

INTRODUCTION:

[MUSIC]

Steven: Hello, everyone. My name is Steven, and today, you'll be listening to a podcast created by a group of my classmates in my Caribbean Literature class. The overall focus of this podcast is gonna be to explore familial relationships, more specifically parent-child relationships, and connect that to the literature we've read as a class. This is a topic most people can relate to in some way or another, and you'll hear that come through as our speakers speak in their personal segments. . I'll be guiding you today as we transition from speaker to speaker. And now I want to introduce the speakers. First, we're going to hear from Angelique, who offers a bit of a different and personal perspective on her father-daughter relationship.,Then we're gonna hear from George, who is going to discuss mother-daughter relationships in Girl by Jamaica Kincaid. After this, we'll hear from Lily, who goes into depth about the father-son relationship between Hans and Krishna in the novel Hungry Ghosts. Then we're gonna hear from Julian who will discuss Lucy by Jamaica Kincaid and some psychological theories connected to parent-child relationships. And last but not least we're going to hear from Jeau who talks about familial relationships and ancestry in two poems he found very interesting. So, get comfortable, and get ready to listen to some well-thought-out connections and perspectives. That's enough from me for now, I'll leave it to them...

[transition music]

ANGELIQUE:

Hi everyone!

So, to kick things off, let me tell you a bit about me. My name's Angelique Cespedes, I'm 21, a senior studying English here at Baruch College, and I'm a first-gen Haitian American. Haitian on both my mom's and dad's side. But, to keep things interesting, my father is also Dominican, so I've got that Caribbean-Latin American mix that really shapes a lot of how I see things.

Growing up, I was always hearing stories about resilience, family, and the sacrifices my parents made to make life better for me. Honestly, those themes—sacrifice, connection, and even tension—show up so much in the parent-child relationships we've been looking at in this class. And it's part of why I feel a deep connection to the works we've read, like Lucy by Jamaica Kincaid, Erzulie's Skirt by Lara, and Hungry Ghosts.

Ok now I'm excited to explore those connections more in my part of the podcast. So let's look into how parent-child relationships play out in my story, specifically my own father-daughter relationship, which is actually a new combo of a relationship type compared to the ones we've read, and let's also look into how this specific one type of relationship echoes throughout my own Haitian and Dominican background.

All right, let's talk about this quote-on-quote myth that's still hanging around—the missing Black father. You know the stereotype—this idea that Black fathers just aren't around for their kids, that

they're more like a fleeting presence rather than a real, emotionally engaged figure. It's everywhere in the media, right? It's a catchy narrative, but like most stereotypes, it's not the whole story. So, let's start with the article "The Myth of the Missing Black Father" by Coles and Green. They basically kick off their whole argument by addressing the fact that Black men are treated like they're a statistical anomaly in the fatherhood department. They write: "In their parenting role, African American men are viewed as verbs but not nouns; that is, it is frequently assumed that Black men father children but seldom are fathers." Like, wow, right? They're saying that Black men get credited with the "fathering" part, but when it comes to being actual fathers, well, that's a whole different ballgame. I mean, we're told Black fathers are mostly non-existent, except for the occasional appearance in crime stories or maybe some angry social media rants. But let's be real—if we look a little closer, we start to see a pattern. And honestly, that pattern isn't just some random stereotype people made up for no reason. I'm speaking from my own experience, too. My dad...he left my three older siblings. So, there's that. I'm not gonna sugarcoat it—he wasn't around for them, and right now, still doesn't make an effort. I've been surprised that ever since my childhood, my mother, who was never even my half-sibling's stepmother, was the one who was always almost near begging my father to just simply call his kids and his grandkids. To simply send them money, because even though it's obvious that there isn't any real love in that action, it's the least that he could do. But I'm also not gonna pretend like that's the whole story. This "absent Black father" thing isn't just some fantasy. It happens, right? And, yeah, maybe this stereotype came from somewhere real, but it's not the entire truth.

What Coles and Green bring up in their article is that we've been fed this narrative for so long that it's hard to see beyond it. It's damn near impossible. They point out that while a lot of Black children aren't living with both biological parents (for a lot of reasons, including systemic issues), that doesn't mean Black fathers don't care or don't try. In fact, they argue that the whole "missing" label is a misrepresentation of a much more complicated reality.

But back to my family—my dad wasn't a father to my older siblings, but he is one for me. He's literally at work right now, and I'm going to see him when I get home. When was the last time he willingly saw his other family? Though, we can't just paint everyone with the same broad brush. Sure, the statistics say that fewer Black kids live with both parents, but does that really mean the dads just don't care? Or is there more to the story? I mean, in my case, my dad might not have been perfect, but there were still pieces of him that stuck around. It's complicated. And it's definitely more than just a "myth" or "fact."

