

**THE THEME OF ALIENATION IN**  
**THE SHORT STORIES OF EUDORA WELTY.**



**DIMCHI K. MARAK**

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN**  
**FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR**  
**THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**IN ENGLISH.**

**NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY,**  
**SHILLONG—793014.**

**2001.**

NEHU UNIVERSITY  
Acc. No. 109307  
Acc. by  
Date  
Class by  
Sub. heading by  
Enter by  
Transcribed by


**NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY**


**2001.**

I, *Dimchi K. Marak*, hereby declare that the subject matter of the dissertation is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this dissertation did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University /Institute.

This is being submitted to the North Eastern Hill University for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English.

*Dimchi K Marak*  
( Candidate )

  
( Head )

  
( Supervisor )

Dated Shillong,  
the 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2001.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

I wish to thank Prof . T . Ao , my supervisor and Head of the Department of English for her invaluable guidance and generous support. I thank madam for taking time out from her busy schedule and helping me tirelessly without which this dissertation may not have been possible .

I am deeply indebted to my parents whose constant support and determination has enabled me to complete my work . Thank you Ai and Baba for being my inspiration and for everything that you have done for me .

I also take this opportunity to thank the staff of our NEHU Library and CIEFL for providing me with the necessary materials . I also owe a debt of gratitude to my youngest brother for all the materials that he sent me .

I would be failing in my duty if I do not mention some close friends who have helped and supported me earnestly .Lastly I thank the Almighty Father for giving me the strength and aspiration .

Dated Shillong ,  
the 31<sup>st</sup> July ,2001 .

*Dimchi K. Marak.*  
( Dimchi K. Marak ).

## **CONTENTS.**

<u><b>CHAPTERS</b></u>	<u><b>PAGES</b></u>
Acknowledgement .....	
Introduction .....	1—20
Chapter I :	
Alienation : Stories of	
Childhood .....	21—36
Chapter II :	
Alienation in Society .....	37—97
Chapter III :	
Alienation Due to	
Circumstances .....	98—120
Conclusion .....	121—136
Bibliography .....	137—140

## **INTRODUCTION.**

**(a) THE SHORT STORY AS A SEPARATE GENRE.**

A recent handbook of literary terms defines the short story as : “ *A relatively short narrative (under 10,000 words ) which is designed to produce a single dominant effect and which contains the elements of drama. A short story concentrates on a single character in a single situation at a single moment. Even if these conditions are not met , a short story still exhibits unity as its guiding principle . An effective short story consists of a character (or group of characters) presented against a background , or setting , involved through mental or physical action ,in a situation . Dramatic conflict—the collision of opposing forces—is at the heart of the story ”.*

A short story differs from the ‘anecdote’—the unelaborated narration of a single incident – in that , like the novel , it organises the action , thought and dialogue of its

characters into the pattern of a plot . Also the plot form may be comic , tragic , and satiric and it may be written in the mode of fantasy , realism and naturalism . In a 'tale'— story of incident — the focus is on the course and outcome of events as in Edgar Allan Poe's '*The Gold Bug*'. "Stories of character " focus on the state of mind and motivation or on the psychological and moral qualities of the protagonists . Ernest Hemingway's classic '*A Clean Well – Lighted Place* ' , consists of a curt conversation between two waiters about an old man who gets drunk each day and stays on in the cafe until it closes followed by a brief meditation by one of the waiters . Early in the history of the short narrative , there developed a device of the 'frame-story'— a narrative where one or more of the characters proceeds to tell a series of short narratives . This device was widespread in the oral and written literature of the East and the Middle East , as in the collection of stories called *The Arabian Nights* , and was used by a number of other writers , including

Boccaccio for his prose *Decameron* (1353) and by Chaucer for his *Canterbury Tales* (1387). In more recent times, the frame – story may consist of either a single narrative (Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*) or a sequence of narratives (Joel Chandler Harris' stories as told by Uncle Remus).

The short story differs from the novel in what Aristotle called 'magnitude' which imposes differences both in the effects that the short story can achieve and in the choice, elaboration and management of the elements to achieve those effects. Edgar Allan Poe, sometimes called the originator of the short story as an established genre was its first critical theorist. He defined the short story as a narrative which can be read at one sitting from half an hour to two hours and is limited to 'a certain unique or single effect' to which every detail is subordinate. The short story writer introduces a limited number of characters, does not go into detailed analysis as a novelist does and often begins the story towards

the end , minimising the details of the settings , keeps the complications down , clears up the denouement quickly — all in a few sentence . Thus , the limited narrative gives the artistry in a good short story a higher visibility than that of the novel .

The shortest of short stories may be no more than a page or two in length for example Maugham's '*Raw Material*' ; the longest may be over a hundred pages like Lawrence's '*St. Maw r*' . The status of the middle length between the short story and the expansiveness of the novel is called a ' novella ' or ' novelette ' , for example Maugham's '*The Letter*' and H. E. Bates' '*The Grass God*' . This form was especially exploited in Germany after being introduced by Goethe in 1795 and carried on by Heinrich vonKleist .

Short fiction is the most enduring and ancient of literary forms . It is as Maugham suggests , the oldest type of

literature . Some of the earliest literary documents were said to be the Egyptian papyri dating from 4000 — 3000 B. C . The stories found in ‘ *Histories* ’ of Herodotus were dated back to c480 — 425 B. C . Old Testament in the Bible has been called ‘ the unread best seller ’ because it is full of wonderful short stories . Most of all , the short story is particularly important because it had been the genre through which many writers reveal their unique visions of their own cultures and the impact of the outer society on the lives they portray.

The short story as a genre did not appear until the beginning of the nineteenth century , but it was at the end of the nineteenth century , with Kipling and Stevenson , that the short story as a form to be respected took on a separate identity . The increase in literacy created a demand for literature of all kinds . Many magazines used short stories to fill up their pages . Among the early contributors and

practitioners were Washington Irving , Nathaniel Hawthorne , and Poe in America , Sir Walter Scott , Mary Shelley , Rudyard Kipling , D . H . Lawrence in England , E . T . A . Hoffmann in Germany , Balzac in France , and Gogol , Pushkin and Turgenev in Russia . Since then , almost all the major novelists of the European languages have started writing short stories . So the short story flourished .

The art of the short story flourished more abundantly in America . Thus , Frank O' Connor called it ' the national art form ' . Its American masters include along with the writers mentioned above , William Faulkner , Henry James , Mark Twain , Herman Melville , O Henry , Fitz - James O' Brien , Thomas Bailey Aldrich , Bret Harte , William Dean Howells , Sarah Orne Jewett , Frank Stockton , Katherine Anne Porter , Mary E. Wilkins , Kate Chopin , Eudora Welty , John O'Hara , Ambrose Bierce , Richard Harding Davis .

It seems quite likely that the origin and

characteristics of the short story make it a form especially suited to women writers who make it particularly their own as they emerge from a long history of silence and obscurity. Their 'fresh demands', 'unique sensibilities', find new expression in short stories. However, some of the best women short story writers have been influenced by male writers. Elizabeth Bowen would not have written as she did if not for the influence of Sheridan LeFanu, Doris Lessing without Lawrence, or Katherine Mansfield without Chekhov. Some of the better known women short story writers are — Pauline Smith, Gertrude Stein, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Eudora Welty, Jean Rhys, Alice Munro, Elizabeth Taylor, Anita Desai, to name a few.

Thus, as Sean O'Faolain says in '*The Short Story*' (1948), it (short story) is '*an emphatically personal exposition. What one searches for and what one enjoys in a short story is a special distillation of personality, a unique sensibility*'.

\*\*\*\*\*@@@@@\*\*\*\*\*

**(b) A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND  
WORKS OF EUDORA WELTY.**

Eudora Welty ends her brief autobiography , “ *One Writer’s Beginnings* ” (1984) thus : ‘ *As you have seen , I am a writer who came of a sheltered life . A sheltered life can be a daring life as well . For all serious daring starts from within* ’ (104) . Welty was born in a particular time and place that historically secured its women in a sheltered environment . The sheltered life that Welty writes about in “ *One Writer’s Beginnings* ” is typical of a woman nurtured in the deep South of North America during the early part of the century . Born April 13 , 1909 , Welty is a life - long resident of Jackson , Mississippi , daughter of an insurance executive from Ohio and a mother from West Virginia who read avidly and passionately and who once raced back to a house smothered in flames to save a set of Dickens. She had two

younger brothers , Edward and Walter . Welty grew up in a close - knit extended family one that sheltered her and protected her from outside forces of all sorts . She writes , *‘ Even as we grew up , my mother could not help imposing herself between her children and whatever it was they might take it in mind to reach out for in the world.....She stood always ready to challenge the world in our place ’* (OWB — 39 ) .

Welty attended public schools in Mississippi . She published several pieces in magazines for children before she reached her teens . From 1925 — 27 , she attended Mississippi State College for Women in Columbus , then the University of Wisconsin in Madison . She spent an academic year in New York City , studying at the Columbia University School of Business but attending lectures , plays , concerts and art exhibitions as well . The untimely death of her father in 1931 prompted her return to Jackson where

she worked for the local radio station and wrote ' Jackson and Delta Society News ' for the Memphis , Tennessee, ' Commercial Appeal ' a major newspaper for north - west Mississippi . In 1935 — 36 , she worked for Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal program , the Works Progress Administration (WPA) serving as a ' junior publicity agent ' and travelling to many parts of Mississippi to promote road building , new airstrips , canning factories , and other efforts to bring economic progress to poor and remote rural areas of the state .

She began writing spontaneously as a child ; she continued without any plan for a profession , without any particular encouragement and as it proved , not needing any. For a few years , she believed she was going to be a painter and painted quite earnestly while she wrote without much effort . Welty believed that writing cannot be taught but only learned and learned by the individual in his own way , at

his own pace and in his own time .

Eudora Welty read vigorously . She had at arm's reach the typical collection of books which existed in a certain kind of Southern family so that she read ancient Greek and Roman poetry , history and fable , Shakespeare , Milton , Dante , the eighteenth century English , the nineteenth century French novelists with a dash of Tolstoy and Dostoievsky . She also read W . B . Yeats and Virginia Woolf . But always from the beginning , she loved folk tales , fairy tales and old legends and liked listening to the songs and stories of people who lived in old communities whose culture is recollected and bequeathed orally .

Welty was past twenty - six when she offered her first story , “ *The Death of a Travelling Salesman* ” to the editor of a little magazine unable to pay , for she could not believe that anyone would buy her story ; ‘ *Manuscript* ’ was the

magazine and John Rood the editor . After that she has been recognised and appreciated and she feels simply lucky about it . She did face the problem of some of the editors wanting a novel first before publishing her stories . So , she tried her hands at novels but eventually she became a master of the short story .

Her father's fascination with machines of all sorts gave Welty her intense concentration upon time and clocks , on travel , telescopes and cameras . The camera that her father uses to record all special occasions gave Welty her visual sense and love of photography . Photography has had a profound influence on Welty's mode of writing , teaching her that '*Life doesn't hold still*' , as she explains in "*One Writer's Beginnings*". '*Photography taught me that to be able to capture transience , by being ready to click the shutter at the crucial moment , was the greatest need I had*' (OWB—84 ) .

However, Welty's formal career as a photographer never really materialised though two exhibitions of her photographs were mounted in New York and five selections from her photographs have been published to date , most notably : "*One Time, One Place*" (1978) and "*Photographs*" (1989) . She explains her choice of vocation that she '*felt the need to hold transient life in words — there's so much more of life that only words can convey ..... The direction my mind took was a writer's direction from the start*' (OWB—85) .

Like Ellen Glasgow , Welty is a Southern writer and a kind of regionalist . However , while Glasgow's stories are of Virginia life from the Civil War to the present ; Welty simply tell stories about the land and people she knew best . Though she shares Mississippi with Faulkner , her land is the Natchez Trace area . For Katherine Anne Porter land and people meant Texas , for Carson McCullers and

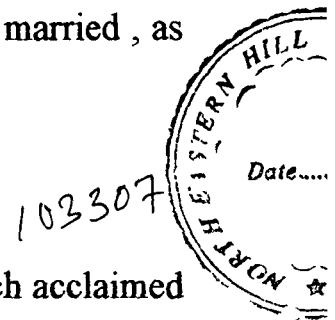
Flannery O' Connor they meant Georgia . Yet , Welty is not a Southern regionalist in every sense . She does not treat the social and psychological implications of the Negro problem , she does not plan for the restoration of the South like Glasgow , etc . Despite all this , Welty's short fictions give an insight into the southern society . She is concerned mainly with whatever people she has closely observed as individuals rather than classes . Her eccentric and mentally deficient characters are nevertheless imbued with pride and strong sense of family ties .

Yet , there are also distinct differences between Welty and other Southern writers . Though born in Jackson Mississippi , Welty's father was from Ohio , mother from West Virginia making them immigrants from the North . There being no Southern ancestry Welty enjoys the attachment to her own land of birth and the detachment

of being somewhat outside . But despite everything , Welty will always remain a prominent voice of the South .

