love to her children which is one of her most important characteristics.

**2. List the devices, such as dress, names, and gestures that help establish the traits of a character.**

When Sethe went to the carnival she “*was badly dressed for the heat, but this being her first social outing in eighteen years, she felt obliged to wear her one good dress, heavy as it was, and a hat. Certainly a hat. She didn't want to meet Lady Jones or Ella with her head wrapped like she was going to work.*”

It shows that Sethe is more concerned with how she appears to the community than she should be. She is extremely self-conscious on how she wants to present herself on her first outing in over a decade. However, later Sethe, “*was embarrassed at being dressed for church. The others, ahead and*

*behind them, would think she was putting on airs, letting them know that she was different because she lived in a house with two stories; tougher, because she could do and survive things they believed she should neither do nor survive.*” This section is where Sethe realizes that she doesn’t need to put on a façade for the community and all she needs to do instead is to enjoy the simple moments with the people she cares about. While she believes that the community shuns her because she has more material objects than they do, she is setting herself up for failure because she tries too hard and isn’t familiar with proper social conduct.

### **3. Describe in detail the traits of a complex character, especially contradictory and seemingly inexplicable traits.**

*“In the very teeth of winter and Sethe, her eyes fever bright, was plotting a garden of vegetables and flowers--talking, talking about what colors it would have. She played with Beloved’s hair, braiding, puffing, tying, oiling it until it made Denver nervous to watch her.”* Morrison also uses a list of actions in the last sentence of this quote because she wants to show the readers the different actions that Sethe takes on Beloved’s hair alone, list four things in total. The fact that Denver is “nervous” from watching her also gives information to the reader because Denver’s personality is not one that is made easily nervous especially from actions by her mother whose she feels some hostility towards. Morrison describes Sethe in this quote as having “eyes fever bright” because she wants to convey the hyper mental state that Sethe is in.

*“Then the mood changed and the arguments began. Slowly at first. A complaint from Beloved, an apology from Sethe. A reduction of pleasure at some special effort the older woman made. Wasn’t it too cold to stay outside? Beloved gave a look that said, So what? Was it past bedtime, the light no good for sewing? Beloved didn’t move; said, “Do it,” and Sethe complied.”*

In this quote, we can see a typical mother-daughter relationship that starts to develop between Beloved and Sethe. However, more importantly, we can see how Beloved starts to take advantage of Sethe because she cannot say no to Beloved no matter what and starts to give up her own food and even her own life in order to appease Beloved which is a direct contrast to her aloof behavior from before.

### **4. Explain a character’s motivations for doing the things he or she does. Focus especially on what the character seems to want. Explain the situations from which the character’s motivations seem to emerge.**

Sethe tried to detach her and her family from slavery by escaping from the plantation known as “Sweet Home” because she doesn’t want her children to grow up in slavery which prompts her to try and kill her children off when schoolteacher finds her family at 124. She kills them because she views her children as an extension of herself and believes that because she brought them into the world, only she can take them out of it. She also showers Beloved with affection when she figures out that Beloved is her daughter because she wants to show her that she loved her dearly and only killed her because she didn’t want her to go back to “Sweet Home” and be subjected to the horror known as slavery. *“She would trade places any day. Give up her life, every minute and hour of it, to take back just one of Beloved’s tears. Did she know it hurt her when mosquitoes bit her baby? That to leave her on the ground to run into the big house drove her crazy?”*

**5. Describe the strategies a character devises for getting what he or she wants. Explain how effective those strategies are.**

*“Ten minutes for seven letters. With another ten could she have gotten "Dearly" too? She had not thought to ask him and it bothered her still that it might have been possible--that for twenty minutes, a half hour, say, she could have had the whole thing, every word she heard the preacher say at the funeral (and all there was to say, surely) engraved on her baby's headstone: Dearly Beloved. But what she got, settled for, was the one word that mattered. She thought it would be enough, rutting among the headstones with the engraver, his young son looking on, the anger in his face so old; the appetite in it quite new. That should certainly be enough. Enough to answer one more preacher, one more abolitionist and a town full of disgust.”*

Sethe is remembering how she slept with the engraver so that she could have “Beloved” engraved on her deceased baby’s tombstone. She had to do this in order to get the engraving on the gravestone because she is not a wealthy woman and the only way that she could pay for the engraving was to sleep with the man and while she does get the engraving done it is dehumanizing because of the way Sethe describes it as “rutting” which is a verb used mostly when describing pigs. This is also a shameful point in Sethe’s life because the immoral act was viewed by the engraver’s son. “the anger in his face so old; the appetite in it quite new.” Sethe also remembers this later when she realizes that she could have gotten “Dearly Beloved” written if she had only thought to ask showing that she does not regret her actions if it meant that it was for her beloved child.