And continuing right on to the idea of the "missing Black father" being part myth and part reality, it's hard not to feel a little... I don't know, bitter about how much weight that stereotype carries. Coles and Green point out that this image has deep roots in American history, saying, "The history of challenging and dismissing Black men as fathers has its roots in the foundation of America and still exists in contemporary American society." Let's not forget, these systemic issues didn't just appear out of nowhere—they're baked into how society views and treats Black men, especially when it comes to their role in families.

But there's another layer to this that we don't talk about enough—mental health. What happens when a father is physically present but emotionally checked out? My dad was there in the sense that I could call him if I needed to. He would probably give me a ride. But his love felt conditional, like it came with a list of requirements I was supposed to fulfill just to earn it. He would probably give me a ride...only if I got an A+ on my paper last week and not an A. That kind of dynamic messes with you, especially as a kid. You start asking yourself: If my own parents can't fully show

up for me, what does that say about me? Am I not worthy of that love? And even though you might know, deep down, that the problem isn't you, it still leaves scars. Emotional absence can be just as painful as physical absence, and the two often get lumped together in conversations about Black fatherhood when they're really very different struggles.

But when you hear stories like mine, it's easy to wonder if those stereotypes are just too real. I mean, my dad leaving his other kids isn't exactly helping the cause, right? And while it's easy to say, "Not all Black dads," the reality is that these situations do exist. They existed in my life. And when you're a kid growing up with that reality, you don't really care about statistics or stereotypes. You just know what's missing.

And that's where I want to leave things for now. The story of Black fatherhood isn't a one-size-fits-all tragedy. It's a messy, complicated narrative with pieces of truth, pieces of myth, and a lot of room for nuance.

As we move forward in this podcast, you'll hear from my group about how these themes show up in the books we've been studying, like *Lucy*, *Erzulie's Skirt*, and *Hungry Ghosts*. Spoiler alert: parent-child relationships in those stories are just as messy and layered as what we've been talking about here.

So, stay tuned, because this conversation is just getting started.

[transition music]

STEVEN:

And that was Angelique with a beautiful connection to her and her own father's relationship, also a different perspective than what we usually got in the literature we read in this class and we thank Angelique for being so open and honest with us and you as an audience. And it was really great to hear that. And now we're going to hear from George with his thoughts and analysis on Jamaica Kincaid's girl and his own connection, culturally, to these issues.

[transition music]

GEORGE:

How are you guys doing? My name is George Kusi. I am a, I have a African and Caribbean background, majority Ghanaian, but my mom is a quarter Trinidadian, so this class was very insightful of a little bit about my culture that isn't shown throughout my household. I'm a senior at Baruch College majoring in finance, and here I'm here to talk about or focus on the mother-daughter relationships, utilizing Jamaica Kincaid's short story, *Girl*, published in 1978, almost as a base level

on how these relationships hypothetically could realistically become. And when I'm referring to these relationships, I'm talking about mother and daughter Caribbean relationships. I'll start by briefing a little bit about *Girl*. *Girl* is a short story about the relationship between a mom and her daughter, and what makes complex is the background of these women, like I said prior, born and raised in the Caribbean.

So the first talking point I wanted to dive into was the specific points about *Girl* that I kind of wanted to utilize as a base for how mother and daughter relationships in the Caribbean could be like. The strict psychological and physical limitations mothers put on their daughter and hold them to an almost unrealistic and unreasonable standard. Growing up with caribbean friends both boys and girls you hear stories all the time and sometimes you see it growing up in public schools on how these relationships are in real time. What makes *Girl* very unique is the parallel I asked myself after reading it. Was the mother communicating with her daughter in a way to protect her so she'd become the best version of herself and not adhere to the wicked world we live in?

Or is it out of past traditions of strict parenting, almost as if? Since I wasn't able to live an outgoing, free life, therefore my daughter will have to experience the same. This is the first quote I'll get into, just so listeners can start thinking about this parallel. The quote starts, 'This is how to bully a man.' This is how a man bullies you. This is how to love a man. And if this doesn't work, there are other ways. And if they don't work, don't feel too bad about giving up. I remember reading this quote and how my pace sped up naturally because I was trying to interpret-how I would comprehend these words if they were being said to me.

All these skills her daughter needs to have inherited into her, and all these alternatives her mom already has in place if this plan doesn't go accordingly. So it honestly felt as if there was a fly stuck in my ear, and it was just stuck there and I was just trying to get it out, but it wasn't able to get out. Just like someone bothering me constantly and constantly. The next quote I'll utilize is: This is how to hem a dress. When you see the hem coming down and sew to prevent yourself from looking like a slut, I know you are so bent on becoming. In this quote, we see how degrading a mother can speak to her daughter. However, it goes back to the parallel that I brought up previously.