Besides writing , Welty loves music , gardening and has a normal amount of social life . She has never married , as she says , marriage “never came up”.

As a writer of fiction she has been much acclaimed receiving honorary degrees from six universities and a number of important awards and grants . Her books include : *A Curtain of Green (1941)* , *The Wide Net (1943)* , *The Golden Apples (1949)* , *The Bride of the Innisfallen (1955)* , *The Shoe Bird (1964)* , *Moon Lake (1980)* , along with *The Collected Stories* , the novella *The Robber Bridegroom (1942)* , *Delta Wedding (1946)* , *The Ponder Heart (1954)* , *Losing Battles (1970)* , *The Optimist's Daughter (1972)* , *The Eye of the Story (1978)* , followed by a memoir *One Writer's Beginnings (1984)* . Her short stories have appeared



in 'The Southern Review , Atlantic Monthly , Harper's Bazaar and The New Yorker'.

Eudora Welty's collection of short stories offer an extra – ordinary range of moods and themes which are anything but simple . The scenes of her stories are limited to the author's town , even the farthest of the scenes are within the boundaries of her own state . Many of the characters are of a sort that caused a Bostonian to remark that he would not care to meet them socially. They live a secluded existence , alternatives to which they cannot imagine . Escapes such as they are — are all provisional , unsatisfactory : Clytie commit suicide ; Sister moves to the post office in the first volume '*A Curtain of Green*' and in the next volume '*The Wide Net*', the characters live in similar circumstances yet in some cases are able to contemplate escape .

The theme of 'alienation' has been chosen from Welty's stories to be discussed in three separate chapters. The sources of the stories for the chapters have been taken from the first two volumes of Welty's books of stories — *A Curtain of Green and Other Stories* and *The Wide Net and Other Stories* .

*“Alienation remains an ambiguous concept with elusive meanings, the following variants being most common .*

*(i) 'powerlessness', the feeling that one's destiny is not under one's own control but is determined by external agents, fate, luck, or institutional arrangements ;(ii) 'meaninglessness', referring either to the lack of comprehensibility or consistent meaning in any domain of action(such as world affairs or interpersonal relations); (iii) 'normlessness', the lack of commitment to shared social prescriptions for behaviour (hence widespread deviance, distrust, unrestrained individual*

*competition, and the like); (iv) 'cultural estrangement', the sense of removal from established values in society (as for example, in the intellectual or student rebellions against conventional institutions); (v) 'social isolation', the sense of loneliness or exclusion in social relations (as for example, among minority group members); (vi) 'self-estrangement', perhaps the most difficult to define and in a sense the master theme, the understanding that in one way or another the individual is out of touch with himself."*

The characters in the stories concerned suffer from either of these causes. The first chapter deals with two stories concerning children who are alienated themselves from the world of adults because of their state of childhood. In '*Memory*' a child is alienated from the adult world by her childhood who hopes to learn the secrets of life by looking at everything by squaring her hands before her

eyes . ' *The Winds* ' concerns a child who has private visions and a secret self not adaptable to the adult world she belongs to .

The second chapter consists of six stories dealing with alienation from society . In ' *Lily Daw and the Three Ladies* ' a half-witted girl is under the control of social forces represented by a group of earnest ladies . In ' *Clytie* ' Clytie and her family live in isolation from society . The only person allowed in their house is a barber , Mr. Bobo . Mrs. Larkin in ' *A Curtain of Green* ' stays away from social life especially after the death of Mr . Larkin . ' *Asphodel* ' is the story of Sabina , who lives isolated on a hill . ' *Livvie* ' is about a Mississippi marriage between an old man and a young girl . They live isolated on the Old Natchez Trace . Similar is the case of Jenny and her grandfather in ' *At the Landing* ' who live a secluded life on a hill above the landing .

In the third chapter which deals with alienation due to circumstances , three stories are included : ‘ *The Key* ’ — a story of a deaf and dumb couple who live alone and is looked upon with indifference . ‘ *A Visit of Charity* ’ is the story of a young girl who visits two old women in an ‘ Old Ladie’s Home ’ . Both these women are hostile and wary of the outside world . The heroine of ‘ *Why I Live at the P.O.* ’ lives at the P . O . as she needs some space for herself ; she needs to get away from her strange family . In all these stories , Miss Welty portrays each character with deep insight and sympathy .

\*\*\*\*\*@@@@@@@@\*\*\*\*\*

# **CHAPTER I**

**ALIENATION: STORIES OF CHILDHOOD.**

In 'A Memory' one of Welty's best stories, a child on the beach feels alienated from the adult world because of her childhood who hopes to learn the secrets of life by looking at everything, squaring her hands before her eyes to bring the observed thing into a frame. *Ever since I had begun taking painting lessons, I had made small frames with my fingers, to look at everything.* (ACOG—135).

The story begins with a child all by herself on the beach indicating her preference for solitude. Being a weekday she knows the only persons likely to be in the park *were either children who had nothing to occupy them, or those older people whose lives are obscure, irregular, and consciously of no worth to anything.* (ACOG—135). She is at an age when a person tends to pronounce judgment upon

everyone and everything , she is also easily frightened . When a person or happening is not in keeping with her opinion , hope or expectation , she is terrified by a vision of abandonment and wildness . She feels she can foresee everything ; she appears to be a clairvoyant person . So , when nothing happens according to what she foresaw , she is terrified . Her parents who are completely ignorant of this side of her would have been worried about her . *My father and mother , who believed that I saw nothing in the world ..... would have been badly concerned if they had guessed how frequently the weak and inferior and strangely turned examples of what was to come showed themselves to me.* (ACOG—136 ) . She feels convinced that she sees glimpses of future happenings though not the actual events but if whatever happens does not conform to these visions , she becomes terrified . She is not really aware of what she wants to see . She simply feels that whatever she observes , a secret life is being shown to her . She is also obsessed with the notion of

concealment so that even the smallest gesture of a person seems to convey a message to her . This is heightened by the fact that she is in love for the first time , though her love is not reciprocated . She remembers the morning on the stairs at school when she had touched the wrist of the boy she loves . She thinks about this encounter endlessly . This has made her an acute observer and a dreamer . She is always on the alert . One day , when the boy she loved bled through the nose , she fainted because it was unexpected and unforeseen by her . Since then she is doubly anxious for him and her fear for his life increases .

Lying on the beach , remembering this boy she is suddenly aware of other children playing nearby . She notices the presence of adults too . Being a keen observer , a vivid description about these people are given by her beginning from their physique , clothes and their strange and rowdy behaviour . *Sprawled close to where I was lying , at any rate , appeared*

*a group of loud , squirming , ill-assorted people who seemed thrown together only by the most confused accident , and who seemed driven by foolish intent to insult each other , all of which they enjoyed with a hilarity which astonished my heart.* (ACOG—139 ). She is shocked and tries to withdraw to her dreams of touching the boy she loves .

Finally , she emerges from her dream to a deserted beach . The sight of the mess on the beach created by the strangers leads her to tears . It looks like the ravages left by a storm . This being the last morning on the beach , she refuses to let it mar her happiness and continues to lie there squaring her hands before her eyes thinking ahead of her return to school that winter and watching the boy enter the classroom with this hour on the beach accompanying her .

Welty comments looking back on the story :

*The tableau discovered through the young girl's framing hands is an unwelcome realism. How can she accommodate the existence of this view to the dream of love, which she carried already inside her? Amorphous and tender, from now on it will have to remain hidden, her own secret imagining. The frame only raises the question of the vision. (OWB).*

Inside the 'small frame' there is a form of conflict: between secret visions and unwelcome realities. Her secret visions are those that she foresees and forms opinions upon, whereas the unwelcome realities are when these visions do not conform to her opinions and expectations and when that happens, it results in her feeling abandoned and alone. Being still a child and at an age when everything is viewed with curiosity and expectations, to conform to her wishes or visions, the harsh realities are a shock to her and

these shatter her perfect private world that she creates within her. The reality of the adult world is too much for her to handle . Welty's story is told by a young girl which indicates the presence of this conflict even in a child's immature perception .

' *The Winds* ' concerns a child's pre—occupations with her memories and also her visions who has yet to adapt herself to the adult world she belongs to .

The story begins at night with a family of four— Josie , her brother Will and her parents — seeking shelter from the storm . It is the equinox — a seasonal change . They gather in the living room waiting for the storm to pass . There is lightening and strong winds rock the house *like a boat that has been stepped into*. (TWN—352 ) . Lying in a chair , Josie ( the main character ) drifts back to the summertime , to the past where she hunted for fairies , made

sand-castles , whispered to the imaginary Queen and wished to understand the tongue of birds . While she is indulging in this , she is called by adults . Josie then remembers , after that she went out on her bicycle, the golden Princess . All the children are playing ; Josie is also preoccupied with her own activity . *She floated rose petal dry in her mouth , and sucked on the spirals of honeysuckle and the knobs of purple clover . She wore crowns . She added flower necklaces as the morning passed , then bracelets, and applied transfer-pictures to her forehead and arms and legs.....* ( TWN—353 &354) . There is a house across the street and it seems to watch the activities of the children . It is a worn—out old house where eight children live , Cornella being the eldest among them . The rest of the children of the neighbourhood are prevented from playing with them . Josie remembers one particular morning , when she was watching Cornella dry her bright yellow hair in the sun , cascading like a waterfall . Between them an old man driving

his cart was singing a sad song . This made Cornella stamp her foot in anger . Perhaps she was expecting someone else for she was particularly watchful that day . At that moment , Josie is called and she feels that she is never going to catch up with Cornella whom she is suddenly beginning to love . Against all restrictions she wants to befriend Cornella who she feels has rebuffed her . At this point , the house stirs because of strong winds blowing . As a result , it wakes Josie up .

The wind seems to change to songs and Josie withdraws again into her memories of the summer . Playing with her friend , going to the park where she never fails to touch the stone dragons before going home . In her remembered past , Cornella was becoming an integral part of Josie's life . Her every step and each movement is watched by Josie—how Cornella would come out and gaze down the street , *as if she could see far , far away , in a little pantomime*

*of hope and apprehension that would not permit Josie to stir.*  
 (TWN—359) .Josie envisages how it will happen , yet it is like new always . Then unknowingly , she lifts her hands as if calling Cornella but the latter says something worse than the stamping of her foot , which breaks Josie's heart . Her estrangement from society and friends makes Cornella unfriendly and hostile . Just then Will who slept throughout wakes up and yells like a wild Indian and brings Josie back to reality .

Learning from her parents that she too , talks in her sleep just like Will , Josie experiences a kind of shock . This fact of sleep-talking has a disturbing effect on her as if a part of her secret self is being revealed to adults . Have they learnt already about her imaginary Queen , her desire to learn the tongue of birds ? Will they make fun of her now ? As a result , she experiences feelings of detachment . She remembers how in summer , she would go

to Daisy , a cow and release her emotions there alone .Her preference for an animal rather than a human to release her emotions indicates her deep seated want for secrecy . Perhaps she feels that the thought of shedding tears in front of a person may reveal her weaknesses and her imperfections which she will rather keep within her .That the adults may rebuke and tease her if they see her in tears , frightens her .

Once again she thinks back to the summer evening , the games they played , especially how in the twilight they would bring out their steam-boats made out of shoe-boxes and greet each other dreamily . Suddenly , she sees Cornella standing still , staring out at them , so undaunted , so filled with hope . At that moment the storm strikes and interrupts Josie's thoughts . Josie is frightened and for the first time thinks about the future — when the wind calms down and they can indulge in their childhood activities again . She

thinks whether wonders will ever return ? All the good times they had , would they ever return ? Her father then kisses her which brings back the memory of that very night before the equinox occurred . In the evening , they had gone to watch a musical show at the Chautauqua (a summer school ) . Of the musicians , the cornetist has a powerful effect on Josie . She feels as if *the beauty of the world had come ..... through their town that night .....*(TWN—366 ) .

Thunder strikes and pulls Josie back to reality . The waiting is now over , there is now the calm and steady fall of rain . Everyone retires to bed . Lying in her bed , Josie listens to the rain falling . *There , outside, was all that was wild and beloved and estranged , and all that would beckon and leave her , and all that was beautiful .* (TWN—367 ) . Beckon and leave her , and all that will be left with her will be just memories .

The next morning Josie goes out to inspect the signs left by the equinox . She finds a fragment of a letter. She reads it and at once keeps it in the most secret place in her room . It is a letter for Cornella from her lover . This is the reason why Cornella keeps staring out alone , hoping .

In this story one realises the role of memory in Josie's life . It is her refuge . She withdraws to her memories away from adults . Even the tiniest bit of her secret thoughts and dreams being revealed to any adult scares her . Her thoughts are her own whether of the past , present or future . Any revelation of these secrets is unthinkable . She feels the outside world beckon her , but she is yet to come out of her cocoon of secret self and face it .

