

Land of Love and Drowning Study Guide

Land of Love and Drowning by Tiphonie Yanique

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Plot Summary

"Land of Love and Drowning" tells the story of the Bradshaw women in the American Virgin Islands from the early 1900s through about 60 years. The family is introduced as Owen Arthur and Antoinette being the parents to Eeona and Anette, though Anette is born quite a few years after Eeona.

In Section 1, Owen Arthur is a businessman, owning a ship named The Homecoming. His wife, Antoinette, is Madame of Villa by the Sea, an inn the Bradshaws own on St. Thomas, an island in the American Virgin Islands. Antoinette is simply Owen Arthur's wife, though she aspires to be much more. Eeona's beauty is a sort of magic, as most men love her upon first sighting. Anette is not nearly as pretty, and in fact is compared to an ugly doll. Her magic is being able to expect others' arriving, as well as being able to think something and make it so.

At the beginning of the story, the Islands are still owned by the Danish, but soon after the story starts ownership is transferred to America. The people of the Virgin Islands become legal Americans, though nothing changes for them, since they're an American territory far away from the continental United States.

Eeona and her father have a consensual sexual relationship, though both are somewhat ashamed of it. Eeona's pubic hairs are sliver, and Eeona wonders if she got them from her father, since they engage in a sexual relationship and he is so much older than he is.

Antoinette and Owen Arthur call each other Madame Bradshaw and Mr. Bradshaw, indicating a somewhat formal relationship. Owen Arthur has a mistress, Rebekah, who has a hoof instead of a heel and can perform obeah, a kind of dark magic.

Antoinette is pregnant, though she doesn't want to be. In Eeona's opinion, Antoinette is jealous of her relationship with Owen Arthur. During her pregnancy with Anette, Antoinette tries to relieve her body of the fetus. She engages in a practice called "washing of the womb." She pounds her fist on her belly, and she visits Rebekah, her husband's mistress, to obtain a kind of potion that will abort the fetus. Nothing works, however, and Anette is born with fiery red hair.

Owen Arthur hopes this new baby will eliminate his feelings for Eeona, but that is not the case. His feelings remain. Owen Arthur then actively tries to rid himself of his feelings for Eeona by laying with his wife, caring for her when she's ill, sending Eeona away to Tortola to receive schooling, and letting her marry Louis Moreau, a Frenchman Eeona meets while living on Tortola. Eeona is upset with her father for abandoning their relationship, but Owen Arthur dies in a shipwreck off Anegada before the two can repair their relationship.

Jacob Esau McKenzie is introduced to the reader at the time Eeona and Louis are courting. He is a boy on St. Thomas who has the McKenzie last name, since his mother



is Rebekah McKenzie, but whose birth father is Owen Arthur Bradshaw. It is an open island secret that Owen Arthur and Rebekah are lovers, but Jacob is still considered a McKenzie.

Eeona, Antoinette, and Rebekah know that Jacob is genetically a Bradshaw, not a McKenzie, but Anette doesn't since she is too young at the time of their relationship. Antoinette warns Eeona about him before she dies, but Eeona is unsure if her warning is to cautious of him or to care for him.

Anette learns to swim at 11 months old. Antoinette teaches her because her people are from Anegada and are of the sea, and so Antoinette is determined to make her daughters the same. They go to a beach where nobody will bother them, just so Antoinette doesn't get criticized for teaching an 11-month-old how to swim.

After Owen Arthur dies, Antoinette sees this as her opportunity to be free. She escapes to New York City, leaving Eeona in charge of Villa by the Sea and Anette. In America, Antoinette meets a dead end when she tries to sign up for a Fashion Institute for Coloreds, and so comes back to St. Thomas just to die.

Eeona and Anette move to an area on St. Thomas called Savan, where Eeona tries to teach Anette how to be a lady. Ladylikeness isn't something Anette cares about, but she pays attention for Eeona's sake. One day, as they are playing on a beach, Rebekah and her sons are on the same beach. Jacob and Anette meet for the first time, but are quickly taken away from each other by Rebekah.

With both of their parents gone, Eeona and Anette must find a new way to live. Eeona tries to send Anette to an orphanage on St. Croix to protect her from Jacob. She meets with Mrs. Lovernkrandt, one of her father's former business partner's wives, to see if they can work out a deal for Eeona to make a living. Their interaction goes sour, however, and Eeona leaves the Lovernkrandt home with no prospect of a job.

The narrator returns to tell the reader of the McKenzie men, as it is an essential piece of the novel that Jacob is named McKenzie but not actually a McKenzie. McKenzie men can only breed men. They cannot love other and are difficult to love because of their difficulty in showing affection. The McKenzie men are considered odd, yet are held in somewhat high esteem on the Islands.