It's very possible she's utilizing very vulgar vocabulary to intimidate her daughter from going down such a path that she's really trying to prevent. And the last quote I'll utilize is, This is how to behave in the presence of a man who don't know you very well. In this way, they won't recognize immediately the slut I have warned you against becoming. So again, we read this insult, 'slut', and I remember Jamaica Kincaid reading this short story and adding the same emphasis that I added on it when I first read it. It was exactly how I heard it in my head the first time reading it. So in all, after the quotes and reading the short story in full, I actually still don't have a concrete answer if I interpret the fictional mother character communicating like this out of love/fear or out of envy and bad parenting being passed down generationally.

The second talking point I wanted to jump into was utilizing my first journal entry and comparing it to *Girl*, creating a generalized assumption on Caribbean mother and daughter relationships. The title of this journal is *A Qualitative Study of the Black Mother-Daughter Relationship* by Joyce Everett. So after reading this journal, I noticed a handful of contradictions, since I am generalizing the reasonable assumption we may make about *Girl*, and how a mother-daughter relationship is scientifically better than what *Girl* was giving off to readers. And as an African American male, I'd hope so because the first quote we'll be utilizing is from the coping section in the journal where they talk about how black mothers and daughters help cope with each other. The quote is: They learn how to solve personal and interpersonal problems.

And to master, minimize, or tolerate conflict and stress. Families influence child coping behaviors through three pathways, socialization of coping, parental modeling, or by creating a supportive, cohesive, and structured family environment. This quote is specifically referring, again, to the black mother and daughter relationship. However, let's focus on the parent modeling aspect with the definition of the process where the children learn behaviors, attitudes, and emotions. So after hearing this last part of the imitation, it ties perfectly into my theory of the possibility of strict parental tendencies being passed down due to envy. The next quote I'll get into is from the esteem section. Self-esteem. A study shows that black adolescents have the levels of self-esteem that are equal or greater than that of white adolescents. After hearing this, I asked myself, does this contradict Girl?

Or are the ideas of Caribbean mothers putting their daughters down as a form of parenting? I mean, it's definitely food for thought. The three factors that influence self-esteem is evaluation of achievement in the family and life, support network and contract with friends, and the positive feelings about being black. And I wanted to include this section solely to represent that there are ways to prevent tendencies parents may be placing on their children out of anxiousness or anxiety, better term of words. about their daughters or even sons without having to be very rude or utilize such vulgar language that we heard from Girl.

My third talking point would be utilizing another journal entry, Anique John's analysis of becoming a woman and the Caribbean mother-daughter relationship by John Anique. I wanted to jump straight into this journal entry because of the beginning sentence, which is: the dynamic mother-daughter relationship. It can be loving. And supporting at best as well as continuous and tragic. This is a very deep quote to utilize for the first sentence I thought when reading it but again this supports the harsh reality of mother and daughter relationship. So Anique analyzes different Caribbean literatures in her journal entry and we actually hear a familiar author for one of the ones she reviews which is again Jamaica Kincaid and her book Annie John.

So Annie John's relationship with her mom was extremely similar to the relationship with the mom and girl and the quote I could utilize represent their relationship is Annie's mother represents a common type of Caribbean motherhood. This is the type of mother who attempts to make sure that her daughters avoid tragedies that she experiences and also the social dangers that she thinks are likely to negatively impact a young girl's life. So, again this ties in perfectly with the other parallel that I had of parents or parenting tendencies out of love and fear. You don't want your daughters to go down this path so you want to almost psychologically trap them and keep them at arm's reach to make sure that they don't go down a specific path.

And lastly, my last talking point would be about the experience I had growing up in a very expressive African Caribbean family. I wanted to talk about the parallel of my mom's relationship with me which is very different from my sister's. Again, my mom is a quarter Trinidadian and 75% Ghanaian, so not the most Caribbean, but there's still cultures we still experience a little bit of that Trinidadian culture in our household. And, my mom, for an example, I really remember my mom trying to mask or hide, quote unquote, womanhood conversations that she had with my sister growing up. Things that women go through based on them being a woman; my mom would never have these conversations in the public, and when I mean in the public, I mean with other family members around, like my brother, my dad-she would always bring her to a separate room and talk to her, and we would just never see those conversations.

However, on the opposite side, when my mom was trying to give me and my brother's lessons, it would be very public, like I said prior; she would love to say it out loud in front of everyone-in front of my dad, in front of my sister, her name is Susan, and it wasn't embarrassing. But I always questioned why did mom always have to call us out in front of everyone? But when Susan had to go

through something or whe she wanted to talk to Susan about her experience as a woman, it would always be in private eye and we would never hear about it. That's all from me, folks. Again, my name is George Kusi, and I appreciate you guys for listening to my segment about the parallels that we see in mother and daughter relationships from the Caribbean. Thank you.

[transition music]

STEVEN:

And that was George with some astute observations on mother-daughter relationships, the general importance of communication, and how generational trauma can affect how one is raised. Now we're going to hear from Lily who's talking about what was my personal favorite novel we've read in this semester, Hungry Ghosts. And she goes into detail about the relationship between two of the main characters, Hans and Krishna, father and son, and what their relationship entails.

