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## A Raisin In The Sun By Lorraine Hansberry: Characters Analysis

In Lorraine Hansberry's play, *A Raisin in The Sun*, she demonstrates a variety of human behaviors through the different characters. This play is based on an African American family in Southside Chicago, 1959. The father, Walter is a dreamer who wants to use his father's insurance money and invest in a liquor store, with the hope that it will get his family out of poverty. Travis is an innocent young boy who plays Walter's son. Beneatha, who plays Walter's sister is an aspiring doctor and is very self-filling. Lastly, Mama, or Lena, plays Walter and Beneatha's mother. She is very giving and does whatever she can to improve her family. Throughout this essay, I will be analyzing the characters in the play *A Raisin in the Sun*.

Mama demonstrates the maternal nature of humans. Mama is a minor character in the play. She loses her husband before the play begins and is receiving a ten-thousand-dollar life insurance check. She is a woman of deep-rooted faith and is very passionate about her family. Although Mama has a conflict within her family. She sees Walter's negative change in personality, She sees her daughter, Beneatha, drifting away from Christ and she feels she's "just seen her family falling apart today . . . just falling to pieces in front of her eyes" (Hansberry 1543). Despite her and her financial situation, family problems, and being widowed, Mama still remains optimistic. Because of the behaviors that mama shows, mama can be viewed as ... by the readers.

Walter's character demonstrates the greedy nature and tendencies of humans. Walter Younger is the main protagonist in the play. He's passionate, ambitious, and a risk-taker. At the beginning of the play, Walter is unhappy working for a rich white man, as a chauffeur. He is an aspiring business owner and wants to greedily use all of his father's life insurance money to invest in a liquor store with his friend. Throughout the play, he continues to selfishly imagine himself becoming a rich businessman in an office and the status that comes with it. This creates an internal and external conflict within Walter. Walter's jealousy causes him to become angry, over-drink, and be ungrateful. This internal conflict within himself creates an external conflict with his family. His anger, jealousy begins to slowly drift apart the Younger family. Because of these behaviors, Walter can be viewed as .... By the readers.

Travis Younger's character shows the purity of humans. He is the son of Ruth and Walter Younger. Travis is an innocent young boy and loves his family. For example, when "Mama: She holds the check away from her, still looking at it. Slowly her face sobers into a mask of unhappiness. Ten thousand dollars. She hands it to Ruth. Put it away somewhere, Ruth. She does not look at Ruth; her eyes seem to be seeing something somewhere very far off. Ten thousand dollars they give you. Ten thousand dollars. Travis: To his mother, sincerely. What's the matter with Grandmama—doesn't she want to be rich?" (Hansberry 1520). Travis also knows about his family being in poverty but doesn't fully understand the complexity of it. For instance, in the beginning scene, Travis's teacher tells all the students to bring fifty cents to school with them. When he asks his mother, Ruth for the money she says "I ain't got fifty cents" and then continues to beg for the money. Travis wants to financially help out his family by carrying groceries after school, which shows responsibility. The readers of the play could see Travis's character as hope for the next generations of Youngers.

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