Anette knows of Eeona's plan to send her to the orphanage on St. Croix, and so Anette intentionally throws a big fit on the docks the morning of the boat's departure so that she may not be let on the boat. It works, and Eeona and Anette remain together.

As Section 2 starts, some time has passed. Anette is sick with a fever. When the fever breaks, her friend Ronald is by her side. Eeona tries to get Anette to go to church so Anette can heal, but Nelson their ass (mule) won't keep Anette on his back. Ronald brings Anette fish and water, which is exactly what Anette was thinking that she wanted.

Ronald is a boy who loves Anette, but Anette doesn't love him back. She only likes him as a friend. Eeona doesn't approve of him as a mate for Anette since she believes he



comes from a lower class of Islander. However, Ronald is persistent in his pursuit of Anette and is genuine in his affection for her. Eeona ends up approving mainly because Ronald is not Jacob McKenzie.

Ronald leaves the Islands with other men his age, as they are drafted for the war, and it is during his absence that Anette decides his affection is true and steady. When he returns from training, the two marry.

While Anette is busy marrying Ronald and then living with his mother, Eeona works for Mr. Barry at the Hospitality Lounge. She is in love with the air conditioning in his building, but Mr. Barry is in love with Eeona. She works for him to earn a salary so she can work toward the free, independent, and wealthy life she so desires.

Mr. Barry proposes to Eeona 40 times with a different bouquet of flowers each time. Eeona begins considering his proposals because she loves the air conditioning in his building so much, but after she lets him relieve her sexually, Eeona feels dirty. Mr. Barry then is the only living person to see and know about Eeona's silver pubic hair.

Jacob is in the Army and is in the same unit as Ronald. Jacob is clearly different than his McKenzie brothers, as he is brilliant and capable of loving. While he is away for the Army, Rebekah sends him packages with sweet cherries, treating him as her most cherished son. The man everyone thinks is his father is Benjamin McKenzie, Rebekah's first husband whom she banished to a forest on another island using obeah.

Back on St. Thomas, Anette discovers that she's pregnant from when Ronald was home between training and reporting to his military base in New Orleans. Both she and Eeona are surprised at the pregnancy.

In New Orleans, Jacob, Ronald, and their soldier friend Spice experience racism. The soldiers are surprised by this because technically, they are Americans, and they are fighting in World War II to protect their home country. They are refused service at a restaurant and leave the restaurant without causing trouble.

In their downtime, Ronnie shows Anette picture to his friends on a regular basis. Jacob tries to not look at the photo too often, because when he does he feels like he knows her and wants to know her even more.

Again on St. Thomas, Eeona asks Anette how she and Ronald plan to love Ronald, their daughter, well enough, since Anette never had a proper example of how to love. Anette isn't worried about it and decides that she and Ronnie will love and raise Ronald on their own, without Ronnie's mother's or Eeona's pushy opinions.

As the boys continue to experience racism in New Orleans, they begin causing trouble. They decide to walk into a restaurant that refused to serve them and demand service while holding their weapons on their shoulders. The boys are split up by the Army in the hopes they will stop causing trouble. Jacob wants to go home, and so causes enough trouble that will get him kicked out of the service.



Jacob is to return home on the same boat as Ronnie. Anette shows up to the docks to greet Ronnie, but is dismayed when he isn't there. She sees Jacob kiss the ground, but thinks nothing of him. Anette is most upset because she knows her husband got off that boat, but Ronnie wasn't on it. Coinciding with her feelings, Jacob returns to St. Thomas only to feel incomplete, though he's unsure why.

Anette gives Ronald a divorce letter since she doesn't feel faithful to him after what she sense at the docks the day he didn't arrive. Soon thereafter, Anette meets Jacob at a dance at a Catholic school. The two feel like they've known each other for a long time, even though they just met. The two share a passionate kiss before the night is over, causing Eeona to become upset with Anette for breaking her promise to Ronnie.

Eeona, feeling frustrated with Anette for what Eeona sees as reckless decisions, goes to the docks to return her boat ticket to New York City. Instead, Eeona spontaneously gets on a boat to Freedom City, St. Croix, giving in to her wildness and her desperate desire for freedom.

Anette is happy about her choice to be with Jacob, though she misses her sister. Jacob, too, is happy about his choice to be with Anette, but when he shares the news with Rebekah, she doesn't join in his enthusiasm. She begs him to be with any woman but her. Jacob loves his mother, but knows that she's capable of sending a curse. He's unsure of what to do, and goes to a bar to drink instead of dealing with his problems.

On St. Croix, Eeona is free from her obligations on St. Thomas. She meets Kweku Prideux, who is Benjamin McKenzie just renamed. Kweku and Eeona share a sexual encounter on Kweku's balcony. Even though his thick body hair disgusts Eeona, she lets it go so she can feel desired. She wants to be madame of his octagonal home, so she continues in the relationship despite Benjamin's lack of affection. When Eeona becomes pregnant, Kweku backs off even more.