[transition music]

LILY:

Hi everyone, so today I'm going to be discussing Hungry Ghosts by Kevin Jared Hosein. So while there are quite a few interesting familial relationships in this story, I want to specifically zoom in and discuss the father-son relationship between Hans and Krishna. Throughout the novel, Hans' perspective of his father changes as he witnesses several events and actions that he sees as betrayals. But if you look closely, you can see that Hans actually always viewed his father with some skeptical doubt. He never really idolized him, like we often see with father-son relationships. We often see a son looking at their father and seeing them as this perfect god-like person. But Krishna never really sees Hans like that, and we're going to talk about that a little bit more in a bit.

But first, I want to start with some background. So an essay titled 'Religion and Its Diaspora: The Adaptation of Hinduism in the Indo-Caribbean' by Khalia Brown explains the complicated place of Hindus in the Caribbean. It explains that after the British abolished slavery in 1807, the British turned to India, which was one of their colonies at the time, to fill this missing labor. So in 1838 and 1845, Indian indentured servants were brought to the Caribbean, and by the 20th century, hundreds of thousands of Indians were living in the Caribbean, and Hinduism was widespread throughout the islands. So about 100 years after the Indians were brought to the islands, Hosein's novel, Hungry Ghosts, begins. And although the story is set in 1940s Trinidad, after the abolition of indentured servitude, the Saroop family, which is Hans and Krishna's family, as well as other Hindus, do not live comfortable lives like everybody else does.

They suffer persecution and poverty, and they struggle to feel a sense of belonging. Kevin Jared Hosein talked a little bit about this in a podcast called Poured Over, Kevin Jared Hosein on Hungry Ghosts. And he talks about the living conditions that they had. They lived in these dirty barracks, and not only were their living conditions physically unfortunate and unclean, he says that they never really truly feel like they have a home. The specific quote is, he says, 'they live in a barrack, but it is not a home to them.' And that kind of just speaks to the way that although the characters were born in the Caribbean, and they lived there all of their lives, they just struggle with the sense of belonging because of how they're treated and how their religion differs from the majority religion in Trinidad.

So how each of these characters deals with this suffering differs, specifically when it comes to Hans and his son Krishna. In one scene, towards the beginning of the novel, Krishna goes with Hans and Tarik to a store. They just are going to go buy a few things. And when they enter the store, they're rejected because the store owner is afraid that they will steal something. And Krishna, we see Krishna and Hans react quite differently to this situation. Hans, we have Hans who stays pretty much quiet, and he kind of just goes with what they're doing. And he says, okay, okay, like two, three of you will, I'll just be in the room alone. And you two can go wait outside because they're saying that they don't have enough eyes to watch for stealing.

So, okay, Hans says, I'll just stay here. But Krishna is extremely bothered by this. And he says, this is a quote from page 33, he says, we have money, we ain't stealing nothing from your stupid store. And then he says, he says to his father, he says, tell him something pa, call him a jackass. Well, Hans kind of just reacts to this in a bit of a quiet, mellow, calm way. He says, he just covers Krishna's mouth and he tells him to be quiet. And the two kind of just go back and forth until finally, Krishna goes outside, but he is extremely bothered by this. He, he won't even eat the candy that he wanted so badly beforehand. He wouldn't, he refuses to eat the candy that they got from that store.

He doesn't want to have anything to do with the store. And we can see from this situation that Hans and Krishna really, they have these different personalities and different reactions to, to the persecution. They, Hans, Hans is calm and he just takes things as they are. While Krishna, and it has to do a little bit with how he's younger and he's less experienced, but Hans has a smaller reaction to these things. While Krishna is extremely bothered by micro acts of persecution, he is; he's angry and he sees his father as being weak because his father refuses to stand up for him. And this happens again and again. We see Krishna getting angry with Hans for being so quiet and so accepting of what's happening to him.

And Krishna, Krishna wants to fight back and Hans doesn't. And even more than that, Hans sees Krishna's desire to fight back as being him being a troublemaker, him causing problems. While Hans sees Krishna as being weak. And Hans, really, he sees this as a big betrayal. And we see just from the beginning of the story, how Hans never really, Krishna never really sees his father as being this perfect person. He sees him as he sees him as weak, he sees him as something that he doesn't want to aspire to be. And a little bit later in the story, I'll turn to page 178. Josein writes of Krishna's thoughts: 'He didn't want to become the compliant boy his father wanted him to be.' He couldn't imagine being bossed around by store clerks and convincing himself that's just the way things are, bowing down before people who would spit on him or call the police on him for existing.