**6. Describe the miscalculations a character makes and the effect they have.**

Sethe miscalculates how horrified the schoolteacher would be when he realized what she would do in order to protect her children, because she assumed that she would have to kill all of her children and then herself to escape slavery but the schoolteacher immediately left when he realized how far Sethe was willing to go in order to not be brought back so she only killed one of her daughters and then had to live with the guilt would forever be haunted by it as shown by Beloved, both as a ghost and a reincarnated human. This causes Sethe to feel immensely guilty and she begins to give up her life to feed Beloved’s in repentance shown through Beloved’s succubus like nature.

**7. Summarize how a character intensifies, changes, or comes into sharper focus for the audience. Trace the intensification, change, or focus through each major unit of the play. Explain what causes it.**

*“Looking, in fact acting, like a girl instead of the quiet, queenly woman Denver had known all her life. The one who never looked away, who when a man got stomped to death by a mare right in front of Sawyer's restaurant did not look away; and when a sow began eating her own litter did not look away then either. And when the baby's spirit picked up Here Boy and slammed him into the wall hard enough to break two of his legs and dislocate his eye, so hard he went into convulsions and chewed up his tongue, still her mother had not looked away. She had taken a hammer, knocked the dog unconscious, wiped away the blood and saliva, pushed his eye back in his head and set his leg bones. He recovered, mute and off-balance, more because of his untrustworthy eye than his bent legs, and winter, summer, drizzle or dry, nothing could persuade him to enter the house again.”* This paragraph gives commentary on Sethe through Denver’s point of view and shows that Denver has seen Sethe as a “quiet, queenly woman” all of her life rather than the joyful girl she is with Paul D or the high strung psychopath the rest of the town views her as. This shows that Denver respects her mother immensely and is awed by her tolerance. She

doesn't flinch in the face of death and simply chooses the best way for things to survive and views nature taking its course through cold eyes as seen when she sees the sow eat her own litter. This shows that something has mutated her from the original glittering iron eyed girl that Paul D knew because in the time that Paul D was gone she has become more cold hearted but it could also be seen as she is choosing what she believes is right for surviving which would prove how slavery changed her and forced her to become less humane. However, once Beloved arrives and Sethe realizes that she has a chance to reconcile with her once lost daughter she allows her to take, *"the best of everything--first. The best chair, the biggest piece, the prettiest plate, the brightest ribbon for her hair, and the more she took, the more Sethe began to talk, explain, describe how much she had suffered, been through, for her children, waving away flies in grape arbors, crawling on her knees to a lean-to. None of which made the impression it was supposed to."* The use of the long compound sentence brings out the effect of Beloved's selfish nature in which she takes up everything that Sethe has to offer and Sethe allows her to because she is full of guilt from killing her daughter and wants to make up for it and Beloved takes full advantage of it by accusing, *"her of leaving her behind. Of not being nice to her, not smiling at her. She said they were the same, had the same face, how could she have left her? And Sethe cried, saying she never did, or meant to---that she had to get them out, away, that she had the milk all the time and had the money too for the stone but not enough. That her plan was always that they would all be together on the other side, forever.* Beloved guilt trips Sethe into thinking that she wasn't a good mother for "leaving her behind." and we finally see Sethe's vulnerable state because she cannot believe how her actions were viewed by her family because she thought that they were the best course of action and cannot accept that Beloved will never forgive her for this and wants to spend all of her time to try and get her to accept her and love her again.