Jacob, Anette, and Ronald spend the day together at the beach, and then later that night Jacob picks the two girls up from their home in the midnight hour so they can return to the beach. While there at night, Ronald feeds off of Anette's breast and simultaneously, Jacob and Anette are intimate with one another.

Back on St. Croix, Eeona continues to hope Kweku will come around to caring for her and the baby. Unfortunately, the baby is stillborn. Eeona names the baby Owen Arthur, since no one but herself knows what the means to her, and Kweku throws the baby off the balcony. It is not long after Eeona regains her strength and makes her way back home to her sister.

Anette becomes pregnant while Eeona was away and gives birth to Jacob's baby girl whom they name Youme. Rebekah threatens Jacob with having to go to Korea to help fight the Korean War if he doesn't go to medical school. Jacob loves Anette but also wants to be completely worthy of her, which he feels he can't do until he's a man.

Section 3 begins where the previous section left off, with Anette at the airport devastated that Jacob has gone to America. With Jacob gone, Anette is heartbroken. So



much so, that when she is approached about being a chambermaid, she ignores the offer and just goes home to bed instead of putting up a fight. Eventually, however, Anette seems to lose hope that he'll actually come back someday. He starts going to dances, and at one of them reunites with a childhood friend, Franky. In grade school, Franky had built Anette a house out of aluminum, but Eeona made her give it back, saying such a gift and such a boy were beneath the Bradshaw women.

Anette enjoys Franky's company, and Franky is patient in his pursuit of her. Franky is a Coast Guardsman and takes his responsibilities very seriously. He mans a local lighthouse and is known for his fidelity to his work and to his relationships.

While the two are dating, they go to Water Island to participate in a movie filming on the beach. Anette wears a the red fabric Jacob gifted her in place of a wedding ring so that everyone can see she is fine. They enjoy the movie filming experience, and afterwards a bonfire with the stars from the movie. Anette becomes upset, however, and wishes the star's blond hair to catch fire. When it does catch fire as the girl is playing limbo near the bonfire, Anette is immediately inwardly ashamed.

On their way home, Anette puts her hand on Franky's thigh, which he takes to mean she is in love with him. He pulls to the side of the road and proposes right there. Anette doesn't want to say yes, but she doesn't know how to say no. Franky has been so patient and so faithful in his pursuit of her, and she knows he'll make a good, steady husband.

Since Anette and Jacob are written to be star-crossed lovers, when Anette becomes engaged is when Jacob feels the need to write to one of his brothers still living on St. Thomas to ask if she is indeed engaged. The brother answers yes, and Jacob works quickly to make it back to St. Thomas. Jacob knows he can't marry Anette, but he doesn't want anyone else to have her either. Jacob is too late, as Franky and Anette marry on a whim.

Jacob's brother Saul visits Anette to give her a note Jacob has written her. He wants to meet her at an appointed time and place. However, when Anette asks Franky what Franky would do if Anette left him, his strong, angry response causes Anette to remain with Franky. Jacob is devastated and responds to his heartbreak by switching his specialty from pediatrics to gynecology.

The movie is released into theaters in the United States and on the Islands. It ends up being a soft core porn movie, and the provocativeness of the film stars and the use of the Virgin Islands and her people in such a film is an embarrassment to the Islanders. The governor of the Islands complains, but every grievance is dropped because the Gull Reef Club made and continues to make a lot of money from the film.

In Section 4, Franky gets a promotion at the lighthouse to head keeper. He and Anette have reconciled from their briefly tense evening when Anette was thinking of leaving him. Jacob returns to St. Thomas as a married gynecologist. Youme uses him as her



gynecologist, and a maid brings her to and from his office so that Jacob and Franky don't have to interact.

Eeona warms to her new family, approving of Franky since he is not Jacob and is a steadfast husband for Anette. She gets a job with the government administering loans so she can help Franky build the house he wants to build for Anette. She also uses her money to become even more independent, purchasing a car and eventually her own inn on another island. For now, though, she enjoys her time with Anette's family as she saves her own money and continues to hope for her lasting freedom.

The Civil Rights Movement begins in the continental United States, and the social unrest carries over the Virgin Islands. Islanders debate the situation among themselves, as they have a hard time believing people are being treated the way it is being described on the radio and on the television. Their national identity is tested, as they wonder to whom they belong if they're not welcome in the States even though they're Americans. They wonder if their freedom means anything.

Anette's children—three now, since she and Franky had a boy named Frank—are quiet and scared as the television reports of protests, sit-ins, police raids, and physical abuse of Civil Rights Movement participants. Ronalda seems touched by the events more so than the other two children, as she takes the act of slavery and abuse of blacks to heart.

