

Song of solomon

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Song of Solomon Q In what ways does Guitar function as a foil to Milkman's character? How is he different from Milkman in terms of not only his upbringing, but also his outlook on life? How have Guitar's life experiences shaped him? What comments does he make clue you in as to his attitude and outlook on life?

Guitar acts as a foil to Milkman in various ways. Guitar shelters Milkman from being criticized because of his class and background of being a wealthy black person. Guitar protects him because he is from a poor background. Secondly, we see that Guitar is interested in politics while Milkman is not about to protest about anything. Thirdly, Guitar is fatherless, motherless and homeless while Milkman has both parents and is from a good home. Finally, Milkman is into women and partying while the Guitar is into racial equality campaign and politics.

Guitar is different from Milkman in various ways not only in upbringing but also in his outlook of life. We see when Milkman found Guitar at the barbershop listening to a story about a black man trampled to death by the whites. Guitar is shaken and wants to protest while Milkman is not bothered. Therefore, Guitar, having had a rough life of poverty and experienced racial discrimination at its worst, is determined to speak up. Milkman starts drifting from Guitar because their reasoning is changing since he wants to party with women instead of campaigning. Moreover, Milkman thinks about money and business and owning property, while Guitar thinks about bettering the lives of black people.

Guitar's life experiences have shaped him to be a more patient man with humility and empathy for his fellow brothers. His poverty has made him to

want a better life for his fellow black people. He has no interest in partying and women while his brothers are being discriminated upon. He has no interest in owning property and mistreating his fellow brothers and not caring like his friend milkman.

In page 153, guitar tells milkman, ‘...cards are stacked up against us... stay alive and in the game, makes us do funny things...things that make us hurt one another...don’t carry it inside...try to understand... just forget it... keep yourself strong...’ ((Morrison, 153).

Q2. What kind of person is Milkman at the beginning of the novel? What makes him tick? What are his attitudes? What evidence in the text do you see of such attitudes? In what ways does he differ from his father? Is he similar in any way?

Milkman is a man who does not believe in class difference in the society that is why he befriends a poor boy guitar. But this does not mean he is good hearted, milkman is egocentric person and loves his access to opulence and riches. As the story progresses, he learns to be a compassionate man after a trip down south. An example depicting milkman’s egocentric nature is when his father hits his mother and he goes to complain to guitar who tries to explain why he is fighting. He gives milkman an example of the death of Till but milkman says he was crazy.

Milkman is different is similar to his father by his nature of being too concerned with his looks. He even thinks one of his feet is taller, although it is in his mind. He also has his love for money and property. His father is proud of him. Macon has no imperfections and gets better with age, thus makes milkman to start to purposefully try not to think like his father or act

like him. Therefore, Milkman does the opposite in that "...Macon wore bore ties, Milkman wore four hands in. Macon hated tobacco Milkman tried to put a cigarette in his mouth every fifteen minutes. Macon hoarded his money, Milkman gave his away..." (Morrison, 149)

Q3. What do you find confusing about Song of Solomon so far? What do you find confusing about the novel so far?

The most confusing aspect in the novel is the ability of Macon to accumulate such wealth at that particular time when racial discrimination was high. At this period in time black people could not get jobs not to talk about education. This means they could not operate banks and buy property like Macon does.

Q4. Please identify at least 1 key event, character (other than Milkman), or conversation from pgs. 152-258. Discuss this event, character, or conversation in a few sentences.

An event that Guitar tells Milkman about Till's death as punishment (Morrison, 153). Till was apparently killed because he had had sexual encounter with a white girl yet he was black. This event marks a very serious racial segregation between the black and white people. The incident was not reported as a rape case but by consenting individuals yet the black person took punishment for it and was... 'Just an item on WJR evening news' as put by Guitar (Morrison, 152).

Q5. In what ways has Milkman grown? In what ways does he still have a long way to go?

Milkman has grown in so many ways. First, he is no longer an egocentric person anymore. He now reasons with humility and compassion. Second,

milkman no longer cares about money and anything materialistic as compared to the suffering going on around him. He is now fully aware of the happenings around and not engrossed and blinded in his rich life.

He still has a long way to go in that he must stop being compassionate and do something about it. He can start by campaigning for the rights of his fellow black people. He can support other politician's dreams like Guitar. Instead of flying milkman has to come to terms with his situation and try to mend it.

Q6. Please select two characters from the following list:

Milkman

Macon Dead

Ruth

Guitar

Pilate

In a well-developed paragraph for each character, please describe that character's attitude towards his or her identity and social position as a black individual. Please include specific details, including quotations, regarding relevant events, statements, conversations, etc. to support your response.

Milkman

Milkman sees himself as a privileged black man. Even though he wallows in self-pity he feels great as he comes from a wealthy family. His social position elevates him even from the white men and this causes a rift between him and fellow black people. His identity as a black man does not bother him as much as other black people may feel because of the difference in upbringing, thus a different outlook in life. Milkman feels special over other people as he tells Guitar, "...yeah, well, fuck till. I'm the one in trouble..." (Morrison, 152).

He doesn't care that Till has been unfairly punished.

Guitar

Guitar comes from a poor background and thus totally shapes him and his identity. He believes in struggling in any way one can. This is because as a black man he is underprivileged in the society. He is homeless and an orphan thus struggles to fight. He tells Milkman, "... niggers get their names the way they get everything else-the best way they can..."(Morrison, 155). This means that he believes a black man must struggle to get anything.

Q7. Please select four significant passages from pgs. 152-258 in Song of Solomon. Quote and discuss the significance of each passage in 5 lines.

Quote 1. "Your daddy slapped your mama, right?"

"Right. Right." (Morrison, 152)

This signifies the era when women were being molested by men. It was a common thing and women did not take any action. Milkman complains to his friend Guitar about it. It does not seem as a bad thing but it is bad that it is his mother according to Milkman. Guitar says this is why they should fight.

Quote 2. "I don't know, Guitar. Things seem to be getting to me, you know?"

"Don't let 'em.... Look at Till. They got to him too. Now he's just an item on WJR'S evening news."(Morrison, 154)

These were times when racial discrimination was rife. White people did things that made black people mad and angry. Guitar tells Milkman not to be concerned as anger only leads to self-destruction. He gives him the example of Till. Milkman does not care much anyway.

Quote 3. "Try me. You could learn if you'd try"

"You're too young for me."

“ You’re like all women. Waiting for prince charming to come trotting down the street...” (Morrison, 169)

The phrase of women waiting for prince charming seems to be stereotypical. But as seen in the novel it was a thing for women and still it is up to now. Another issue emerging here is the age difference between men and women. It was argued that men were to be older than women. This is the reason Hagar sleeps with a young man but cannot allow him to marry her.

Quote 4. “ You kill anybody in the war tommy?”

“ I put my hand to a few”

“ With your hands?”

“ bayonet, friend...”

“ How’d it felt?”

“ Unpleasant...” (Morrison, 175).

The killing of fellow human being is horrid. Even in war where it is a norm, soldiers shudder doing it as stated by tommy. He killed people he did not even know but he felt remorseful. He says as much as he hates certain people he can never kill them with his bare hands. He brags about the killings but not the actual killing.

Work Cited

Morrison, Toni. Song of Solomon. , 2014. Print.