In both '*A Memory*' and '*The Winds*' , there is a strong play of memory . Welty's essay, '*Some Notes on*

*Time and Fiction ' (1973)* sets forth her attitude towards memory. *Remembering is so basic and vital a part of staying alive that it takes on the strength of an instinct of survival and acquires the power of an art ..... It is also life's work*. Welty views memory on the one hand, as a necessary mode of survival and on the other, to be the realisation that the survival of the mode of memory itself depends on the passionate self-consciousness with which it is apprehended as a way of life. Both the characters of these two stories use memory as a mode of survival. The child in '*A Memory*' uses the memory of the boy she loves to sustain her during her holidays till school begins in winter. There is absolutely no interaction with adults in this story. It deals with only the lonely girl on the beach with her private thoughts and memories. She finds it difficult to balance the reality and her dream of love. Since it is her first love, she expects it to be perfect and also to comply with her expectations. But what she is not prepared

to accept is the reality , for the fact remains that her love is one-sided and not reciprocated . Also , obsessed with concealment her feelings remain hidden , she detaches herself from adults . Normally , children are not so secretive , they share nearly everything with their parents . In the case of this child , even her parents are unaware of the fact that she feels the future happenings and the secrets of life are being revealed to her before hand . She does not reveal this secret of hers to her parents or anyone in case she is rebuked .

Again , in ‘ *The Winds* ’ , the memories of the past summer , have helped Josie spend her time while waiting for the storm to pass . There is communication though , between Josie and her parents but it is only for very brief moments . What is important here too , is her concealed thoughts and memories . Josie keeps her feelings and emotions within her . She does not share it with an adult . She even rejects her mother’s offerings of comfort . She is shocked by learning

that she talks in her sleep . Perhaps , she is wondering how many secrets of hers have been revealed through this sleep talking of hers . Have her parents learnt about her obsession with Cornella or about the imaginary world that she lives in ? All these thoughts makes her detach herself from everyone . Josie is more comfortable releasing her emotions in front of an animal because she feels animals are more patient and richly compassionate and do not judge . Also she can cry in front of an animal because animals cannot speak and so no one will know about her weaknesses .

Thus , we find both the characters withdraw to their memories which as Welty says is not only a mode of survival but also a way of life. The girl on the beach has used memory to sustain during her holidays while Jenny has used memory to pass her time , till the storm is over . Both of them lack self—confidence , to come out in the open , to express themselves . Both seem wary

of the adult world to which they belong ; they are not responsive to it . The girls feel safe in their own world , the private , perfect place they have created for themselves in their thoughts and memories .They do not share anything with their parents . The girl on the beach could have mentioned to her parents that strange visions of what was to come frequently showed themselves to her . But due to lack of communication , her parents are ignorant of this fact and feel that she sees nothing in the world . In the case of Josie , she finds it difficult to show her emotions in front of her parents or anyone else . And since everyone was prevented from playing with the children of the house across the street she is scared to let her parents know about her feelings for Cornella . Thus , they are alienated and separated from the outside world of adults in that , they prefer to live in their own private world where everything is perfect .

\*\*\*\*\*@@@@@@@@\*\*\*\*\*

## **CHAPTER II**

**ALIENATION FROM SOCIETY.**

The first story of this chapter is *Lily Daw and the Three Ladies* where Lily a half-witted girl is unable to make a decision on her own and three earnest ladies are bent on doing what they consider to be the best for her, no matter what the consequences . These ladies represent the social forces .

The story revolves round a day in the life of Lily . On that particular day at the post office of Victory , Aimee Slocum , an employee receives a letter from the Ellisville Institute for the Feeble-Minded of Mississippi . It is an acceptance letter of Lily into that Institution . Mrs. Watts and Mrs. Carson , a Baptist preacher's wife are there too . The three ladies read the letter together . They are

pleased , happy and excited for Lily . Yet , they have no idea what the institution is like . *I've always heard it was lovely down there , but crowded* said one . (ACOG—18). Wanting to give the news to Lily right away , the other two ladies wait for Aimee to finish her duty .

While waiting Mrs. Carson learns of Lily being at the tent show the previous night where she kept staring at the xylophone player . They feel it is unlike her because 'she wasn't bright' . Aimee having completed her work all three ladies set off for Lily's house . They learn with shock on the way of Lily's plans of getting married . Convinced that Lily is their responsibility , they cannot imagine her undertaking anything without their consent . They had already decided earlier that Lily is to remain a spinster . They even persuaded Victory boys not to marry Lily . After her mother's death it is Mrs. Carson who rescued her from her violent father and

provided her with everything .

There is a clear indication from the description of Lily's house that everything is dependant on charity . *The paintless frame house , the wire chair donated from the drugstore that burned .*(ACOG—21&22). They find Lily packing , wearing her pretty new hat . Lily informs them about her plans of marriage and the ladies try to persuade her and change her mind and go to Ellisville instead . But Lily is adamant . They are alarmed on learning that she plans to marry a musician , the xylophone player she met the previous night . They feel he has cheated on Lily because such musicians are always on the move from one town to another and most probably they have a girl in each and every town to whom they have promised marriage ; Lily being one of them . Lily being indecisive is soon persuaded to change her mind .

At the station the whole town of Victory is present to bid Lily goodbye . *The Victory Civic Band had assembled without any orders and was scattered through the crowd . Ed Newton gave false signals to start on his base horn . A crate full of baby chickens got loose on the platform .....* (ACOG—27).

Mrs. Watts and Mrs. Carson sneaked Lily into the train from the other side . Lily is wearing a small hat—an exchange for her pretty hat — and a travelling dress made out of Mrs. Watts' previous summer's mourning dress . Apparently someone close to Mrs. Watts had died the previous summer and she made a dress for the funeral . Aimee is getting emotional , *she was the one who felt things.* (ACOG—27). She is ordered to get off the train . Mrs. Watts and Mrs. Carson are accompanying Lily upto Jackson . Aimee bumps into a stranger who enquires about

Lily . Aimee before realising it asks what he wants Lily for , to which he replies they are getting married . Aimee tells him Lily is leaving for Ellisville then it strikes her that the stranger is the xylophone player . The band is starting to play and the train is starting to leave . Aimee rushes back to the train and informs the two ladies accompanying Lily about the stranger . Excited , they hurriedly got down with Lily unaware of the commotion . They explained that they have decided to marry her off . But Lily now wants to go to Ellisville and not get married , but her protests fall on deaf ears . Lily is not allowed to have a mind of her own and her life is shown as being completely run by these ladies . As soon as they stepped down the train , the band started “ Independence March ” .

The xylophone player is waiting for them . Mrs . Watts beams at him and Mrs. Carson tells him that her

husband being a preacher can get them married . Aimee gets more emotional . *Some of the people thought Lily was on the train and some swore she wasn't . Everybody cheered , though , and a straw hat was thrown into the telephone wires .* (ACOG—31).

This short story is filled with grim comedy . Lily is taken care of by Mrs. Carson as she is a feeble — minded person without any relatives and is therefore dependent on others . In the course of the story it is revealed that her mother died and her father is a violent person . Her father's consistent beatings and his attempt to murder her must have had a permanent effect on Lily's mind . Thus she becomes terribly confused and cannot do much intelligent thinking . Since Mrs. Carson's rescue of her , she is living on charity both in the material as well as psychological sense . Therefore she is unable to speak

her mind , make decisions independently and stop the ladies from interfering in her life . She cannot protest about being forced into spinsterhood . Not only that , she gradually becomes indifferent to everything around her . Because of her indifference she does not complain when her pretty hat is exchanged for a smaller one or her travelling dress is made out of someone else's mourning clothes . Nothing really seems to matter to her .

The decision of the three ladies for Lily is either the institution or marriage . The institution cannot guarantee a solution to the problem of Lily as she may never get well in the institution if they are sending her there to be cured . It could also be that they feel that she belongs there . Either way , their attempt to send her there only highlights Lily's helplessness . Again there is a change of plan and the ladies decide to marry her off to a man of

her choice but who is a complete stranger to them .  
Probably the ladies are simply shaking off their  
responsibility in the nicest possible way .

What Lily really needs is a little love and  
affection from the ladies which she never got from her  
family . And her father's harsh treatment may have  
aggravated her fragile nature and made her what she is .  
For Lily therefore , going to Ellisville and staying locked up  
within , away from people and society or marriage to a  
complete stranger seems to make no difference . In either  
situation , Lily does not show the slightest awareness of  
any connectedness to anybody or anywhere . The trip to the  
institution has been the decision of the three ladies  
whereas getting married was Lily's idea . By being able  
to express this wish she for the first time tries to  
take control of her own life . But when the three ladies

intervene , first with one decision and then changing it , Lily is left as helpless and as isolated as she is shown in the beginning . At the end of the story , even Lily's physical presence is left unlocated and unspecified .

In the next story *Clytie* , the main character of the same name is depicted as a person who is dissociated from her self . She leads a life of utter drudgery performing chores for a family who takes her presence for granted . This is a family called Farr whom Welty describes as being *too good to associate with other people*.(ACOG—145). But in fact the family has fallen on bad days and therefore keeps themselves aloof from the other people in the town .

The story is about a day in Clytie's life which also happens to be her last . Rain starts to fall in the late

afternoon in the town of Farr's Gin . Everybody except one has taken shelter . Clytie Farr is standing still in the middle of the road looking straight ahead , getting all drenched . She always comes out of the big house around this time . Earlier , she used to run around on some pretext or another . Now Clytie simply comes out everyday for no apparent reason . No one speaks to her anymore and the way she rushes about town , people are convinced that one day she will be run over in the busy street . The ladies think that perhaps like her sister Clytie's wits are also leaving her . As she stands still , someone calls out to her to take shelter . But Clytie only *clenched her hands and drew them up under her armpits , and sticking out her elbows like hen wings , she ran out of the street* ..... (ACOG—145).

Reaching home she enters the hall where there is

only a solitary piece of furniture , an organ . Inside the house , *every window was closed , and every shade was down* ..... (ACOG—146) . Octavia , Clytie's sister is furious with her for running off . She calls her ' common ' and chides her for running out and wandering about the streets .

Clytie is sent to the kitchen to prepare supper for the whole family of four — Clytie , father , brother Gerald and sister Octavia . Lighting the wooden stove , Clytie thinks back about herself in the street standing still . She had then seen a child's face looking at her so trustingly and openly . This had made her stand still when suddenly the rain pouring and someone shouting at her stopped her in her meditations . Clytie is beginning to observe faces for sometime now . She feels it is impossible to see a face all at once . The first thing she discovers on seeing a face is that she is seeing it for the first time . She feels that a face is the most profound and moving sight in the whole world . People

conclude that Mr . Tom Bate's Boy who sells peanuts has a clear face which can be read easily . But for Clytie , he is as mysterious as an Egyptian .

The wind blowing in through the open window breaks her thoughts . Octavia would be furious for she never likes to keep doors and windows open . For her rain and sun signifies ruin . But Clytie knows that more than ruin , it is the prying from outside that terrifies Octavia . Having cooked the three meals separately , she takes them upstairs . On the way up , she thinks of their old cook Lethy who used to be with them since their father's childhood . They had to give her up after their father's first stroke . Since then , Lethy has never been allowed in the house by Octavia . The only person allowed in the house is a barber who by appointment comes to shave their father once a week .

Clytie places the tray in her father's room . She wants to feed her father but Octavia snatches the bowl from her . Furious , Clytie screams at her but Octavia is indifferent . As she stands her hair falls over her forehead . She has been ill which resulted in loss of hair . It is now growing and dyed almost purple . Clytie takes Gerald's food to his room . Lying in bed , he looks exactly like their father . After his coffee , he starts reminiscing about the days when he owned a house and was happily married . But the marriage ended soon and he shot his wife . Clytie leaves Gerald with his face hidden. This shows how even the smallest overtures of Clytie for establishing some contact with her family are rebuffed and she is left to her private musings on 'faces'.

As she has her supper she realises that their faces (the family's) always comes between herself and that

familiar looking face that she is constantly in search of . She tries to remember the other face which looked a little like a trusting child's , even the barber's and Lethy's , yet it is different . It is very close to hers . But then either her sister's or brother's or father's or the face of her other brother Henry with a bullet hole through the forehead always interferes with the vision .As a result , she hardly ever gets to see the face properly . Searching for a resemblance of that face , she examines every face in the street . Yet she is always interrupted ; her name is called and frightened , she flees . She is becoming frightened all the time . Clytie's abnormal state of mind is reflected in her appearance also . She never dresses up like she used to earlier . Every once in a while , *she would come out in what was called 'outfit' , all in hunter's green , a hat that came down around her face like a bucket , a green silk dress , even green shoes with pointed toes . She would wear*

*the outfit all one day, if it was pretty day, and then next morning she would be back in the faded jumper with her old hat tied under the chin, as if the outfit had been a dream.* (ACOG—153).

Sometimes when a neighbour asks her about anything—like the rose bush she planted—Clytie answers politely but afterwards she comes rushing out screaming Octavia's negative remarks : *My sister Octavia says you take the rosebush up.....If you don't I'll kill you !... ..* (ACOG—153). Then she runs to the vegetable garden and curses alone . Everyone said she is just imitating Octavia who used to do the same thing years ago but in a much louder voice . Finally she rushes out of the gate and through the town with such speed that *no one in town could have kept up with Miss Clytie.....* (ACOG—154). Having eaten her supper rapidly , she checks the doors and windows to make sure they are locked . It is her routine

before retiring to bed .