**8. Summarize a scene in which a major character faces a crisis. Explain what we learn about the character from the character's words and actions.**

*"I believe this baby's ma'am is gonna die in wild onions on the bloody side of the Ohio River." That's what was on her mind and what she told Denver. Her exact words. And it didn't seem such a bad idea, all in all, in view of the step she would not have to take, but the thought of herself stretched out dead while the little antelope lived on--an hour? a day? a day and a night?--in her lifeless body grieved her so she made the groan that made the person walking on a path not ten yards away halt and stand right still. Sethe had not heard the walking, but suddenly she heard the standing still and then she smelled the hair. The voice, saying, "Who's in there?" was all she needed to know that she was about to be discovered by a white boy. That he too had mossy teeth, an appetite. That on a ridge of pine near the Ohio River, trying to get to her three children, one of whom was starving for the food she carried; that after her husband had disappeared; that after her milk had been stolen, her back pulped, her children orphaned, she was not to have an easeful death. No. She told Denver that a something came up out of the earth into her—like a freezing, but moving too, like jaws inside. "Look like I was just cold jaws grinding," she said. Suddenly she was eager for his eyes, to bite into them; to gnaw his cheek. "I was hungry," she told Denver, "just as hungry as I could be for his eyes. I couldn't wait."*

Sethe is determined to continue on her journey to Georgia, not for herself, but for her daughter as shown in the text where she is seen willing to give up and die among the wild onions but fears her unborn child living in her stomach only to die because of her weakness. In this section, Sethe is given animalistic tendencies because she "smells" the hair of the person coming towards her and this is animalistic because she is using her senses rather than her voice to find the person coming for her. Also, she makes a reference to white men with "mossy teeth" which is a reference to anyone with bad intentions because

Sethe fears white men because of how the nephews subjected her to rape and how they used her breasts which were meant to sustain her child and instead turned her into an animal that was not yet milked. This section shows how Sethe responds to harsh conditions because her fear for the white men that she is anticipating causes a change over her which can best be described as dehumanization because she loses her human reasoning and instead seems to only focus on killing the person that poses a threat to her and her children.

**9. Summarize a scene in which a major character has a startling or affecting revelation. Explain what the revelation is, what causes it, and its effect on the character's future.**

*There was no entry now. No crack or crevice available. She had taken pains to keep them out, but knew full well that at any moment they could rock her, rip her from her moorings, send the birds twittering back into her hair... All news of them was rot... All news of them should have stopped with the birds in her hair.*

Sethe talks about how she has protected herself mentally from what the whites have done to her. She sees herself as an impenetrable wall that has not been breached. She talks about the “pains” she has to take which refers to the murder of her children. As she talks about how she could return to the slave life, Sethe describes the slave life as savage and wild with “the birds twittering back into her hair.” We get a sense of Sethe’s disgusted attitude towards the whites and slavery as she describes how it “rip[s] her from her moorings,” or how she is torn away from her family. Sethe continues to explain her thoughts about whites with comments of how their actions were “rot[ten]” and she includes how their actions weren’t really news, especially when there were so many more important news like the “birds in her hair” or the jungle of slavery.

**10. Explain how you would portray one of the characters in an important scene. Show how your performance would reveal the character's inner state.**

*“I am full God damn it of two boys with mossy teeth, one sucking on my breast the other holding me down, their book-reading teacher watching and writing it up. I am still full of that, God damn it, I can't go back and add more. Add my husband to it, watching, above me in the loft--hiding close by--the one place he thought no one would look for him, looking down on what I couldn't look at all. And not stopping them--looking and letting it happen.... There is also my husband squatting by the churn smearing the butter as well as its clabber all over his face because the milk they took is on his mind.”*

Sethe is angrily trying to stop conjuring memories into her consciousness causing her to become frustrated and angry as shown through the usage of “God damn it.” So when portraying Sethe in this scene we would show the raw anger in her eyes and her trembling in an insatiable rage which she feels towards the nephews or any boys with “mossy teeth” The fact that she remembers the nephews nursing from her and stealing her milk shows how traumatizing it was to her and to show that trauma we would also add unshed tears in her eyes and a hidden horror.

**11. Explain the relationship a major character has with the other major characters. Describe the alliances and conflicts the character has with the other characters. Describe the attitudes the character has toward the other characters and their attitudes toward him or her.**

**Sethe & Paul D:** They have known each other the entire duration of the novel, more specifically after she arrives in Sweet Home. Paul D represents change to Sethe, something that she desperately wants, but cannot fully embrace the change because of the constant presence of Beloved. She initially presumes

that Paul D chases out Beloved, when the ghost was chased out, but the reincarnation of Beloved puts a strain on their relationship. This becomes so bad because Paul D actually leaves the house when he realizes that Sethe choose Beloved over him, and only returns in the last part of the novel when Sethe is bedridden and barely talks to anyone because he can finally re-enter the house without guilt. Beloved is finally gone, the one that he had sex with. Paul D was the only one to fully understand her for who she is because she knew how bad slavery and knew her back before she was a wide-eyed open girl, before she was twisted by slavery.