There was nothing logical or practical about going through life acting as someone's footstool. So we can see here that not only is Krishna bothered by Hans's actions, he wants not to be like his father. He strives; we often see you know children looking up to their father and wanting to be like them. Krishna never really sees Hans like this; he sees him as something not to be as something to learn how not to act like, and ultimately this small betrayal is only the start of something a lot bigger, so while Krishna sees Hans's silence and weakness as a betrayal, there's an even bigger betrayal later in the novel. when Krishna finds out that his father has been with Marley the woman that he works with he feels betrayed and angry

but it's more than that he goes to the Changoor house where they they're together he sees them together and he doesn't say anything he doesn't interrupt them which i think is a sign that he thinks it's too late for his father he can't change his father it's a bit of acceptance and he he just throws up and he says this is on page 213 Josein writes of Krishna's reaction he felt simultaneously terrified and betrayed powerless to this derangement now i actually think this word powerless is quite significant and consistent throughout the novel because not only not only is Krishna angry with his

father and

upset with him but he he hopes and he he wished that his father would be the kind of person that would protect him from from what they face living as hindus in the caribbean, like at the story krishna was a young boy powerless in that moment and hans could have spoken up for him his Hans should have been the one to protect him in Krishna's eyes and again here this is such a big Betrayal because, not only he is he angry at Hans, but he wishes that Hans would have been somebody to protect him. Because he is a powerless person in this situation, and that I think is what brings Krishna to act out so much.

He joins this gang and he he hangs out with these these people who everyone looks at them as being in the wrong crowd, but Krishna like it says feels powerless to stop what's going on with his father. He feels not only is everyone betraying him, but his own father is betraying him, and he's powerless to stop it. And we see the the end of the novel ends pretty tragically and we can understand why this might have happened with what krishna goes through not only with the persecution that he faces but also with his relationship with his father and readers are left to wonder what would have happened if maybe krishna didn't feel so powerless with his family maybe if he had that protection from hans if he had that not only that that real protection but that that emotional support and that safety net and he felt like he was not going to be able to

fight back but he was having he was like-minded with his father like they were both agreeing on how to fight back on what to do but no instead we see them reacting so differently having two different having two different intense reactions Hans is one of essentially weakness and Krishna as one as one of power although he has so little, he doesn't have the proper resources or the or the age or the seniority to really fight back, Krishna and Hans really do react quite differently and I think that's a big perpetuation to the end of this novel and can look at their relationship throughout the story and see that kind of breaks down brick by brick starting with the store and ending with the the large family betrayal and we see that really, I think, is a big part of what happens at the end of the story.

[transition music]

STEVEN:

You know the saying goes “Don’t meet your heroes” right? But when your heroes are your parents and they’re constantly letting you down, what can possibly be done about that? And that’s the problem with Hans and Krishna as Lily was saying, Hans was not the person Krishna wanted him to be. He was weak and he was resigned to the life he lived. And Krishna was rebellious and young and didn’t like the microaggressions and people attacking them and looking down on them and he was not complacent in the way Hans was. So that was Lily with her great analysis of hungry ghosts. And now we’re gonna hear from Julian who’s gonna talk to us about Lucy which is another story by Jamaica Kincaid, it deals with another mother-daughter relationship. And Julian is gonna go into a little bit of the psychological aspects of a mother-daughter relationship, so let’s hear what he has to say...

[transition music]

JULIAN:

Hi, everyone. My name is Julian, and in today's segment of this podcast, we'll be talking about, you

know, the mother-daughter relationship in Jamaica Kincaid's Lucy. We'll be exploring the dynamic that shapes the protagonist's journey to self-discovery. You know, this segment will be highlighting the emotional distance between Lucy and her mother, and the cultural and generational division between, you know, that complicates their bond, basically. We'll also be, you know, connecting the themes of independence, cultural identity, and the immigrant experience to the relationship, as well as, you know, bringing up some psychological theories and social theories that could have probably impacted this, you know, relationship between Lucy and her mother. With further ado, I'll be starting. So, a little introduction about, you know, of the book. Jamaica Kincaid's Lucy is basically a novel.

It was published in the 1990s, and it was basically a semi-autobiographical, you know, novel. It's basically; it doesn't really precisely, you know, it basically has some of her life in it. It doesn't precisely talk about her, but, you know, basically. So, basically, the novel. The novel explores, you know, the journey of a young woman named Lucy Josephine Potter, you know, as she leaves the Caribbean, you know, and moves to the United States to work as an AU pair, basically a young foreign person who is basically working as a house worker or a child caregiver in exchange for, you know, in exchange of, you know, of a room or food, et cetera. Lucy, in this case, is basically working for a wealthy white family, and, you know, throughout the process of the novel, we see, you know, some emotional and cultural dislocation, but we'll be exploring that in a little while.