The next morning Gerald says he is going to their Farr furnishing store which hardly did any business . Suddenly Octavia screams . “ It’s started” said Gerald . Perhaps he means Octavia’s madness . He furiously tears the napkin and goes back upstairs .

Mr . Bobo the barber arrives exactly at nine to shave Mr. Farr . As he goes upstairs , all the occupants of the house *lined up.....and .....looked at him with repulsion .* (ACOG—156). He wished he had never accepted a letter from Octavia to come and shave Mr . Farr every Friday morning . Of course , it is one thing to be the only person allowed into the Farr residence except of course , the undertaker who had been there when Henry shot himself . Everytime he says to himself he will never return but always returns . As he waits to be summoned , Clytie

comes and looks at his face and touches him with gentleness . For an instant they are quiet , then each lets out a cry . Mr . Bobo turns and flees while Clytie stumbles . Meanwhile Octavia orders Clytie to fetch water from the barrel . She looks into the barrel and sees a face there . She realises *it was the face she had been looking for , and from which she had been separated . It was a wavering , inscrutable face . The brows were drawn together as if in pain . The eyes were large , intent , almost avid , the nose ugly and discolored as if from weeping , the mouth old and closed from any speech . On either side of the head dark hair hung down in a disreputable and wild fashion . Everything about the face frightened and shocked her with its signs of waiting , of suffering .* (ACOG—159). As she recoils from the shock and fright , the face in the water too recoils . It takes her sometime to recognise the face as her own and this recognition makes her *sick at heart , as though the poor , half-remembered vision had finally betrayed her .* (ACOG—159) .

When Octavia's monumental voice cries out *Clytie! Clytie! The water! The water!* , it signals the end of Clytie's vision of herself and Welty says that *Clytie did the only thing she could think of to do* . (ACOG—160) .Clytie's head-long plunge into the barrel symbolizes her final immersion into the spectre of the lost vision which eluded her in life .

Welty describes the last image of Clytie , *When Old Lethy found her , she had fallen forward into the barrel , with her poor ladylike black-stockinged legs up – ended and hung apart like a pair of tongs* . (ACOG—160) .

Clytie's dissociation from people and in the process , from herself begins in a family which was too conscious about their status and position to mingle with the rest of the town whom Octavia calls 'common' . Perhaps a tragedy like the failure of the family business has left them distraught and friendless . The presence of

the only sole furniture — an organ , in their house is indicative of their gradual loss of other possessions . If earlier they were aloof from society because of their wealth and status , now it is their abject poverty which completes the isolation and begins to tell on them mentally too . Neighbours try to be nice but all their attempts are rejected . The peculiar madness borne out of extreme poverty and family pride forces Octavia to eccentricities that prohibit all social contact . So curtains and shades are pulled down and doors and windows are kept locked .

Nobody except the barber is allowed in the house . Under Octavia's control they live an extremely solitary existence cut off from all communication or contact with the neighbours and society as a whole . Finally even the barber flees unable to bear the strangeness of their behaviour . With the barber's exit from the household the alienation of the Farr's seem to be complete .

As for Clytie, the protagonist of the story, the exit is of a different kind. Her constant search for the illusive face is the only energy which keeps her going in a household devoid of all meaningful relationships and an estranged society. When she recognises her face in the water in the barrel as the one which she has been unable to focus on, the realisation shatters her. Her head-long plunge into the depth of the water which results in her death is symbolic of the futility of her search. The finality of her death confirms her alienation not only from her family and society but in the end from her own self.

*A Curtain of Green* is about a woman, Mrs. Larkin who has stopped relating to the outside world after her husband's death.

In Larkin's Hill, the rain comes regularly in the afternoon around two o'clock. But one particular day the sun is still shining at five o'clock. Everyone is waiting for

the rain . However , neither the rain nor the heat of the sun can affect Mrs . Larkin who works daily in her garden—a large densely grown plot—behind the house . She lives alone after her husband's death . The hedge bordering the garden is so high that the garden can be seen only from the upstairs windows of the neighbours . After Mr. Larkin's death , Mrs. Larkin is seen nowhere but deeply engrossed in her garden . Every morning she comes out slowly with her uncombed hair and wanders for a while among the plants . *And then a sort of sturdiness would possess her .....and then she would kneel in the flowers and begin to work .* (ACOG—187).

She works tirelessly all day till a servant calls her at dinnertime . Even the rain stops her momentarily only . *It might seem that the extreme fertility of her garden formed at once a pre-occupation and a challenge to Mrs. Larkin .* (ACOG—187 & 188) . Somehow she seems not to seek

order in her garden . She hardly trims , cuts , separates . She never strives for a beautiful garden . Her neighbours peering through the window thinks it looks more like a jungle . After Mr . Larkin's death—after whose father the town is named—the neighbours used to visit Mrs . Larkin frequently but she never appreciated it . So they stopped coming to her place and sometimes just peered through their windows out of curiosity .

So , on the morning of that particular day when the sun is still shining at five o' clock , the neighbours hear Jamey – a working Negro boy—whistling in the garden . He comes occasionally to work in Mrs. Larkin's garden . She wants Jamey to finish work before it starts raining . As she hoes , the memory of that fateful day returns . It was the previous summer . She was waiting in the front porch for the arrival of her husband from work . She heard his car approaching . At that moment without warning , a chinaberry

tree suddenly crushed over the car . From where she stood she was saying , “ You can’t be hurt . ” But the tree had crushed her husband to death . She stood on the porch shocked . *It was an accident that was incredible , when her love for her husband was keeping her safe .* (ACOG—190).

She continued hoeing with the memory behind her . Suddenly she notices that everything is quiet . Even Jamey is motionless and has stopped whistling . She calls him but can hardly be heard in the dense garden . She is terrified as if her loneliness is pointed out to her by some outside force . She walks towards him and notices how young and docile he looks . As she draws near he does not turn . She can see the side of his face . She feels as *if that glimpse of the side of his face , that turned away smile , were a teasing , innocent , flickering and beautiful vision—some mirage to her strained and wandering eyes .*

(ACOG—191). Living a lonely and secluded life, the sight of a smiling child should have been like a sight for sore eyes. However, his docility infuriated her with a feeling of condemnation. Strangely she thinks of her husband, how innocent he was, unaware of what was to befall him. Death came to him without warning. So when she is behind Jamey she is still for a moment and then suddenly raises her hoe above her head. In doing so, her overall sleeves fall back exposing the part of her arms which was not burned by the sun, “the shocking fact of their youth.”

She holds the handle of the hoe and looks at Jamey so lost in thought. *The head of Jamey, bent there below her, seemed witless, terrifying, wonderful, almost inaccessible to her, and yet in its explicit nearness meant surely for destruction, .....the bowed head holding so obviously and so deadly its ridiculous dream.* (ACOG—192). Mrs. Larkin thinks, *such a head she could strike*

*off , intentionally..... (ACOG—192) . Thus gripped by such irrational thoughts , she ponders on the question of life and unpredictable death , Life and death , she thought , gripping the heavy hoe , life and death , which now meant nothing to her but which she was compelled continually to wield with both her hands, ceaselessly asking , Was it not possible to compensate ? to punish ? to protest ?..... (ACOG—192) .*

The suddenness and ease with which the accident took her husband's life is felt anew by Mrs . Larkin as she stands behind Jamey . She thinks how easy it would be to take his young life ' to compensate the loss of her husband .' As she stands on the brink of this 'pale darkness' , the rain starts to fall and she is jolted back into reality .

In contemplating to kill Jamey with the hoe , Mrs .

Larkin re-lives the moment of her husband's death which she witnessed . Probably she wants others to experience what it feels like to be caught unawares by death . She wants to inflict the same pain she feels on everyone but the rain comes and saves Jamey . She then realises that she cannot prevent the inevitable and collapses after that . When she finally stirs in response to Jamey's call , it is a moment of recognition for him . He seems to understand the immense loneliness of her life . He had also sensed an intangible chasm between them when she was standing behind him . Looking down at the collapsed Mrs. Larkin , Jamey can only run away from such inhospitable loneliness . This fact eventually completes Mrs . Larkin's alienation from all human bonds .

*Asphodel* is the story of Sabina who lives a solitary life . The story of Sabina is told by way of reminiscence by three old ladies .

The three old maids—Cora , Phoebe and Irene —are out on a picnic . There is sadness on their faces as their Miss Sabina's funeral was just the day before . It is a bright cloudless afternoon when they reach Asphodel—a golden ruin — their picnic spot . They have come in a buggy .They know Sabina would never have appreciated their going over to Don McInnis' Asphodel .

Reaching their destination they settle down with their food . Then each one of them starts reminiscing about the deceased Sabina. *It was like an old song they carried in their memory , the story of the two houses separated .....but actually situated almost back to back on the ring of hills , while completely hidden from each other .....(TWN—334).*

Sabina is forced to marry Don McInnis of Asphodel by her father . Mr . McInnis is the last of the men of .

Asphodel and Sabina the last of hers . So all hope lies in Mr .McInnis to continue the line of their family . He is aware of this fact and seems to gloat over it . On the wedding day Sabina stands stoically and rigidly by his side tolerating his malicious laughter and condescending behaviour . They have three children but tragedy strikes , all the three die reaching maturity . Minerva is drowned before her wedding day, Theo is killed in a fall off the horse and Lucian shoots himself . These incidents only serve to make Sabina withdraw into a stance akin to proud aloofness . She will rather stand with such pride than reveal her emotions at her misfortune . But things get worse ; her husband starts having extra-marital affair which she learns from the three ladies . She listens without expression then suddenly she is cursing everybody — her husband , the other woman, her children , even the ladies . By then even her father was dead and there was no one to comfort her . So furious and outraged , she asks the ladies ,

*How can I show him the hate I have for him ? (TWN—338) .*

Learning that Don McInnis takes the other woman to Asphodel , Sabina in anger drives him out of the house . *Drove him out with a whip , in the broad daylight . Mr . McInnis seems to enjoy all this , He walked straight ahead as if to humour her, with his white hat lifted and held in his hand.* (TWN—338). At the gateway she cried for the woman to come out but nobody did . She accused the whole town of protecting her . Asphodel burnt that night. Hearing the news , Sabina is pleased but ever since then she becomes remote from everyone . She starts living a secluded life , grand in her isolation . She then lays a rule that the name of Asphodel and Don McInnis are not to be mentioned anymore .

After that she regularly comes down the hill as if

imposing her will on the whole population . She wears a wig as her hair has fallen off due to an illness . She wears all the fineries of her family which is so heavy that she has to drag herself through the streets . She is feared by all , she is aware of everything going on in town , nothing escapes her . *She dominated every ceremony , set the times for weddings and for funerals , even for births , and she named the children . She ordered lives about and moved people from one place to another in the town , brought them together or drove them apart , with the mystical and rigorous devotion of a priestess in a story ; and prophesied all the things beforehand . She foretold disaster , and was ready with hot breads and soups to send by running Negroes to every house the moment it struck . And she expected her imparted recipes to be used forever after , and no other .* (TWN—340).

But she never enters the post office . She has no

idea what it is and it is the only thing in town which remains beyond her power. Yet in the end she enters the post office and the atmosphere there becomes charged with fear and apprehension that something dreadful was going to happen. ....*and alarm like the vibration from the fireball trembled in the notes of the air, and the crowded room seemed to shake, to totter.* (TWN—341).

Seeing her standing at the door Cora remembers ,  
*We looked at one another in great fear of her than ever before in our lives, and we would have run away or spoken to her, except for a premonition that this time was the last, this demand the final one.* (TWN—341).

Sabina begins to speak demanding her letter. She has never received a letter in her life and knows nobody outside the town. Receiving a negative reply, she begins to tear and throw up everything. Madness seems to come

over her . She is raging , rocking and dancing . *A fury and a pleasure seemed to rise inside her , that went out like lightning through her hands .* said Cora. *She threw down her stick , she advanced with her bare hands . She seized upon everything before her, and tore it to pieces . She dragged the sacks about , and the wastebaskets , and the contents she scattered like snow . Even the ink pad she flung against the wall, and it left a purple mark like a grape stain that will never wear off. She was possessed then..... as she could never have been possessed . (TWN—342).* Finally she stands still . She had finished her fury and lay *toppled on the floor , her wig fallen from her head and her face awry like a mask .(TWN—343).*

Thus , the three ladies come to the end of their reminiscing of Sabina's life . Suddenly they hear a shudder among the vines growing along the columns . They see a naked man stepping out in front of them staring . He scared

them , .....*the three old maids first knelt , then stood , and with a cry clung with their arms upon one another .(TWN—343) . In a soft little chorus of screams they waited , looking back over their shoulders , with their arms stretched before them . Then their shoes were left behind them , and the three made a little line across the brook ,..... (TWN—344) . They only stopped on reaching safety beside a ‘No Trespassing’ sign . The bearded man did not move at all .*

When they regain their breath they are convinced that the naked man is Don McInnis . Cora said Sabina would have been delighted seeing his condition now because her revenge on him would have complete . Suddenly a large number of goats appeared from behind the columns rushing towards them . They jump into the buggy and their horse start running . But since the goats are catching up they start throwing biscuits from the basket they have

saved for the way home . Yet the goats keep catching up . Only when they throw the baked hen did the goats stop . In this manner they made their escape.