**Sethe & Denver:** Sethe loves Denver fiercely, showing that through the constant protection of Denver, whether it be through her words or actions. She is constantly defending Denver from criticism, seen when Paul D was upset at Denver's rudeness and although Sethe did not accept Denver's rudeness, she still sought to protect her from Paul D's harsh words.

*"Your girl, Denver. Seems to me she's of a different mind."*

*"Why you say that?"*

*"She's got a waiting way about her. Something she's expecting and it ain't me."*

*"I don't know what it could be."*

*"Well, whatever it is, she believes I'm interrupting it."*

*"Don't worry about her. She's a charmed child. From the beginning."*

*"Is that right?"*

*"Uh huh. Nothing bad can happen to her. Look at it. Everybody I knew dead or gone or dead and gone. Not her. Not my Denver."*

Although the two have a typical mother daughter relationship, Denver feel resentment for her mother who has kept her from society, because, *"When she got out of jail and made no gesture toward anybody, and lived as though she were alone, Ella junked her and wouldn't give her the time of day."*

. She also worries about her past and how Sethe almost killed all of her children. She fears that her mother might succumb to her feral desires and constantly fears for her life, which is ironic because mothers usually protects their children rather than induce fear.

**Sethe & townfolk:** Initially, they viewed her as kin because they are all colored people, but the event, which caused Sethe to go mad and nearly kill all her children rose doubts in the townfolk about whether they could truly trust Sethe because the only things they knew about her was that she had four children. They did know where she came from or who she really was. Additionally, her one first month was filled with such festivities that everyone became jealous. Sethe did not help to quell these doubts because she constantly isolated herself from society and refused any help from the townspeople, causing a volatile relationship between her and who she viewed as the others.

**Sethe & Baby Suggs:** Baby Suggs is the moral center of the book and she is a foil for Sethe because where Sethe is completely broken by slavery, Baby Suggs is freed from it and is able to try and help her. Baby Suggs is one of the people present when Sethe goes awol and tries to kill her child so they won't be brought back to slavery by the schoolteacher and Baby Suggs is the one who tires to rescue Denver from Sethe trying to feed her while being covered in her dead daughter's blood, *"When she came back, Sethe was aiming a bloody nipple into the baby's mouth. Baby Suggs slammed her fist on the table and shouted, "Clean up! Clean yourself up!" They fought then. Like rivals over the heart of the loved, they fought. Each struggling for the nursing child. Baby Suggs lost when she slipped in a red puddle and fell. So Denver took her mother's milk right along with the blood of her sister."* (Page 179) Despite these actions Baby Suggs is able to accept Sethe as her child and willingly goes into exile with her when the townfolk start to look at them with disapproving eyes for their success and Sethe's actions. This shows

how Baby Suggs never lost faith in Sethe even though she might have disagreed with her actions.

**Sethe & Beloved:** Sethe and Beloved have a very dysfunctional relationship because Beloved is a succubus that is feeding off of Sethe's life and takes advantage of her while Sethe loves Beloved unconditionally and feels immensely guilty for killing her daughter even if it was to prevent them from being brought back into slavery. A quote that shows Beloved's succubus-like nature is "*Sethe's eyes bright but dead, alert but vacant, paying attention to everything about Beloved--her lineless palms, her forehead, the smile under her jaw, crooked and much too long--everything except her basket-fat stomach.*" Although Sethe's eyes are "bright" because she is happy that she can serve Beloved, her eyes are also "dead" because she has not been eating properly or taking care of herself properly because she is serving Beloved. The author describes Sethe's eyes also as "alert" because she wants to be able to serve Beloved properly and is paying close attention to her. "Vacant" is another descriptor because she is left with little energy; Sethe has used it all to serve Beloved wholeheartedly. However, this sentence is ended the apparently more important fact that she loves Beloved because of the way this part is describe, with words that convey the love that she sees. The author mentions that "everything [is looked at] except her basket-fat stomach", meaning that Sethe doesn't literally look at her stomach, but that she is also not seeing what the stomach represents. The basket-fat stomach is proof of the fact that Beloved is eating everything that Sethe has. Sethe's adoration blinds her to the fact the Beloved is fatter than what she should be. Beloved is also a constant reminder of Sethe's past and is supposed to symbolize slavery because she haunts every character but haunts Sethe the most because Sethe could never forget the fact that she killed her daughter and although she acknowledges that it was necessary at the time, she spends all of her time remembering that moment and has stopped living her life because she cannot get over the fact that she is alive but her baby is on the other side.