And, you know, it navigates through the world of past, present, and, you know, the relationship with her mother, you know. In this, in the novel, you know, we see. Certain emotional distance and maternal influence in Lucy. We see how, you know, she's very distant with her mother. She doesn't seem to want to go back and live her prior life in that sense. You know, she moves to the United States, as privately said, and works for this family, but she doesn't seem to want to relocate back to the Caribbean and revisit those memories she had with her family or with her mother, precisely. We have several examples of it throughout the book, precisely with, you know, her not wanting to read, you know, some of the letters her mother has sent to her.

You know, she's very reluctant to read them, but, you know, at a certain point, she finally does read them. You know, she reminds herself that she is. She's trying to leave that life behind, but, you know, there's a certain quote where she, you know, reflects that she's the object of her life and that, you know, she has to, she's trying to put, you know, much distance between herself and, you know, the events of the letters, you know. You know, she's trying to emotionally detach herself from, you know, the staff to establish her identity, basically. You know, another example of this would be when she basically recalls how her mother had strict expectations for her. She had, you know, her mother had some, you know, conditional love and, you know, how she had to, she, how she had her, how, you know, this conditional love was basically tied to her obedience and, you know, academic success.

But, you know, however, you know, this memory kind of like brings an emotional toll and how, and it shows how Lucy has struggled with her own path of freedom, precisely, and how she has certain burdens. But it also shows that how she, how, you know, Lucy's mother's been trying to put a mirror image of herself onto Lucy. And it's, and it's very, very common, I would say, in the Caribbean. You know, there's certain reasons for these, these actions, I would say. First off, one of the psychological reasons for this would be the emotional, the attachment theory, which is basically where, you know, early bonds of a caregiver basically shape, you know, one's emotional development. And it creates a very strong relationship as time goes on. However, we don't.

See that in Lucy and her mother, we see a very big sense of resentment and, you know, how we see how Lucy basically perceives her mother as a failure to provide this unconditional love and support for her, you know, and how she, how her mother has basically replaced those, how her mother has replaced that with, you know, expectations of colonial and patriarchal ideals. And, you know, this.

Has basically betrayed Lucy in a way, you know, Lucy felt betrayed, felt, basically, she hasn't felt this maternal connection with her mother, you know, which is very important for everyone, I would say. you know, in any case, the social perspective of this would be, you know, the family structures, you know, in every country, in every part of the world, in every part of the continent, you know, there's a family structure to this, and, you know, we see this, that we see how, you know, how in the Caribbean,

in this case, there's dual roles where the maternal figure, basically the woman, has this view of caregiver, but also the authority figure. And, you know, this duality can actually create tensions between, you know, the caregiver and the child. In this case, it would be Lucy's experience. And, you know, her mother. You know, this dynamic has been very impactful for them. There's also this ideal of cultural division, also cultural trauma, I would say. I wouldn't say cultural trauma, but, you know, there's this cultural division. As previously said, we saw how. We read, basically, how Lucy Travels from the Caribbean over to the United States to work for this family. However, she doesn't feel like home. You know, she doesn't feel at home.

And it has impacted her in the way she views herself, in the way she views the Caribbean, the way she views the family she's been integrated with throughout the novel. And we see examples of that. There's a specific interaction where Lucy, where, you know, the employer, Mariah, you know, she's been, she loves this, you know, daffodils, specifically, where she, where the daffodils basically symbolize a view of British and cultural heritage. But Lucy doesn't feel, doesn't feel, you know, Lucy clashes against that, you know, she clashes against the flower. She says she hates it. She says she dislikes it because she had to retell. She says that she had to retell, recite this poem, basically recite this poem up in front of a crowd of people. And, you know, she had to recite this. This poem about daffodils, not knowing what the flower looked like, what it smelled like, what it felt like, you know, because it never, it never grew in the Caribbean. And, but it did grow over in the United States, in Britain, specifically, I would say. And she hates it because it's a, you know, symbol of British and cultural heritage and colonial, colonialism. And, you know, she, it also symbolizes the rejection and post of cultural norms, basically.

She also feels this sense of loneliness throughout the book, you know, specifically how she celebrates the landscape of the Caribbean and how she resents. You know, how she has resentment of her education as it mirrors, you know, her mother's attempts of, you know, the traditional and colonial ideals. A psychological standpoint for this would be the idea of cultural dissonance. You know, the exposure of Western ideals to Lucy has, you know, made her clash against her mother, collectivist, you know, approach. And it creates. It creates conflict in her identity, you know, she struggles with that. You know, but this can be interpreted as a further position of Lucy's mother as a symbol of colonial oppression. And that embodies, you know, the internalized values of the patriarchal society at the moment in time and how Lucy rejects that, you know.

The struggle also highlights the broader. The broader impact of the colonial legacies, basically, and how, you know, the generational identities, you know. And we see how Kincaid has explored this, you know, cultural and generational division as, you know, Lucy struggles to identify herself and how she has been raised in the Caribbean society that's been, you know, accepting of, you know, these colonial values. And how Lucy's views on her mother have been a symbol of compliance to these ideals, you know. Lucy has been, you know, tries to break free of these, of this and tries to, you know, redeem herself as a new cultural sense, you know, a new cultural context. You know, this cultural division has also created, has made Lucy to understand that there's certain defiance that, you know, reflects this resistance.