Irene cannot help thinking that Sabina would have been ashamed of them if she was still alive . Cora feels Mr . McInnis must not be allowed his liberty but Phoebe simply laughs .

It is clear that Sabina was born to a well-to-do family . Her house atop a hill commanded the town at its foot . She grows up confined within the four walls of her house , secure and safe . When she is of marriageable age her father finds a suitor of equal status — Mr . Don McInnis of Asphodel . She has no say in this matter—the most important event of her life . She quietly surrenders to her father's wishes . The marriage is a disaster ; Sabina has to bear with Mr McInnis' intolerable behaviour . Even their

children die as they reach maturity . To top it all Mr .  
McInis is unfaithful to her .Yet her pride prevents her from  
breaking down , she never sheds a tear . But the composure  
breaks when she learns of her husbands infidelity . Though  
she has been docile for so long , at this stage she musters  
enough courage and is able to throw her husband out of  
the house .

Sabina has led a life of secluded protection before  
her marriage and had no communication with others  
outside the security of her home . Feelings of loneliness  
and desperation must have taken a toll on her . Her  
father's indomitable will rules the entire household and  
she submits to it without a murmur . However , there is a  
vital difference between the father's autocratic behaviour and the  
husband's subsequent treatment of her . Whereas the father  
forces her to marry the man of his choice because he  
thought that it would be good for her to marry a man of

status , her husband's behaviour towards her is devoid of any human consideration . Even the children born out of this loveless marriage who might have been a source of consolation for Sabina die , leaving her alone and desolate . The last straw is when she learns of her husband's infidelity . It is then that she severs all ties with him and starts living a life of absolute detachment from all human interaction .

Irene said , *she was born grand , with a will to impose.* (TWN—337). All her frustrations and pent-up feelings of her past solitary years and at her present situation surfaces and it is the ordinary townspeople who have to bear the brunt of her fury when she struts in the streets proclaiming her power and imposing her will .

The one place that is beyond her domain is the post office . Having no friends and never receiving a letter

in her life, she has no need to go to the post office—the one inalienable indication of her lonely life. It is a blow to her pride to realise that she is the only one who does not receive a letter in her life. The post office is the one space which seems to be outside her power in a town where she thinks she has supreme authority. So on that fateful day she enters the post-office and demands her letter in a kind of showdown with this elusive space. When she is told that there is no letter for her, she vents all her pent-up fury and in the process loses her own life.

Sabina's story is an example of what being subjected to the tyrannical authority of a parent and the inhuman treatment of a husband can do to a woman's psyche. The only possible reaction to such violence is her violent behaviour in the post office. For sometime she tries to contain her feelings by assuming

the role of a tyrant herself. But on that day when she realises that there was no letter for her at the post office, it signifies her total alienation from everyone and everything around her and she snaps. All the assumed arrogance and posture of self-assurance collapse and as a result of the violent outburst, she suffers a stroke and dies. The cycle of her alienated life culminates in her physical death.

*Livvie* is the story of a girl of sixteen who marries an old man named Solomon. He takes her away to a place in a deep country. Even the way to this place is deserted but Solomon tells Livvie that the road was busy once upon a time. Solomon loves Livvie but keeps her confined in the house. She is not allowed to visit her parents anymore. People feel that Solomon hides his wife because of jealousy. So nine years went by and now Solomon is bedridden while Livvie is still a young woman.

Solomon has a beautiful house . It consists of three rooms — living room , bedroom and kitchen . Solomon has worked very hard to acquire such a beautiful house built by his own hands . The house is filled with furniture , even his quilt is a result of hard work of his mother . It has *twenty-one different colors , four hundred and forty pieces , and a thousand yards of thread* .....(TWN—380). The Kitchen is filled with cutlery and plenty of food . There is only one possession of Livvie — a picture of a baby of the family she worked for back home .

Even the outside of Solomon's house is described beautifully . There are chairs to relax and flowers grown and fruit trees on either side of the house . At the entrance there are *bare crape-myrtle trees with every branch of them ending in a coloured bottle , green or blue* . (TWN—381). Solomon is a superstitious person who believes that the bottle trees prevent evil spirits from

entering the house by luring and trapping them inside the coloured bottles .

Though the house is beautiful , it is isolated . There are cabins of the tenants further away but Livvie is not allowed to go there . The field-hands who work for Solomon are forbidden to look at Livvie and vice versa . Even the road below , whenever Livvie explores , it is deserted so that leaves reach upto her knees . She is actually allowed only upto the well and the hen-coop .

Livvie is a perfect wife , she works tirelessly , loves to cook and surprise Solomon . But lately he hardly tastes his food and is slowly wearing out . One day Livvie watches the field-hands working together . There is a break and everyone gathers together to have their lunch . Livvie thinks of Solomon blissfully sleeping , unaware of all happenings . She wonders what would Solomon's reaction be

if she was to go and join the workers . Solomon would be angry and ashamed of her because she has defied him . But she remembers her mother's advise who said , *I rather a man be anything , than a woman be mean .* (TWN—386).

Later , a lady comes by selling cosmetics . Livvie tries a lipstick but is unable to pay as she has no money . Also she is worried lest her husband wakes and hears a stranger in the house . He would not have appreciated it . The lady is curious and wants a look at him to which Livvie obliges . She looks at Solomon then at Livvie as if they share a secret , then the lady leaves . As Livvie sits by Solomon he awakes but can hardly see her and notice the difference — Livvie with the lipstick on . She then realises that her husband is dying — this is the secret that she and the lady shared .

The truth scares her and she decides to go for a walk and goes further down the Natchez Trace . Suddenly she sees a man dressed finely who introduces himself as Cash . As they start walking together Livvie cannot help but stare at him . It is not his dress or his walk or she may not have looked at him at all . Yet sometimes the sudden appearance of people in one's life makes a vast difference . They can appear either at the right moment or the wrong moment . Cash's appearance in Livvie's life seem appropriate and she welcomes his company . She is feeling sad and lonely thinking of Solomon afraid that he may die soon . At such times she needs someone to share her feelings with or just someone there beside her . They walk on till they are back at Solomon's house . Seeing the same old familiar house and its surroundings Livvie is depressed , she feels trapped here .

Cash whistles a tune Livvie is familiar with . At

last it dawns on her that Cash is a field-hand . Livvie begins to have doubts about him , wondering how he can look so fine , he must have stolen money from Solomon . Curiously she goes closer to him when suddenly he grasps her and she surprises herself by kissing him spontaneously. At that moment Livvie intuitively realises that Solomon's death is near and she runs to her husband's room to find him sleeping soundly . Cash follows her inside and they both look at Solomon . It is said people's faces tell of secrets not known to the one who looks at them while they sleep . While asleep Solomon's face seemed to reveal how all his life he has struggled to build his house which was *the infinite thing with him , and he could see no end to the respect he would contrive and keep in a house* . (TWN—395) . But he has build a lonely house , the way he would built a cage and in building it , he was *like the builder-slaves of Egypt who forgot or never knew the origin and meaning of the thing to which they gave all the*

*strength of their bodies and used up all their days.*(TWN—395). He is more laborious than the beetle . But now he looks as if he is taking a rest from his life-long labour . Suddenly Solomon opens his eyes . Cash feels he can easily strike Solomon but again such a strong man now weakened cannot be struck without warning. Solomon begins to speak : *Young ones can't wait* .(TWN—397) . He has come to the realisation that his hold on Livvie is slipping away and he cannot prevent the inevitable . He indicates that perhaps Cash is the young man Livvie is waiting for . He knew Cash McCord since he was a child . He then asks forgiveness for his sins of marrying a young girl and isolating her from her family and friends . After that he lifts his silver watch — his prized possession— gives it to Livvie and dies peacefully .

Livvie leaves the room with Cash following . She is free at last from the responsibilities of looking after her old

husband . There is no one to restrain her freedom anymore .  
 Even the surroundings seem happy . *Outside the red-birds  
 were flying .....the sun was in all the bottles .....and  
 the young peach was shining , in the middle of them  
 with the bursting light of spring .* (TWN—398).

Livvie's detachment from any societal responsibilities begins soon after her marriage . She is taken to a place far from her home and since then she is not permitted to visit her family . She is also forbidden to visit the tenants near their home and to talk or even look at the field workers . Even within the compound , she can venture only upto the well and the hen-coop . Such are the restrictions on her freedom . But she bears it all because she is a dutiful , loving wife . Also her mother has ingrained in her that no matter what , women must never be mean . So she tolerated her husband's possessive behaviour . All the same , her loneliness and longing for companionship is indicated by her

desire to mingle with the workers who seem so happy together. But the fear of her husband prevents her from going against his wishes and attempting communication with others beyond her confinement.

However, she is aware of the fact that she will eventually be free from the bonds of her husband's possessiveness. When Solomon falls sick and is bedridden, she has the first glimpse of hope and thinks that when he dies, she will be free. And so it happens in the end.

In this story, the regaining of freedom is shown rather as inevitable than any conscious effort on the part of the protagonist. Solomon in his last gesture to Livvie offers his most cherished possession, his silver watch. In symbolic terms this can be interpreted as Solomon's final admission that no one can stop the march of time and when his time on earth is over, it is the beginning of Livvie's time to be

free and happy at last , in the companionship of Cash , a person who in Solomon's words is 'the young man Livvie waited for' .

*At The Landing* is a story similar to *Livvie* except instead of Solomon , it is the grandfather who puts restrictions on Jenny's movements .

Jenny's grandfather is dying when the story opens . He dreams of a great flood coming . He comes to Jenny's room and tells her so . *It is coming* , he said . *It's the river* ..... (TWN—399). There used to be a river at The Landing but it is now gone three miles away . It comes back only during floods . Jenny seeing her grandfather's condition takes him back to bed . He dies that night .

Jenny has been living with her grandfather upon the hill all her life . The town 'The Landing' is at the foot of the hill where the road drops like a waterfall . They are

hardly seen at The Landing . The grandfather is too old and Jenny too shy and so they stay together inside their home . Jenny spends her monotonous days either looking at her mother's paintings or sitting on each chair surrounding the dining table or counting the plates in the closet . But she knows one day she is going to be free , be independent. *She was calm the way a child is calm , with never the calmness of a spirit . But like distant lightening that silently bathes a whole shimmering sky , one awareness was always trembling about her : one day she would be free to come and go . (TWN—402).*

Everytime she ventures out , her grandfather calls her back . She is only permitted to visit her mother's grave . On one such day she sees Floyd across the ravine . He intrigues Jenny . It is rumoured that he used to fish all night and sleep all day . He comes towards Jenny and stares at her . Then suddenly he is kneeling down and

drinking the spring water . He then goes back to the field and sleeps. Jenny watches him sleep . *The day she watched him in the woods , she felt .....that her innocence had left her .....But if innocence had left , she still did not know what was to come .* (TWN—406). Jenny is a naive girl , not worldly wise living a secluded existence with her grandfather as her only companion . He is the only person she is in close contact with . So now watching Floyd sleep , who is a total stranger to her , Jenny feels as if she has lost her innocence . But what the loss of that ‘innocence’ meant or what was to come next , she is unable to grasp . Since then they meet regularly though there is a barrier between them . The graves are on her side while the pastures , the sun and the grazing horse are on Floyd’s side symbolising Jenny’s dull , monotonous life and Floyd’s free life compared to hers . But there is no actual communication . Jenny is beginning to fall in love with Floyd . She longs to be free to express her love but reality

comes in the form of her grandfather who always calls her back . Everytime he asks her whether she had put flowers on her mother's grave , as if to pull her back to the past and prevent her from having anything to do with the present surroundings

Her grandfather cannot look at Jenny without wonder . She reminds him so much of her mother who like Jenny had a strong urge for freedom and would rave and rant which he ignored . However , Jenny is patient and obedient towards her grandfather . She feels nothing begins in her own heart and that she is there to fulfil someone else's wishes and desires . The only time she feels hopeful is whenever Floyd passes by with his fish . Floyd somehow inspires her . She craves for the freedom he enjoys without restrictions . She knows that one day she too is going to enjoy the same kind of freedom . *In The Landing , every person that moved was watched out of sight ,*

*and it made a little pause in every life . (TWN—404) . But for Jenny the moment of hope was when the rude wild Floyd walked through The Landing carrying the big fish he had caught . (TWN—404).*

So , in the morning after her grandfather's death , Jenny goes to town to give the news to the townspeople . Her destination is a store cum post office . Everyone acknowledges her but they are not supposed to talk to her . Must have been her grandfather's rule . The first person she sees is Floyd and she remembers her grandfather's order not to speak to Floyd again . So she walks out and informs the old man playing cards about her grandfather's demise . They offer condolences and take her to the women then back home .

