
Everyday Use By Alice Walker: Contrast Between The Sister's Beliefs About The Quilt

At some point in life, we realize the simplest things mean a lot to you. In the short story "Everyday Use," by Alice Walker, contrast the characters Maggie and Dee and their connection to their family towards the heritage of the quilts, details took place in the early 1950s and 1960s in the yard that they call "An extended living room" they want to continue the tradition of a simple hand working life.

Maggie is characterized as quiet, scared, loyal, insecure, and reserved, Maggie did not have a good relationship with her sister since she left for college and the old house caught on fire, she got burned and she has trouble walking when there are people around them she doesn't like making eye contact with them. "Maggie will be nervous until after her sister goes: she will stand hopelessly in corners, homely and ashamed of the burn scars down her arms and legs, eyeing her sister with a mixture of envy and awe. She thinks her sister has held life in the palm of one hand, that 'no' is a word the world never learned to say to her" it gives us an idea of how Maggie's and Dee relationship is like off the bag, it also shows how sensitive the narrator is to what her daughter is thinking and feeling.

When we meet Dee the narrator describes Dee as a pretty young lady, she graduated from a well-known university with the help of her mom and people from her church, she has been a black sheep since a young age and she has that resentment of her family of the type of life she lived, she gets embarrassed to say where she came from because her family lived in a poor humble house. She hated the way she was living at her house where Mama and Maggie were so comfortable and it caught on fire, "I used to think she hated Maggie, But that was before we raised the money, the church and me, to send her to Augusta to school. She used to read to us without pity; forcing words, lies, other folks' habits, whole lives upon us two, sitting trapped and ignorant underneath her voice. Pressed us to her with the serious way she read, to shove us away at just the moment, like dimwits, we seemed about to understand." The narrator spends time and money so Dee could go to a fancy school and all the sacrifices she made for her so badly, She may or may not have caused the fire in Alice Walker's short story "Everyday Use" she watched the fire consume the house as she was standing close to a tree, but she does nothing to prevent the house from burning.

When she arrives home she tells Mama that she's no longer Dee "I couldn't bear it any longer, being named after the people who oppress me" she didn't want people to recognize her and to disassociate with her family the fewer people knew who she was, it was better to her. Dee believes that she is the best in the family causing a huge problem when Mama was trying to decide who should keep the cherished quilt that represents in the "Everyday Use" pattern was that was made by Grandma Big Dee, the quilt has been passed down from generation to generation, Mama couldn't decide if Maggie should keep it that plan's to use it when she gets married or Dee that wants it to hang it up in her wall.

Maggie seems to be dominated by her sister, she does not want to get in the way if Dee gets the quilt, Maggie tells Mama just to let her have it. 'She can have them, Mama,' [Maggie] said, like somebody used to never winning anything, or having anything reserved for her. 'I can

'member Grandma Dee without the quilts.' she says something to reveal how much better off than Dee she may actually be. After all, she can still remember her grandmother without the quilts she probably has that strong connection with the family .“Maggie can't appreciate these quilts,” Dee said. 'She'd probably be backward enough to put them to everyday use.' Dee calls Maggie backward because she is going to put it to use the way it's supposed to be, everyday use. Maggie with the time she got to learn how to make the quilts, can easily make one for her own. Mama offered Dee (Wangero) the quilt when she went away to college but she thought they were old fashioned, out of style, “Maggie would put them on the bed and in five years they'd be in rags. Less than that!” , Dee thinks Mama and Maggie don't understand their heritage she thinks that should be preserved because it is something that means a lot, Mamá decides that the quilts are for Maggie, “Your heritage,' Dee said, And then she turned to Maggie, kissed her, and said, 'You ought to try to make something of yourself, too, Maggie. It's really a new day for us. But from the way, you and Mama still live you'd never know it.' Maggie smiles at her without being scared because the quilts mean a lot to her just like her grandmother, Walker establishes a stark contrast between Dee and her family.

The author contrasted the sister's differing beliefs about the quilt and what represents for them, Maggie gets the quilts At the end of walker's “Everyday Use” Mama already decides that all quilts were going to Maggie but when Dee shows up she tries to convince her to give them to her because Maggie was going to turn them into rags, Mama believes that using them quilts it's a way to live those old days when Grandma Big Dee was alive and the memory of the whole family and Maggie was ready for that and she had that connection with the family and she got them all.

Works cited

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