

# Reading: antonine maillet, la saguine



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

La Sagouine La Sagouine was a wonderful novel written by the Antonine Maillet which was published in 1971. Besides being a novelist she was also a scholar and a playwright. She taught literature and folklore at Laval and Montreal and also worked as a host and script writer for Radio Canada. She has the distinction of being the only non- European to be awarded the Prix Goncourt for her work in Pelagie – la – Charrette in 1979.

“ La Sagouine” revolves around the happenings of an Acadian washerwoman who lived in the rural areas of Brunswick. The novel is based on a collection of monologues written essentially in a dialect called Chiac - which was a mixture of English and French.

The key points in this story made a great impression on me because of its great strength of character. The prior prostitute who is miserably poor reminisces about the story of her life that had passed her by leaving her a very different person. She recalls incidents involving her and her friends, neighbors and others. She sneers and rants about the priest and the church and all other aspects of her life in the village.

What is most striking in this true story is the strong character of La Sagouine who stands as the embodiment of poverty but yet speaks with an air of pride. She has touched the hearts of all her audiences as she did mine with her simplicity as well as her soul- stirring narrative.

Today, the lesson I learned from this straight from the heart story is that one need not be rich in order to be dignified. I didn't realize that scores of people keep hiding their true or real selves beneath a mask or a façade of many other things. Very few people really portrayed the right picture of who they were. It was a lesson for life that I had learned by reading this eye – opener of a novel. Antonine Maillet was really one writer who could touch the very

core of the person without being too blatant about it. What made a greater impact was that it was a true story about a real person. It made me sit back and think of the positive aspects of this character and made me realize that all of us including myself always camouflage the way we speak and deal with others.

It brings to my mind a certain incident where my friends and I excluded a rather shy and unassuming girl whom we thought would not suit our very modern group. Come to think of it, it must have been quite devastating to her because she came from a rather poor and ordinary background. We would avoid this girl like plague and wouldn't answer her properly if she asked us a question. We did not include her in any of the activities that we undertook in our group. Finally, the girl left to continue her studies elsewhere.

Reflecting on my actions, I definitely feel that I would not treat another human in such a way because every one is a child of God and as such needs to be respected, wanted and loved. I realize now the sadness and trauma that they were put through just by our selfishness and the masks we carry around. I understand that one has to accept others in order to be accepted themselves.

If given a chance I would definitely move the hands of time to that day reinvent the whole situation by extending a friendly hand and inviting the girl to our group. Moreover, I would request the whole group to be more open and frank about their opinions and to create an atmosphere of love and respect to everyone we come across irrespective of who they are.

References:

La Sagouine/ Antonine Maillet

<https://assignbuster.com/reading-antonine-maillet-la-saguine/>

[www. amazon. com/Sagouine-Antonine-Maillet/dp/0889241856](http://www.amazon.com/Sagouine-Antonine-Maillet/dp/0889241856)

Antonine Maillet

[www. en. wikipedia. org/wiki/Antonine\\_Maillet](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonine_Maillet)