Later that day Jenny meets Floyd by a small river .

Again no conversation takes place . Jenny can not say anything to Floyd because she feels it is absurd to say , *It is a heavy heart that makes me clumsy.....Forgive the heart that loves more than the tongue can say or the hands can do . Look back at me every time I look at you and never feel pity , for what my heart holds this minute is better than what you offer the least bit less .* (TWN—414-415) . Even if Floyd is aware of her feelings his attitude is one of indifference . He is standing looking at The Landing waiting for the rain . Why he waits for the rain remains a mystery . Jenny realises that his patience is running out and he will soon leave if the rain does not come .

She knows this ‘ moment ’ together by the river will soon be over . She watches a bubble blowing up from beneath the river and suddenly realises that this is the true ‘moment’ which will continue to exist regardless of her or

Floyd . The bubbles make her realise that clear true love does exist in the world . People may come and go but true love will continue to exist . *There it was , existing there where they came and were beside it now . It is in the bubble in the water in the river , and it has its own changing and its mysteries of days and nights* ..... (TWN—415-416) . But soon their moment together ended and Floyd departs The Landing , and the rain comes after his departure .

The rainfall is continuous and at last the flood comes at dawn . Jenny along with the others run for safety towards the hill . Soon the whole town is engulfed in the flood . Floyd is back and Jenny is in his boat . She attempts conversation but again her attempts fail . Due to lack of sleep for a day and a night , Floyd takes her to a small dry place where she sleeps . Later he wakes her up and ‘violates’ her . Even then , after what has happened

Floyd .....*was without care or demand and as gay as if he were still clanging the bucket at the well . (TWN—417) . .....for him it was all a taking freely of what was free.*(TWN—418). This indicates that though Floyd is aware of her feelings towards him he is insensitive towards Jenny . He cooks for both of them and Jenny tries to eat as much as Floyd simply to please him and also to grab his attention . But she realises that nothing in her or what she does , affects Floyd in any perceptible way .

Later , watching the moon so far from them she feels better . The moon is shining in all its glory despite its isolated existence . It looks serene , peaceful and better off staying far away all alone . Jenny identifies herself with the moon — she too desires to be far away from the flood and its torments and be happy in her own world .

At last the flood ceases and everything is in a

mess . . . . . *the little town had turned the color of river water and the trees in their shame of refuse rattled like yellow pebbles and the houses sank below them scuffed and small.* (TWN—419). Seeing the condition of her house Jenny is obsessed with cleaning so much so that she even forgets Floyd . Yet ‘the shock of love’ brings a tremble to her fingers every now and then . Soon the trembling stopped and she is healed of her love . She hopes one day her life will shine radiantly with love and when that happens , she will never let love go but clasp it . Now , *she was like a house with all its rooms dark from the beginning , and someone would have to go slowly from room to room , slowly and darkly , leaving each one lighted behind , before going to the next .* (TWN—421).

The Landing being a small town every news and gossip spreads like wild fire . Everyone comes to know of Jenny’s love for Floyd through three old women . One of

them thinks Floyd is a Gipsy , the other is beyond care who he is , while the third lady thinks he is a descendant of the Natchez Indian . Through all this Jenny wonders what love , deeper than what she is feeling now will be like . Such kind of love will be quiet , she thinks . Perhaps what Jenny means by quiet love is that she need not express in words or actions her growing love for Floyd . It is enough that the knowledge of her love is within her . She will rather remain quiet than make a big issue out of her love , but she cannot forget Floyd . Looking into the core of the amber beads she realises the difference between the radiance within and outside of the beads . In the same way she knows Floyd's heart is .....*clear still , safe and deep in his innocence , safe and away from the outside , deeper than quiet* . (TWN—424). She sees Floyd from within . She realises there is a vast difference between Floyd's inner and outer personalities . She feels Floyd is still pure

and innocent within though he presents a tough exterior .

So , in July , Jenny leaves The Landing in search of Floyd . It is dusk when she reaches the river . A group of fisherman have set up camp near the riverside . She enquires about Floyd and learns that he has gone fishing but always returns to the camp . She is allowed to wait for him . After sometime the men came in to her one by one . She actually speaks to the first one . She protests against their but is helpless . Her first experience outside the safety and security of her home is devastating . This is her contact with the reality of life outside her small world . *By the fire , little boys were slapped crossly by their mothers — as if they knew that the original smile now crossed Jenny's face , and hung there no matter what was done to her , like a bit of color that kindles in the sky after the light has gone .* (TWN—428).

In this last story of the second chapter, the main character Jenny is brought up under her grandfather's strict supervision. The early loss of his daughter has made him protective of his grandchild to such an extent that he secluded her from the rest of the town. Her only human contact is her grandfather. She desires to be free like her mother yet she is more patient than her mother as she realises that she will be free someday. Jenny's freedom is permitted only upto her mother's grave; her grandfather does not permit her going beyond that point. Torn between her personal desires and her grandfather's restrictions Jenny grows up in an alienated environment, innocent of all knowledge of the violence and danger that exist in the world.

Because of her seclusion from outside world, she finds it difficult to express herself even in an ordinary conversation with another person. The reticence that has been induced in her, makes her extremely shy and almost

incoherent . This fact is clearly indicated in the story because even during the flood in her attempted conversation with Floyd : *She knew at once there was nothing in her life past or even now in the flood that would make anything to tell ..... She would like to tell him some strange beautiful thing , if she could speak at all , something to make him speak .* (TWN—417). And despite Floyd's insensitive violation of her and taking advantage of her naivete , she seems to have no hard feelings towards him . This is because she believes that Floyd is not the kind of person that he appears to be . She endows him with qualities that she wants him to possess.. She does not realise that Floyd does not really care for her but is simply accepting what is available at hand . Jenny fails to realise this because she has very little contact with people and therefore is a poor judge of human character , especially that of a man .

Jenny's experience with Floyd brings about a change in her outlook on life. Now that her grandfather is dead, there is no one who can restrain her from venturing out of the environment that she has known all her life. It is true that she does have strong feelings for Floyd which motivates her to undertake the journey in search of him. But much more than just love and longing for him, to her, he is the link to the outside world from which she has been shut out for so long. It is by establishing her connectedness to this link once again that she will eventually gain her freedom from an alienated existence. In her attempt to do so, she suffers another violation at the hands of the fishermen.

The grandfather's over-protectiveness made Jenny vulnerable to her own and others's desires and her eventual freedom from her alienated life is gained at a high price.

But in the end Jenny is left with no choice but to go out into this real world where cruelty and violence are facts of life .

\*\*\*\*\*@a@a@a@a\*\*\*\*\*

## **CHAPTER III**

**ALIENATION DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES.**

*The Key* is the first story of this chapter. It is about a deaf and dumb couple who set out on a trip to Niagara Falls in the naive hope of finding love and happiness. They have never been understood by people and are looked upon with indifference. Their experience in life has always made them wary and suspicious of everyone and everything around them.

The story begins in the waiting room of a remote station where people sat in two rows of benches, waiting for the train. The train is late yet no one seems in a hurry. Among these people are Ellie and Albert Morgan. Their poverty is indicated by the possession of a single suitcase from which the buckle is missing.

Ellie Morgan is a healthy woman of about forty.

She carries a black satchel purse which contains her savings which made this trip possible . Perhaps this is her first trip in her life for she is very tense . Her face is sad . Albert Morgan is smaller than his wife . He sits motionless beside her . Welty describes him as : *He looked home-made, as though his wife had self-consciously knitted or somehow contrived a husband when she sat alone at night .* (ACOG—62) . He is so shy that he appears to say, *Don't look—no need to look—I am effaced .* (ACOG—62) . He presents a sorry picture of a weak and insignificant person .

The only person standing is a young man . His excessive energy separates him from the rest who look exhausted and tired . He looks like a stranger in town or can be a criminal or gambler yet there is gentleness in his eyes . He has a quick tender regard for the people near him . However , there is something in him which gives the impression that he desires to be secretive . He has a key which he keeps tossing from one hand to the other . In this continued gesture the key drops to the ground .

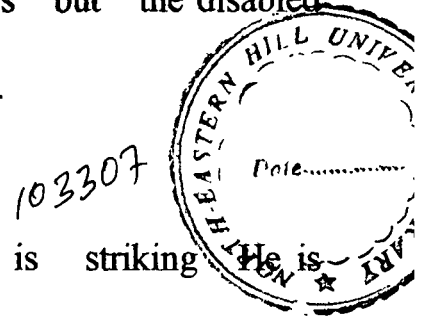
Everyone looks at him for a moment as the key makes a noise and then looks away. As the stranger goes to retrieve his key it slides towards Albert's feet. He sees it and picks it up with wonder. Being deaf he and his wife are the only persons who did not hear the key fall. Seeing him, the young man does not claim the key but simply watches. Albert looks at the key as if it reminds him of some distant memory, as if the sudden appearance of the key was as unexpected and meaningful as that distant memory of his. That particular memory of his must have brought him happiness as much as the sudden appearance of the key has. Albert looks at his wife. Ellie suddenly begins to communicate to him in sign language. People then realise that they are both deaf and dumb. They realise it and dismiss the discovery all at once.

Albert excitedly tries to convey to his wife of the possible joy and luck the key will bring to their lives. *It means something..... Maybe when we reach Niagara Falls we will*

*even fall in love ..... Maybe our marriage was really for love .....not for the other reason—both of us being afflicted in the same way , unable to speak , lonely because of that .*

(ACOG—66) . He cannot contain his happiness at his discovery . Ellie is embarrassed of him and asks him to be quiet but secretly she is pleased . Suddenly he is quiet and the young man wanders back to the wall . The train comes and goes but the disabled couple and the stranger are still in the station .

Something about the young man is striking . He is acutely aware of the world despite his youth . The intensity of his eyes seems to reveal both the joys and sorrows of his life : as if he has experienced much of life at such a young age , as if his sufferings and pain were much more than anyone of his age could bear . Yet he has borne it all and his eyes reveal everything . It was he alone who did not just dismiss the couple . Having gone through so much himself he must have understood their situation . He comes closer to the couple . His closeness makes



Ellie suspicious . The Morgans begin to communicate with their hands rapidly . Ellie suspiciously asks Albert what the stranger want . Albert suggests perhaps he wants the key . They have no idea that the key did belong to the stranger . Albert fondles the key in his pocket for reassurance . He strongly believes in the miraculous power of the key since it has appeared mysteriously and unexpectedly . *There was something — something he could almost remember but not quite — which would let him keep the key always to himself* . (ACOG—70) . Albert assures Ellie of the safety of the key . Ellie nods , yet she is doubtful and anxious . She never fully agrees with Albert , ever .

They are remarkably similar as if they are *cousins even, afflicted in the same way, sent off from home to the state institute* ..... (ACOG—69). In spite of their unawareness of the ways of the world , they appear to be preparing themselves to face any danger that might befall them . They do not know when anything drastic might happen to them , anywhere , anytime . Ellie is more

experienced than Albert and is wary all the time . She is there to protect Albert . But because of her suspicious nature she fails to realise that Albert needs more than her care and protection . He needs to be reassured all the time that he is loved too .

Ellie takes out a picture of Niagara Falls from her purse but suspiciously makes a sign to Albert to hide it from the young man . Albert remembers their teacher telling them about the sense of hearing . The teacher had indicated that by leaning on the railing shown in the picture one can hear the Falls . It can be heard with the whole self and after that one can never forget what hearing is . Ellie loves Albert's repeated narration of this story . Ellie thinks they would have reached their destination had they not missed the train . She is ignorant of the distance to the Falls . Depressed at having missed the train they think of the uselessness of all the hard work of many years making this trip possible . For Ellie , unhappiness is when she thinks of this particular day , also of their lives together besides other things .

As a young girl it had been pointed out to her that married couples visit the Niagara Falls to start their lives with happiness . With this hope of finding happiness in her mind she had worked harder than Albert to make the journey to the Falls possible . And though Albert thinks of the impossibility of their journey , the mysterious appearance of the key has renewed his faith . He also secretly feels that the key is a symbol of happiness not with Ellie but for him alone .

The young man takes a second key from his pocket with a printed tag '*Star Hotel , Room 2*' and places it in Ellie's hands . As he turns and walks away he can see the uselessness of his gesture . He knows that they will either throw it away or keep it as a sign of something . The thought may never occur to them to go to the hotel and spend the night there .

Being a deaf and dumb couple , Ellie and Albert Morgan have to use sign language . This fact separates them from

the rest of the people . They have been sent to a special school or institution as Welty suggests . Their experience of life does not seem a pleasant one as they are of a suspicious nature and are constantly wary . Even though they have been taught to communicate between themselves they have no other education . For this reason they believe that they will reach Niagara Falls when the train stops at the next station . They are a lonely couple in search of happiness . Their disability is the main source of their unhappiness , solitude and sense of alienation from others .