And, you know, this theme is very common in the immigrant narratives as well, where the new

cultural environments challenge the traditional roles. But, yeah. And, but, you know, however, you know, Lucy's journey is not simple. It's very complicated. It's, it's basically a symbol of rejection towards heritage. You know, this reflection also reflects how her mother. Reveals a very impact of the, the impact of the Caribbean family structures and how, you know, Caribbean societies have been emphasized as women as a role of both nurture and disciplinary figure, you know, sometimes this dual, you know, role can actually complicate, you know, the perception of the mother and the mother and daughter relationship. But, yeah. Yeah. At the end of the day, you know, this relationship between Lucy and her mother is very powerful.

It's very, it shows how Kincaid has been exploring, you know, the themes of cultural identity, independence, immigrant experience, and how this portrayal tries to invite, you know, readers to reflect upon, you know, their family relationships and, you know, the cultural and generational division that has shaped their personal identity, you know. You know, Lucy's story is. Basically, a universal narrative, you know, of growth, rebellion, reconciliation, basically trying to make this, you know, a very, trying to explore this human condition of ours, you know. So, I'll thank you guys for this segment. Appreciate it if you're listening. And, yeah, this is the end of the segment. I appreciate it. And I'll see you some other time. Thank you.

[transition music]

STEVEN:

And just like Julian was saying, Lucy resented her mother because of the tough love she gave her growing up. You know she never felt like she had the freedom to be an individual because her mother was so tough on her, and like Lily was saying that Krishna resented Hans because he was a weak man and just wasn't the man he thought he was. And this just goes to show you that these relationships are complicated for many reasons. But now, finally, last but not least, we're gonna hear from jeau whos gonna talk to us about a poem by Elizabeth Acevedo and hes gonna share with us an original poem of his own and hes gonna talk to us about you know, hispanic roots, so let's listen to what jeau has to tell us..

[transition music]

JEAU:

My name is Jean Alvarez, I'll be talking about parent-child or family relationship in this case. I picked two poems. One is by Elizabeth Acevedo. Her poem dives into her identity as an Afro-Latina woman because of her ancestral roots, how she describes about forgetting her Spanish language roots as a child, but coming to embracing and taking pride in her roots. And in her mixed racial cultural heritage, she includes her African indigenous and American and Spanish ancestry in the poem, as it celebrates the blended cultures and histories that make up her identity. And her in general kind of relates to me a little bit, I'd like to talk about that. She was born in New York. She was part of the American public. So it's a long, lengthy one. Her poem is called Afro-Latina.

It also has like some Spanish, so I'll try to translate it after I'm done talking about it. Afro-Latina. Camina conmigo. Walk with me. Salsa swagger. Anywhere she goes. Como la negra tiene tambor. Camina conmigo. Dance to azúcar. Dance to the rhythm. Beat the drums of my skin. Afro descended. The rhythm within the first language. I spoke with Spanish. Learned from lullabies. Whispered in my ear. My parents' tongue was a gift, which I quickly forgot. After realizing, my peers did not understand it. They did not understand me, so I rejected a chibuelo y a mango, much preferring Happy Meals and Big Macs. After straightening my hair in imitation of Barbie, I was

embarrassed by my grandmother's colorful skirts and my mother's broken English. When she spoke soul shit, I would poke fun at her myself, hoping to lessen the humiliation.

Proud to call myself American, a citizen of this nation. I hated camel-colored skin. Cursed God, I've been born the color of cinnamon. How quickly we forgot where we come from. So reminded me, reminded me that I come from the Tainos of the Rio, the Aztecs, the Mayans, los Incas, los Españoles. Con sus fincas. Buscando oro. Searching for gold. And the Yoruba Africanos con sus manos. The Yorubing Africans who built with their hands. Never imagined. Nunca imaginó. I knew I come from stolen gold. From cacao. From sugarcane. The children of slaves. And slave masters. A beautiful tragic mixture. Sancocho. Of a race history. And a memory. And my memory. The children of slaves. And slave masters. A beautiful tragic mixture. A sancocho. Sancocho's a soup. For me, I guess. For my parents.

A race history. And my memory. Can't seem to escape. The thought of lost lives. And indigenous rape. The bittersweet bitterness. Of innate and soul of people. Past, present, and fate. Our stories cannot be checked. Into boxes. They are forgotten. Undocumented. Passed down. Spoonfuls. Of arroz con dulce. La abuela. La abuela. The være's knees. Grandma's knees. They're. The waves of our hips. Skip. To the beat. Of cam-bya. Merengue. Y salsa. Types of uh. Dances. Uh, they're. In. The bending and blending. Of backbones. We are deformed. And re-formed. Beings. It's in the sway. Andés. of our song, the landscapes of our skirts, the azúcar beneath our tongues. We are the unforeseen children. We're not a cultural wedlock. Our hair too kinky for Spain, too wavy for dreadlocks. So our palms tell the cuentos of our materials.

