

# A Quest for Self- Realization in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God

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**Abstract –** *This paper aims to analyze self - realization and quest for identity in Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God. In her novel, she depicts characters who attempt to capture them-selves dependent on their internal wants and musings. Numerous notes and waves in the story show the idea of the fundamental role of self-hood and personality changes as she reveals to the new conditions, real factors, and encounters. Hurston's tale Their Eyes Were Watching God is an excellent work. Hurston delineates the life of an African American lady Janie who fantasies about happiness. Surviving through all complexities at long last, she triumphs and gets satisfaction. Janie doesn't think beyond practical boundaries, yet she has a straightforward dream of bliss, which she finds in herself. The topic of self-acknowledgment or journey for identity is simply the principle topic in Hurston's fic-tion. Hurston was herself occupied with her mission for personality until she settled with writing as her career. This disarray which she confronted herself is apparent in her protagonist's lives. Her characters are looking for their personality like Hurston. At the beginning and the end, Janie is in search for self-identity and a journey for independent life. Janie is a dark lady who needs to liberate herself from social constraints, and she needs to become independent. This paper concludes that Janie in Their Eyes Were Watching God increases an incredible accomplishment looking for her self-acknowledgment and her feminine identity.*

**Key Words –** Self-Realization, Identity, Self-Hood, Quest

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## INTRODUCTION

Zora Neale Hurston, an anthropologist, is one of the well known African American writers. She was born in Eatonville, which is the setting for a large portion of her fiction. Her most famous novel, Their Eyes Were Watching God, is published in 1937.

African-American woman's rights draw a clear lineage from oneself situating of Zora Neale Hurston, a southern dark lady author of the early twentieth century. Hurston slipped into scholarly lack of clarity for over three decades since the 1950s. It was just Alice walker, the chief representative of the dark woman's rights, uncovered the lost fortunes of Hurston's works.

The feeling of self-disclosure has been one of the most perplexing and regularly developing presumptions in literary and critical studies. It has become a passion for critics, novelists, and scholars. All words, for example, man, woman, body self individual I subject and human have been used over and again in literary and critical discussions relating to a particular community or tradition of a specific person's self-discovery.

The novel Their Eyes Were Watching God shows the development of the character Janie from a local young girl to a mature lady. African Americans value the book for its rich black culture and females' self-consciousness. The story is set in southern Florida in the early twentieth century. It is related to the suppression of black women who are suppressed in the first place because they are women and secondly because they are black. It portrays the excursion of Janie to self-discovery. She pines for affection and regard in her life and needs to set up her character.

From the first pages of the novel, the reader doesn't know the name of the primary female character of the book; she is supposed to be as a lady, which demonstrates that she is still an extract and darken element with no disposition for the reader. Presently Janie has come back to Eatonville almost two years after Joe Starks' passing and somewhere in the range of scarcely any months after Tea Cake's with whom she last time left Eatonville. Her local ladies are loaded with questions and threatening vibe towards her, and thus they, despite everything, call "Janie Starks" (EWG 19). In her night discussion with Phoebe, she reveals to her a fantastic tale from her youth up to this minute when she came back to Eatonville. Janie begins Eatonville communicating her resentment and hatred for the women, the person

who sees her arrival at the place, as if they get a name to bite, they can't care about who it is, nothing should be said about anyone on this closed occasion. They can make it like evil. If they need to see and know why they don't come kiss and be kissed? Ah could then sit down and tell 'em things. Agent Ah been a to de significant 'association of life. Yessuh! De big convention of livin' is where Ah been dis year and a half y' all ain't seen me. (EWG 22)

In light of the above citation, in the wake of moving ceaselessly from Eatonville, Janie transforms a lot and views herself as a distinctive individual or self from these ladies. Another similarly significant perspective that Janie alludes to is her specific assault on talking or telling. She appears to think about that unimportant advising won't add up to anything significant if some different particularities don't join it. These other particularities will turn out to be increasingly apparent as Janie's story proceeds. Janie's 'If they want to see and know' is another vital expression as she reflectively continues to describe and uncover a fantastic account. Right now, utilizing the action word 'see' she uses the action word 'know.' This method for talking is prevalent in Janie's discourse, which imparts much about her remain about existence. Janie goes on after a brief delay saying that: "Naw, 'tain'tnothin' lak you might think. So 'tain't no utilization in me telling Yousomthin' unless Ah give you de understandin' to go 'long wid it. Unless you see the hide, a mink skin ain't no different from a coon hide. Lookaheah, Phoebe" (EWG, 23).

Fanon argues that identity is a socio-economical phenomenon rather than being an internal one. From this minute onwards in the life of Janie, she gets mindful of the way of experience as a dark young lady who is unique concerning the white young ladies in her environment. Her Nanny is adorable enough to know Janie's new comprehension of her new 'self' and personality that she endeavors to move away from the place of the Washburn family. After this painful experience, Janie's mindfulness as dark young lady increments and "sees" her darkness like never before: "Us lived dere havin' enjoyment till de chillun at school got to teasin' me 'bout livin' session livin' in de white folks' back-yard" (EWG 24).