The sudden appearance of the key brings about a drastic change in their lives , especially in Albert's . He is now more positive than ever before . He is fully certain that love and happiness await them at the Falls and they will live in love and happiness after that . This is one of the two main reasons for going to the Falls . Their's have been a loveless marriage . They appear to have been married simply because they are afflicted in the same way . As Albert says , they were married because they

were lonely and unable to speak, an indication of the absence of love and happiness. The other reason is – being fully aware of their disability and their teacher's encouragement that after their visit to the Falls and listening to it, they will never forget what hearing is. So, with this prospect in their minds they have worked hard to achieve their goal. This shows their desperate attempt to at least hear. If they can do this, they believe that at least one of their problems will be solved.

Because of such expectations, an ordinary key assumes so much significance for this couple, as if the key is a sign of something miraculous and as if all the impossibilities of their lives will be made possible by the key. Secretly Albert feels that it will bring something much more than happiness to him alone. It reminds him of something that he is not quite able to recall clearly. The young man did not have the heart to take away the key and erase the look of hope and brightness from their faces.

The Morgans have undergone much pain and suffering

because of their condition . The greatest of this is the sense of alienation from society because they are deprived of the basic means of communication . The pain they feel becomes all the more poignant because they are 'aware' of their problem and yet unable to do anything about it except to grasp fleeting glimpses of hope symbolised by the mysterious key .

*Why I Live at the P.O.* is about a young woman moving out of her parents home to escape her family , especially her younger sister . In order to assert her independence and find happiness she leaves home to make the post office her new home .

The story begins with the narrator telling how well she is getting along with her mama , Papa — Daddy (grandfather) and Uncle Rondo. The apparently peaceful atmosphere in the family is belied when the narrator reveals how her sister Stella Rondo steals her boyfriend Mr. Whitaker and marries him. Soon Stella separates from him and returns home with a two year old

girl . Stella claims the little girl is adopted . Soon after her return Stella begins turning the entire family against her sister, the narrator . The narrator cannot believe that the little girl is adopted for she is the spit-image of Papa-Daddy without his beard ( his prized possession ) and also looks a bit like Mr. Whitaker . She tells Stella so and Stella is furious . The first person Stella turns against her sister is Papa-Daddy . She lies to him saying that her sister cannot understand why he does not cut off his long beard . Stella knows how sensitive their grandfather is regarding his beard . The alleged insensitivity infuriates the grandfather and he thinks that the narrator is an ungrateful person . He is convinced that she deliberately said it after all the trouble he had taken to get her a job at the post office . Since he disbelieves her denials , she angrily leaves the room . The grandfather too leaves in anger and decides to lie in the hammock with the words : *This is the beard I started growing on the Coast when I was fifteen years old. ....remember my words : I'll never cut off*

*my beard as long as I live, even one inch, and I don't appreciate it in you at all.* (ACOG—91).

Soon after, Uncle Rondo arrives in Stella's flesh-coloured kimono. He is a pharmacist and is drunk that day. But it is not surprising because the date is fourth of July and it is his annual habit to be drunk on this day. In such a condition, he used to go straight to the hammock to lie down. Papa-Daddy who is already lying in the hammock is disturbed and he wakes up with a horrible yell. On seeing Uncle Rondo he straight away starts to turn him also against the sister. The grandfather is still mad at the sister believing Stella's lie. But Uncle Rondo is too drunk to feel anything against the sister for the time being.

Just then Stella lifts the upstairs window and utters a dramatic 'oh'. As the sister goes to enquire, Stella asks if she notices anything different about their uncle. The sister says :

*Why, no, except he's got on some terrible-looking flesh-coloured contraption I wouldn't be found dead in .....* (ACOG—93).

Stella says the kimono is part of her trousseau and their uncle looks like a fool in it. Here the sister tells her that she is in no position to criticise or judge others when she herself is home without any explanation whatsoever for her separation and the adopted girl. After that she goes down and talks with her mother.

The sister cannot believe that the little girl is not Stella's own. Her mother of course believes Stella. Suddenly it occurs to the narrator that the child has so far not spoken a word. This makes her mother sit up. She calls and asks Stella whether the child can speak at all. Stella is again furious at such a suggestion from her sister. *And in a minute the loudest Yankee voice ..... yells out, 'OE'm Pop-OE the Sailor-r-r-r Ma-a-an!* (ACOG—97) thus proving that the child can not only talk but also sing. The mother is furious with the sister and asks her to apologise but she refuses to do so. So her mother runs to

hug the child and now mama, Papa - Daddy and the baby are all on Stella's side and the other sister, the narrator is alone and alienated from the whole family.

There is only Uncle Rondo left. Stella takes the opportunity at supper time. She tells him that her sister spent the entire afternoon sneering at him and thinking how foolish he looks in his outfit. This angers their uncle who has the most violent temper. Once again the narrator's denial is brushed aside. The evening is spent without further incidents. This should have warned the narrator that her uncle is upto something because he is not one to take things lying down.

The next morning he throws a whole package of fire crackers into the sister's room. He knows she is sensitive to noise of any kind. *People ..... heard it as far as the cemetery, and old aunt ..... thought it was Judgement Day .....It's usually so quiet here.* (ACOG—99). This incident

scares the narrator so much that it compels her to access her situation within the family . She realises that she is alienated from everyone and so she decides to leave home and move to the post office . She takes everything that belongs to her : electric fan , needlepoint pillow , radio , sewing machine motor , calendar , thermometer , canned goods , wall vases , even a fern she feels is rightfully hers because she watered it . The family declares they will never go to the post office again . Finally , the sister is left alone in the post office safe in her knowledge of who in town is for and against her . Asserting her independence and claiming some measure of happiness , she works her revenge by shutting her family off from the outside world . *But here I am , and here I'll stay . I want the world to know I'm happy .* ( ACOG—105).

*Why I Live at the P.O.* tells the story of what family tensions can do to a person . Firstly Stella steals her sister's boyfriend and marries him . As if this is not enough she turns the entire family against her because they are gullible . Stella is

jealous of her sister and wants to hurt her so much that she turns every member of the family against her . Finally unable to bear the unfair accusations , the sister leaves home and family . Their's is the main family in China Grove . So naturally there are people who want to be on the good side of her grandfather . Because of this , part of the society refuses to acknowledge her while part of the society sympathises with her .

Due to the false accusations of this gullible family , the sister is forced to separate from the people who matter most in her life . Unable to withstand the overwhelming antipathy of the entire family , the narrator's only course of action is withdrawal from it into new establishment , the physical displacement thus highlighting her state of enforced alienation .

In the last story of this chapter *A Visit of Charity* , a young girl Marian goes to an Old Ladies' Home on a visit of

charity . Her purpose is to gain some extra points to her score as a Campfire girl , an organisation where doing good work in society enables one to earn points .

One morning Marian , a girl of fourteen steps down from a bus in front of an Old Ladies' Home . She carries a potted plant as a gift . Before entering she stops beside a prickly shrub then proceeds towards the entrance . As she enters she tells the nurse that she has come on a social visit . On learning that Marian has no particular old woman in mind , the nurse takes her to a room occupied by two old women .

The place is so quiet and still , it makes Marian want to turn around and escape . As the nurse knocks , an old woman opens the door . She has on her face a strange eerie smile — which is supposed to be a smile of welcome . As she enters

Marian sees the profile of another old woman lying in bed . As soon as the nurse leaves , the first woman asks Marian if she has come to be their little girl for a while . Suddenly she snatches Marian's cap with one hand and draws her inside with the other . The room Marian observes is small , dark and wet . She is terrified by the woman's strange behaviour . *It was like being caught in a robber's cave , just before one was murdered.*(ACOG—197). The potted plant is snatched from her hands and the woman appreciates it . She says it is pretty .

Then the other woman lying in bed speaks for the first time . She contradicts what the first woman said . She says the flower is not pretty without even turning around . Then the two of them starts bickering much to Marian's amazement . Then the first woman explains that 'poor Addie' is ailing . To which Addie replies that she is no more sick than the other is . Still the first woman says Addie acts in this manner when ' you all ' come . This means

that Marian is not the only visitor . There must have been others like her who come to visit them . Then she tells Marian that she too used to go to school . Again Addie screams : *You never went to school . You never came and you never went . You never were anything — only here ..... Your head is empty , your heart and hands and your old black purse are all empty .....( ACOG—200 )* . Addie finds the other woman's persistent talking intolerable . Marian can see the desperation in Addie's eyes . Still the old woman persists and thinks Addie is mad because it is her birthday . Addie is furious and screams that no one knows her birthday except herself alone . She pleads with the other woman to be quiet else she will lose her mind . She then calls Marian towards her and tells her that when the worst comes she rings a bell and a nurse comes to her rescue . Seeing the woman so close Marian wonders about her and her age as if there is nothing else in the world to wonder about . The woman refuses to tell her age and suddenly she begins to cry . She sounds like a little

lamb . ‘That’s Addie for you’ says the other woman spitefully .

Suddenly Marian wants get out of the strange room and its even stranger occupants . As she runs towards the door , the first woman tries to clasp her but fails . She follows Marian to the hall . Suddenly she clasps Marian and begs in a high-pitched whine for a penny . ..... *have you a penny to spare for a poor old woman that’s not got anything of her own?..... Little girl , just a nickel — a penny--.* (ACOG—203) . Marian breaks free and rushes towards the door . As soon as she is outside she stops briefly near the prickly shrub and picks up an apple that she has hidden . Then she races towards the moving bus shouting for it to stop . Then she makes her escape .

The story depicts the sad plight of two old women who are utterly alone . The greatest need in their lives are love, care and attention which no one can provide ; least of all by

the so-called charitable visits of people like Marian whose sole aim in undertaking the visits is to earn points for herself. Their isolation and alienation are due to their inability to cope with the realities of life outside because of which they are shut up in this institution. When Addie talks about the emptiness of the other woman's head, heart and purse, she is merely voicing the great sense of emptiness that she feels about herself.

They are fated to spend their entire lives in a small dampened room. Had they families who dumped them when they grew old? Addie seems to have a family who has deserted her. Whereas the other woman seems to be in this situation all her life. She has become mentally unstable. One learns of this when Addie declares that the other woman has nothing and has been nowhere. They have no other alternative but to accept their situation and they can do nothing about it. Circumstances have brought them together to this situation where they have only

each other for company and the occasional meaningless visits of people like Marian .

In all these stories , the protagonists suffer from a deep sense of isolation from society . As a result of this they lead unhappy lives and some , like the Morgans in *The Key* undertake an absurd journey to Niagara Falls in the mistaken belief that by doing this they will obtain happiness .

The narrator in *Why I Live At the P.O.* is under the illusion that by moving away from the alienated family and asserting her independence she will be happy . Ironically , this act merely highlights her own alienation from family and society , a condition which cannot lead to any happiness .

The two old ladies in *A Visit of Charity* are already 'cast out' , as it were , from society and are obviously leading

extremely unhappy lives . Though they are together in a room , it does not bring them any nearer to having a meaningful relationship because of their mental condition . In such a circumstance the charitable visits turn out to be futile and provide no solace to them . The temporariness of such meaningless gestures from the visitors only heighten their sense of loneliness and alienation from the rest of the outside world .

\*\*\*\*\*@@@@@@@@\*\*\*\*\*

## **CONCLUSION**

All the stories which have been discussed are about characters who live sheltered , secluded lives within a small community . There is little or no meaningful interaction with the world outside the community . Many of the characters live a life of seclusion by choice whereas a few of them have been forced into such a life .

The two children in the first chapter have difficulty in coping with the adult world . They simply shy away and withdraw from it . Both are extremely sensitive , secretive but are keen observers of everything around them specially adult behaviour . They lack self—confidence to share anything with their parents . One spends her days in observation where she feels that things are being revealed to her while the other retreats to her memories of the past . In doing so , they seem to move away from forming any

close ties with their parents , the adults in their immediate world. This distance thus created between the world of the children and the adult world of the parents make them reclusive, and they retreat into their private and intimate worlds of their imagination and memories where they feel comfortable and safe .

In the next chapter the characters suffer alienation from society due to various reasons . Lily of the first story is slightly dim—witted . She therefore depends on the three ladies who represent society . Lily's personal circumstances are left vague and she is portrayed as someone who cannot interact with others in society . Moreover , the ladies feel that Lily does not possess a sound mind because she has become completely dependant of them and cannot decide anything for herself . So they decide to send her to an institution for the feeble—minded where they cannot say with confidence that Lily will be looked after because they themselves do not know anything about the institution . Then again they

change their minds and decide to marry her off to a complete stranger whom she has chosen . By sending her to the institution or getting her married off will mean the end of their responsibility . The interference of the ladies with their show of concern for her actually does nothing to alter Lily's state of mind or circumstances .

In the next story , a mad streak can be seen in the entire family . This is the cause of Clytie and her family's seclusion from society . Something drastic has happened to them which makes them extremely eccentric . Pride forces them to lead a life of solitude because they have fallen on bad days . They shut out the rest of the world from their lives . All doors and windows are locked and shades pulled down and no one is allowed to visit nor do they make social calls themselves . It is a case of complete alienation . From such a situation , the only escape for Clytie is in her suicidal death .