Read our lifetime, birth intertwine, moonbeams and stars shine. We are very ocean crossed. North star navigates. Our waters, our bodies have been bridges. We are the sons and daughters. El destino de mi gente. Black born, beautiful. Vivéramos para siempre, Afro-Latina. Hasta la muerte. We will live as Afro-Latinos until death. Perfect ending. Now this poem is long, but it really dives into how in the beginning she really rejected her family history because she wanted to build a sense of identity for herself. But then she comes back and embraces it, her familial bond with her mother and grandma. And then her ancestry in general. For me, I was born also in New York. I really don't. I'm from like Colombian. So her like ancestral like roots from Dominican Republic kind of relates to me a little bit, too, because, yeah, I don't.

My parents speak broken English, too. They taught me Spanish, too. They taught me Spanish. I guess I'm a mixture of both. They both. I try to like escape from that and just want to be more American. You know what I mean? I don't speak that much Spanish, even though I do speak Spanish because I hear them every day talking about it. But I really escape from that. So like in my family, I'm like a black sheep. I'm like so foreign to them that like, yeah, I don't know if I ever tried to reconnect. Like she's like, I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. Like with them, but like I sometimes expect more to connect with my Spanish heritage than Colombian heritage. Bad experiences over there.

So I will go into my poem. It's a little bit shorter. I wanted to make it shorter. So here's my poem. Not perfect, but I hope you like it. The poem is called Hope. Through storm, through storms and sunshine, hand in and unbreakable bond, inescapable blood, hair breezing through the air as we wave our pride through the air, our community, our legacy. Daughter by name, Imani in name, a gifted name to familiar bonds, bring us together, a cursed familial curse, to the whispers of hope that conquer fears, a dance of resilience with hearts intertwined in the story of life, our spirits aligned, separated by fate, messaged by the day, letters unread for days, and yet our spirits aligned by name and hair, unbreakable bond, inescapable blood.

So what inspired me to do this poem was a lot of things. What we learned in class, and especially liked the last classes, what we recently learned in class with the letters and stuff, how it's like a form of bond to like reconnect with your roots and stuff, or with your families from back then, to keep the connection alive. Now, the title Hope, as you can see, like I chose, it's about a daughter. Her name is Imani, and the reason I called her Imani is because it means hope. Yeah, that was my part of, I hope you liked my poem, and, or child, parent-child slash family, I guess, relationships, really, really affects, especially when you come from like other roots, indigenous roots and stuff, and for Latinos also, especially.

You really want to have your own sense of identity, that's really what it comes down to, separation, identity. Some people really just want to make a name for themselves, or they go to like, especially when you like come to America, you really just want to embrace America, instead of like living in the past with your ancestral roots. People reject them. I don't really reject them. I, I do reject them. I don't watch, people like cheer for Colombia and soccer, I don't, I really don't care for soccer. I'm more of a wrestling fan. Everyone in my family, everyone, it's insane, I'm such a black sheep, but they, they try, they try so hard to like bring me into it, they don't force it, I'm kind of grateful for that, they don't force the ancestral roots within me, I sometimes, and because of that, that kind of helps me like bring them closer together, because they're so, they're more flexible with me.

I wear Colombia shirts from time to time whenever they play, even though I don't watch the games. I just do it to support them. They supported me, many times in my decision. But yeah, sometimes it's like; it's not like that, you're forced to follow your relationships, support your family, you're forced to adopt your ancestral roots. But yeah, hope you like the poems. Again, I hope you enjoyed it. Again, my name is Jean Alvarez, out.

[transition music]

CONCLUSION-

STEVEN:

And that was jeau, and of course I wanna thank jeau for sharing with the group and with everybody listening today his own personal poetry. It was beautiful and you know we're glad to have been able to be trusted enough for you to share that with us. So, that was it for today. We hope you enjoyed listening as much as we enjoyed creating. You know, familial relationships, especially when it's tied to your culture or location or anything else are not as simple as they may seem. Generational trauma, wanting to break the mold, or simply just wanting to be better are themes a lot of people around the world can relate to. As it relates to the Caribbean, we see it as more complex than just people, especially outsiders, it's hard for us to understand. We're very lucky to have people like the five group members I had around us who are willingly sharing their stories and giving us insight into how certain relationships in their culture plays out. In any case, thank you to my group again for providing such beautiful insight, and thank you, the listeners, for taking the time to listen to us. I'll leave you with this; it's something I've seen a lot on the internet that kind of pertains to this topic and creates good conversation too "Remember, it's your parent's first time going through life too" Have a good one, everybody!

[outro music]

