

I know why the caged  
bird sings  
argumentative



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings “ Whatever the contest had been out front, I knew Momma had won” (p. 33) In Chapter 5, three “ poetasters” girls come to the Store and mock Annie Henderson. They call her by her first name, showing a great lack of respect for their elder, crudely imitate the way she hums Church songs, and pout their mouths like hers. Marguerite, watching the way in which these three girls demean her grandmother, becomes infuriated. But what makes her even more upset is the fact that while these three poetasters girls are tormenting her grandmother, she merely does as they ask and continues to hum.

And as the girls walk out of the store, they all say, “ ‘ Bye, Annie” (p. 32). But Mrs.. Henderson responds, “ ‘ Bye, Mix Helen, ‘ bye Mix Ruth, ‘ bye Mix Eloise. ” (p. 32). Marguerite “ burst [like] a firecracker” (p. 32). “ How could Momma call them Maize (p. 32). At first, she didn’t comprehend how her grandmother could be so polite in addressing those bratty children who had made fun of her. She wanted nothing more than to get revenge on those rude girls. But that was only a momentary reaction. After hearing Annie Henderson change from humming the other song to humming “ Glory, glory, hallelujah, when I lay my burden down” (p. ), she began to understand. Her face was “ a brown moon that shone on [her]. She was beautiful” (p. 33). That is when she knew that Momma had won. The lesson that she had learned by watching her Grandmother handle the situation with the three poetasters girls was that one earns their dignity by treating others with dignity, no matter how the others treat you. Even though the girls were treating Momma with awful disgrace, because she did not react to it, and she

did not let it bother her, their disgrace was only reflected on themselves, not on her.

While one may think that by not standing up to the girls, by not yelling back at them, and by not kicking them out of her store, she appeared cowardly, in fact, through remaining calm, collected, and polite, she in fact showed her immense courage. Fighting back is easy, but it brings you down to the perpetrator's level. Marguerite grandmother knew that the only way to retain her dignity in the situation was to show dignity to her offenders, allowing that dignity to reflect upon herself. And Marguerite, looking at the beauty in her grandmother's courageous actions, felt pride and understood. I know why the caged bird sings By scorpions