In the next two stories the characters detach themselves from society of their own choice. Mrs. Larkin and Sabina prefer to lead solitary lives because of their misfortune. Life has dealt them both a cruel blow. Mrs. Larkin is widowed in her youth and Sabina faces one misfortune after another leading to her insanity. Mrs. Larkin cannot forget the greatest disaster in her life—the accidental death of her husband—and since then dissociates herself from society. She refuses to share her feelings with anyone and even rejects company. Sabina on the other hand becomes aloof and remote since the day she chased her husband away from home. She considers him to be the cause of all her misfortune. Like Mrs. Larkin, Sabina too hides her emotional state from others. Both choose to seclude themselves from their community and bear the pain and sorrow all alone.

In the last two stories of this chapter, both the characters are forced to stay away from their community. The

cause of Livvie's alienation is the jealousy of her old husband . Though well—provided for , Livvie suffers from boredom and loneliness . Her loyalty towards her husband prevents her from escaping . Whereas the overprotectiveness of her grandfather leads to Jenny's alienated life . Jenny's mother had disobeyed her father and went away from a protected life . Unfortunately she died early . Her grandfather fears the same thing happening to Jenny if he let her go . So he feels it necessary to keep her under his watchful eyes always . He did not want to lose out on Jenny too . As a result of such seclusion , they have difficulty in interacting with others and are withdrawn . But whereas Livvie's liberation is regained without any conscious effort on her part , Jenny's somehow knows that her alienation will not last forever .

In the last chapter isolation suffered by the characters are circumstantial . In the first story a couple's disability proves to be the cause of all their problems . They are both deaf and

dumb . They cannot communicate well with others because of which they seem to suffer ill—treatment in society and they become wary and suspicious . There is little or no happiness for people like the Morgans in a world where only the fittest can survive . They are not shown any sympathy or help by society . Left on their own they have only each other to fall back on . The poignancy of their plight is symbolised by the key which somehow seems to hold the promise of a happy future .

A family's blind love and faith in the youngest daughter compels the eldest sister to leave home permanently and live in the post office where she works . The alienation felt by the protagonist and which prompts her to take such a decision has to do with a family's attitude towards one of its members . Through the title of the story *Why I Live at the P. O.*, the protagonist seems to explain to the world why she lives at the P.O. and not at home and by doing this she is drawing attention

to the fact that she has not chosen alienation, it has been forced on her by her family.

The two characters in the last story live in an Old Ladies' Home. Nothing of their earlier lives are shown or hinted at, as though they have been in this home forever. They are not visited by anyone except the likes of the young girl in the story who does so purely for personal gains. Both the ladies lead extremely unhappy lives. They are secluded and even the institute where they live is located away from town. Their physical isolation coupled with the fact that they are abandoned by everyone else adds special pathos to their alienation.

The sense of alienation felt by Welty's characters emanates from certain inherent weaknesses, either in themselves or their environment like family and society. The children are introverts. Had the parents too much of expectations from them?

Perhaps the girls feel they are incapable of fulfilling those expectations ; rather than be a disappointment they isolate themselves from their parents which makes their cause of alienation arise from within the family itself . Same is the cause of Clytie's alienation . The family's massive pride and the absence of any real interaction between the family members are the sole reason for Clytie's alienation ending in her death .

Lily's and Sabina's alienation is a result of their weaknesses . Lily's indecisive nature and Sabina's submissive nature make them incapable to stand up and fight for their rights . Hence in the end Lily's physical presence is left unspecified and Sabina's alienated life culminates in her death .

In Mrs . Larkin's case it is a self—imposed seclusion . After her husband's death she purposely secludes herself from the rest of the town . She blames life for the cruel blow in her

young life and virtually stops interacting with everyone , bearing her sorrow alone .

In the case of Livvie , Jenny , the old women , the disabled couple and the narrator who goes to live at the post office , alienation has been forced upon them .If not for her husband's possessiveness Livvie would never have been isolated . Jenny would have been leading a normal life if not for her grandfather's over—protectiveness . Old age seems to be the sole reason for the ladies' unhappy and secluded lives in the Institute . The Morgan's disability on the other hand is the cause of their problem and the sister who lives at the P.O . has indicated that her family is the cause of her separate life from them . All these characters are unable to do anything about their situation .

In none of the stories Welty talks about love or loving relationships directly . But what is left unsaid gives us the

impression that the characters either receive too much love or not at all .

Jenny and Livvie receive excess love from their grandfather and husband . Such kind of excessive love can sometimes be counter-productive . The power of their ( the grandfather and the husband) love obliterates all other considerations like social interaction , so much so that they fail to realise that through their love , they are alienating the girls from society and the community .

Again some of the characters are alienated because of the lack of love in their lives . The absence of love ( as they feel ) in the children's life leads to their retreat into their secret selves away from the adult world . Lily , Sabina , Clytie , the sister who lives at the P.O., the ladies and the disabled couple seek love but are denied and ignored , hence their alienation . Again though

Mrs . Larkin was fortunate to experience love it has been only for a temporary period of time and which was so cruelly wrenched away from her that she prefers isolation and seclusion to any social contact .

Again if there is any liberation from alienation for the characters it is seen that death plays an important role in the process . Except in the stories of the children , the narrator who lives in the P. O. and Lily , for some of the characters ( Clytie , Sabina ) their own death is the ultimate liberation from the alienated selves . For Livvie and Jenny the death of the husband and the grandfather lead to their liberation . However , Welty's handling of this aspect is very subtle and she leaves it to the reader to decide for herself/himself in the end .

Why does Welty write about such characters ? Perhaps her upbringing in a close — knitted family in a sheltered

environment has something to do with it. All her life, Welty has lived in one place; she and her brothers have always been over—protected especially by their mother. *She stood always ready to face the world in our place.* (OWB—39). One of the reasons for the over—protectiveness maybe because Mrs. Welty lost her first born at birth. Perhaps she feels guilty at not being able to save the child. So she is extra careful with her other children. Whenever Welty's mother wanted her to have something it would be because she never had it as a child. Welty writes; *It took me a long time to manage the independence, for I loved those who protected me .....* ( 'The making of a writer: Listening in the dark'—an extract from *One Writer's Beginnings*, October 9<sup>th</sup> 1983, before publication, p.5 ). Thus living in such an environment perhaps it is but natural for her to write of characters living in similar circumstances – a sheltered life. While the feelings of alienation or being alienated within these stories must be simply her creation with the help of her imaginative

mind , or materials she collected on her travels throughout rural Mississippi .

All the characters in these stories are again female characters . There seems to be a connection between these characters and Welty . Welty is an intensely feminine writer who views human situations with an insightful feminine sensitivity . Perhaps being a woman , she can identify with them and express her feelings better in a female rather than a male character . And like other women writers , Welty writes stories of children where very often the tension is between the child's perception and the adult world . Though this subject is not a female prerogative it does occur in women's stories over and over again . *The susceptibility and literalness of children , their matter-of-fact but unsocialised behaviour , their imaginative play with what is immediately to hand , seems to be particularly sympathetic and useful subject for women writers . [The Secret Self ( Short Stories*

*by Women* ) From the introduction by Hermione Lee ] . Again the question arises — Does Welty feel the same way as these characters — secluded , alienated ? Maybe she does or maybe she does not . But this is not known because she is a private person who does not reveal more than is necessary . Welty simply says there is no explanation outside fiction for her work .

So apart from *One Writer's Beginnings* , very little is known about Welty and her writing and she instructs her friends even to do the same . She offers no explanation for her work wanting the work to exist as the thing that answers every question about its being . This position establishes careful boundaries around what one can and cannot know about Welty and delimits how one may discuss her work in conjunction with her life . Critical enrichment and revaluation of her work is difficult without such sources as letters or interviews with close friends . In the absence of such materials Welty's critics have

concentrated on her public 'persona' as a point of entry into her work . But again Welty has extraordinary control over this persona. Welty says her stories are gifts from the writer . She continues :

*It is not from criticism but from this world  
that stories come in the beginning , their  
origins are living reference plain to the  
writer's mind and heart , where all this  
exterior is continually 'becoming' something  
-- the moral , the passionate , the poetic ,  
hence the 'shaping idea—can't be mapped  
and plotted . ( Eye . p . 109 ) .*

Thus by controlling her public persona so carefully Welty has maintained for her work a certain degree of obscurity . And in all her non — fictional writings and interviews ,

Welty tries to focus critical attention only on those aspects of her work she is comfortable in writing and talking about.

\*\*\*\*\*@ @ @ @ @ @\*\*\*\*\*

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**PRIMARY SOURCES :**

WELTY , EUDORA

- 1941            A CURTAIN OF GREEN (SHORT STORIES)  
GARDEN CITY , N.Y : DOUBLEDAY DORAN.
- 1942            THE ROBBER BRIDEGROOM. (SHORT  
NOVEL) . N.Y : DOUBLEDAY DORAN .
- 1943            THE WIDE NET AND OTHER STORIES .  
(SHORT STORIES) . N.Y :HARCOURT BRACE.
- 1946            DELTA WEDDING . (NOVEL ) . N.Y :  
HARCOURT BRACE .
- 1949            THE GOLDEN APPLES.(CYCLE OF RELATED  
STORIES ) . N.Y : HARCOURT BRACE .
- 1954            THE PONDER HEART. (SHORT NOVEL)  
NEW YORK : HARCOURT BRACE .
- 1955            THE BRIDE OF THE INNISFALLEN AND  
OTHER STORIES . N.Y : HARCOURT  
BRACE .
- 1964            THE SHOE BIRD (CHILDREN'S STORY) .  
N.Y : HARCOURT BRACE & WORLD .
- 1970            LOSING BATTLES (NOVEL )  
N.Y : RANDOM HOUSE .

- 1971 *ONE TIME , ONE PLACE : MISSISSIPPI IN THE DEPRESSION , A SNAPSHOT ALBUM*  
(PHOTOGRAPHS BY WELTY WITH A FINE INTRODUCTION BY HER) . N.Y : RANDOM HOUSE .
- 1972 *THE OPTIMIST'S DAUGHTER* . ( NOVEL) .  
N Y : RANDOM HOUSE .
- 1978 *THE EYE OF THE STORY* (ESSAYS ) .  
N.Y : RANDOM HOUSE .
- 1984 *ONE WRITER'S BEGINNINGS* . ( AUTO-BIOGRAPHY) .CAMBRIDGE , M.A :  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS .

### **SECONDARY SOURCES :**

- 1957 *PLACE OF FICTION* (ESSAY, LIMITED EDITION ) . N.Y: HOUSE OF BOOKS .
- 1965 *THIRTEEN STORIES* , ed . RUTH VANDE KIEFT . N.Y : HARCOURT BRACE & WORLD.
- 1979 *EUDORA WELTY : A FORM OF THANKS* , ed .  
LOUIS DOLLARHIDE AND ANN J. ABADIE .  
JACKSON : U P of MISSISSIPPI .

- 1979 EUDORA WELTY : CRITICAL ESSAYS, ed .  
PEGGY PRENSHAW . JACKSON : U P of  
MISSISSIPPI .
- 1983 EUDORA WELTY : THIRTEEN ESSAYS , ed .  
PEGGY PRENSHAW . JACKSON : U P of  
MISSISSIPPI .
- 1984 CONVERSATIONS WITH EUDORA WELTY ,  
ed . PEGGY PRENSHAW . (COLLECTED  
INTERVIEWS) . JACKSON , MS : UNIVERSITY  
PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI .
- 1987 WELTY : A LIFE IN LITERATURE , ed . ALBERT  
J. DEVLIN . JACKSON : U P of MISSISSIPPI.
- 1989 PHOTOGRAPHS , WITH A FORWORD BY  
REYNOLDS PRICE . UNIVERSITY PRESS  
OF MISSISSIPPI.
- 1989 CRITICAL ESSAYS ON EUDORA WELTY, ed .  
W . CRAIG TURNER AND LEE EMLING  
HARDING . BOSTON : G. K. HALL .
- 1989 EUDORA WELTY : EYE OF THE STORYTELLER,  
ed. DAWN TROUARD . KENT , OH ;  
KENTSTATE U P .
- 1994 A WRITER'S EYE : COLLECTED BOOK  
REVIEWS , ed . PEARL AMELIA McHANEY .

1995 UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI .  
MORE CONVERSATIONS WITH EUDORA  
WELTY, ed . PEGGY PRENSHAW .  
UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI .

ENCYCLOPAEDIA :

1973 THE NEW ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA ,  
VOL . I . 15<sup>TH</sup> EDITION . ENCYCLOPAEDIA  
BRITANNICA , INC . , WILLIAM BENTON ,  
U . S . A .

\*\*\*\*\*@@@@@@@@\*\*\*\*\*

NEHU LIBRARY  
Acc. No. 103307  
Acq. by ...  
Date ... 15/05  
Class. by ...  
Sub. heading by ...  
Eubs. by ...  
Transcribed by ...