In the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Janie is in search of love and self -identity. Janie experiences various types of affection all over her life. Because of her journey for this love, Janie gains autonomy and individual flexibility, which makes her a genuine champion in the novel. As Janie strives for her freedom, others tend to judge her as she dares enough to gain her autonomy. All through the novel, Janie discovers the love that she has constantly wanted, the sort of love that is represented by marriage between a bee and a blossom on the pear tree that remained in Nanny's backyard. Simply in the wake of feeling different sorts of love does Janie finally gain the affection like that between the bee and the blossom.

Janie experiences numerous kinds of affection or love throughout her life. With Nanny, her caring grandmother, Janie experiences a protective love. Nanny longs for Janie to have a superior life than she, and she will do anything in her capacity to ensure that Janie is sheltered and thought about. This defensive love that Nanny gives on Janie fills in as the main impetus behind Nanny's plot to mastermind Janie's union with Logan Killicks. With Logan, Janie has achieved a correspondingly defensive love, much like that gave by Nanny. Logan speaks to security for Janie, as he possesses a 60-acre land of a potato farm. For Janie, notwithstanding, this defensive love doesn't fulfill her requirement for the love that she has constantly wanted.

Joe Starks furnishes Janie with a getaway from the defensive and unacceptable love of Logan. Joe is a man with grand objectives. Janie feels for the first time in her life that she might have the option to find genuine romance with this man who needs her to be dealt with like a woman, as opposed to as a subservient farmer's wife. In the wake of being hitched only a brief timeframe, be that as it may, Janie understands that she is by and by without the affection that she has ached for. The love that Janie feels with Joe is possessive. Joe sees Janie as his ownership, his trophy spouse. He expects Janie to follow his orders, similarly as the townspeople comply with the laws he makes as mayor. Joe precludes Janie to associate with the yard sitters or to play checkers on the patio of the intersection store. Janie feels trapped by Joe's affection; however, she stays with him until his passing.

Following Joe's demise, Janie meets the man who speaks to the genuine romance of her life, Tea Cake Woods. He shows up in Eatonville as a carefree man who rapidly succumbs to Janie's magnificence and appeal. Although Janie fears that she is unreasonably old for Tea Cake, she can't resist the opportunity to go gaga for this man. Janie deserts everything that she has ever known to set out on another existence with Tea Cake. She loves him, as he also loves her. In the wake of moving to the Everglades with Tea Cake, she holds onto this new life just as her new companions. At long last, Janie has discovered the affection like that between the bee and its blossom. She announces that Tea Cake could be a "bee to a blossom—a pear tree blossom in the spring."

In her quest for affection and in the misfortunes that she endures, Janie gains freedom. Janie's freedom starts gradually in the novel. She holds a sparkle of freedom when she picks up the boldness to leave her cold marriage with Logan to flee with Joe Starks.

Her autonomy develops, notwithstanding, all through her union with Joe. As Joe treats Janie as his authority rather than his wife, Janie increases an inward quality. Her quality forms, and one day she stands up for herself to Joe in the presence of the

porch sitters. This act is Janie's first outward indication of her inward quality. Her quality and autonomy develop as Joe gets more vulnerable. Although he expels Janie from his room, she visits him in any case. As Joe lies passing on, Janie uncovers to him that he isn't the man that she escaped with years back. She reveals to Joe that he has always been unable to acknowledge her for the individual that she truly is. Ironically, Janie discovers strength in Joe's demise. At long last, she is liberated from the man who restricted her in a cold marriage. Janie displays her opportunity after Joe's passing by expelling the scarf from her head to let her long bracelet open from under her back.

All through Janie's mission for love and the autonomy that she gains in her excursion, Janie bears the brutal judgment of others. The yard sitters in the novel serve to judge Janie. As the story opens, they sit and remark about Janie's arrival, and her present lifeless appearance. The topic of judgment proceeds in Janie's existence with Joe. He judges Janie, instead of accepting her for what and what her identity is. He stifles her freedom since he fears that another man may take her away from him. Indeed, even Mrs. Turner, the biased, bigoted restaurant owner, judges Janie. She questions Janie's decision of Tea Cake as a spouse since he is "excessively dark." Because Janie perseveres through the cruel judgment of others, she can pick up independence and strength.

Janie's journey for love drives her in various ways. She gains the courage from the defensive love of Nanny and Logan, just as the possessive love of Joe. Janie discovers her ideal love with Tea Cake. Throughout her life, she additionally increases freedom and courage from these connections just as by persevering through the decisions made by others. Because of her long-lasting experiences, Janie gains self-rule and learns the value of true love. As a character, Janie substantiates herself as a heroine.

Hurston created the character of Janie during a period where African-American female courageous women were exceptional in writing. In 1937 when the novel was published, females experienced less open doors than they do today. Hurston decided to depict Janie as a solid, autonomous lady, not at all like most African-American females of the early nineteenth century. Maybe Hurston portrayed Janie as skilled and gallant to enable her perusers and to give them that open doors do exist for all ladies; they need to grasp them.

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