### **SETHE CHARACTERIZATION (Fiction):**

*General comments: flat/round characters; Believable? How are they revealed? How complex? Protagonist/antagonist? Then describe 4-6 central characters: name, age, three descriptive adjectives, appearance, personality, function in novel, a short quote that reveals character.*

#### **1. Are the characters flat or round? What types do they represent? What makes them complex? Do they have traits that contradict one another and therefore cause internal conflicts?**

Sethe is a round dynamic character because Beloved's presence changes Sethe. Sethe has many layers to her. On the surface, she seems crazy and unhinged but as we dig deeper into her personality and her motivations, we began to understand how adversely she views the white society and how she never wants to go back to slavery again because of the horrors she had to endure. Sethe has many internal conflict throughout the work. She wants to move forward with Paul D but she is still haunted by her past, shown through the constant presence of Beloved throughout the novel.

#### **2. Are they dynamic or static? What, if anything, changes about them? What steps do they go through to change?**

Sethe is dynamic because her personality changes. In the beginning, she is headstrong and won't change her beliefs for anyone, but after Beloved is introduced and realizes that she is the reincarnation of her daughter, she becomes more docile in trying to reconcile with the murder, such as how she gives Beloved all her food, starving herself to death in an attempt to make amends for what she has done.



### **3. What problems do they have? How do they attempt to solve them? Are they sad, happy, or between?**

Sethe tried to detach her and her family from slavery by escaping from the plantation. When schoolteacher came back for her and her children, she tried to solve the problem by killing her kids. This is a sad problem. Another problem she had was conflict between Beloved and Paul D because she had to divide her attention between the two, but her attention mostly went to Beloved. This could be considered more of a happy problem.

### **4. Do they experience epiphanies? When, why, and what do their epiphanies reveal – to themselves, to us? Does what they learn help or hinder them?**

One epiphany was when Sethe first realized when Beloved was a reincarnation of her firstborn daughter. When Beloved sang Sethe's song, Sethe finally notices that there was a connection between Beloved and her firstborn daughter. This epiphany caused Sethe to isolate herself from the outside world. She locked her door, didn't go to work, and only worried about Beloved. "Too bad she would be late for work--too, too bad. Once in sixteen years? That's just too bad."

### **5. How do they relate to one another?**

**Sethe & Paul D:** They have known each other the entire duration of the novel, more specifically after she arrives in Sweet Home. Paul D represents change to Sethe, something that she desperately wants, but cannot fully embrace the change because of the constant presence of Beloved. She initially presumes that Paul D chases out Beloved, when the ghost was chased out, but the reincarnation of Beloved puts a strain on their relationship. This becomes so bad because Paul D actually leaves the house when he realizes that Sethe chose Beloved over him, and only returns in the last part of the novel when Sethe is bedridden and barely talks to anyone because he can finally re-enter the house without guilt. Beloved is finally gone, the one that he had sex with. Paul D was the only one to fully understand her for who she is because she knew how bad slavery and knew her back before she was a wide-eyed open girl, before she was twisted by slavery.

**Sethe & Denver:** Sethe loves Denver fiercely, showing that through the constant protection of Denver, whether it be through her words or actions. She is constantly defending Denver from criticism, seen when Paul D was upset at Denver's rudeness and although Sethe did not accept Denver's rudeness, she still sought to protect her from Paul D's harsh words. Although the two have a typical mother daughter relationship, Denver feels resentment for her mother who has kept her from society. She also worries about her past and how Sethe almost killed all of her children. She fears that her mother might succumb to her feral desires and constantly fears for her life, which is ironic because mothers usually protect their children rather than induce fear.

**Sethe & townsfolk:** Initially, they viewed her as kin because they are all colored people, but the event, which caused Sethe to go mad and nearly kill all her children, rose doubts in the townsfolk about whether they could truly trust Sethe because the only things they knew about her was that she had four children. They did not know where she came from or who she really was. Additionally, her one first month was filled with such festivities that everyone became jealous. Sethe did not help to quell these doubts because she constantly isolated herself from society and refused any help from the townspeople, causing a volatile relationship between her and who she viewed as the others.