It is at this time Eeona moves to the island of St. John, purchasing and running her very own inn. She now quickly cultivates the exact life she wants, one of wealth and status, as she's known as Mada Bradshaw around her property. She periodically visits Anette's family, and when she does she stays with Youme in Youme's bed. As soon as Youme falls asleep, Eeona tells her Duene and Anancy folklore. Franky, Ronalda, and Anette listen in, all having different opinions on the stories.

Section 5 is all about Hurricane Mary. She is a strong storm that destroys houses all around the Joseph's home, but the home Franky built for Anette remains standing. Ronalda is in the States during the hurricane and is unhappy with the state of the nation, namely the racism plaguing the culture.

Franky is away during the storm, since he is in the Coast Guard and must work to help the Island. Youme, Frank, and Anette stick together during the storm. In a fleeting thought, Anette wishes Franky dead. She immediately unwishes it and wants to unthink it, but Youme has already heard the thought, as it is then the reader discovers Youme can read and hear her mother's thoughts.

On St. John, Eeona and her inn are safe, though Kweku's octagonal home is destroyed by Mary.

Franky returns after the hurricane with a renewed sense of gratitude for his life and for life on the island, which has returned to the way it was before modernization brought electricity and running water. Islanders are happy with this way of life because they feel it is more organic to their way of living.



Section 6 is all about the BOMB, the Beach Occupation Movement and Bacchanal. As part of the BOMB, Islanders are tired of being run out of their land, specifically their beaches, by tourists and wealthy white people on the island who own the tourism destinations. Islanders hold sit-ins, wade-ins, swim-ins, and general protests to have their demands met.

Eeona is back from St. John, and during one of her visits with Anette's family follows Youme into the bathroom, only to discover that Youme has silver pubic hair as well as a hoof for a heel and a foot that is turned backwards. She immediately recognizes the oddities as a curse, since Anette and Jacob were not supposed to meet and mate in the first place.

Anette, Franky, Youme, and Frank go to the beach for a family day. However, they are not there long before they are asked to leave by a man who points to a woman waving from a balcony; she owns the beach and insists that the Joseph's leave. The Josephs leave without commotion, but are not happy about it. It is here the BOMB is born, since natives don't believe they should be asked to leave their own beaches.

Anette and Jacob meet at the Hibiscus Hotel and Restaurant to discuss Youme's condition. During a bathroom break, Anette discovers that the establishment used to be Villa by the Sea, the place in which Anette was born. Anette also learns that she and Jacob are half-brother and sister, which is a detail that makes her feel as though her life is ruined. She leaves the hotel and goes back home to her family, trying to forget about her love for Jacob.

Anette tries to contact Eeona, likely to discuss her relation to Jacob, but Eeona has left a note with one of the workers at her inn stating, "I am more wild than Mama." She can only focus on one thing at a time, so for the time being, Anette gets on the radio and encourages Islanders to get on their beaches so they can show the white and the wealthy folks that their native land is just that, their land.

Frank and Youme get heavily involved in the BOMB. The largest beach occupation during the movement takes place on Water Island, where the tourists feel invaded by the natives. Frank makes it into the water and swims until he is caught. Youme is also touched by the cause and runs in the ocean, losing the top of half of her clothes and underwear as she goes. She inspires others to get into the water, as well, showing solidarity among the Islanders. Frank is jailed for his actions. When he returns home, he tells Youme he is proud of her actions.

The BOMB ends after three months when the Free Beach Act is passed. Native islanders can enjoy their beaches once again. At the conclusion of the section, Eeona returns from wherever she had run away.

In the seventh and final section, Jacob begins the storytelling. He offers Youme a chance to fix her heel and backwards foot, but she declines, opting to stay exactly as she is.



Anette goes to find and visit Eeona on St. John's island. Even though Eeona has been missing for some time, there have been recent sightings of her on the island. At her inn, Anette stays in a room that is exactly like her childhood bedroom. She forcefully enters Eeona's room, as it is locked, and discovers Eeona has written poems, sayings, and lyrics all over her walls. When Eeona returns, Anette demands to know where she's been.

The reader finds out that Eeona has been in Anegada, visiting her mother's people who are, by extension, her people. Eeona visits with a woman named Angela and Angela's husband. The three of them go into the sea, as Eeona wants to see the wreckage of The Homecoming. She sees it, but is unable to sink deep enough to touch it.

Eeona tells Anette that she is going to take Youme for the two of them live on Anegada, because there Youme will find people just like her. Though Anette slightly protests at first, Eeona is insistent. Eeona cuts her hair, handing the cut strands to Anette, who eventually releases them into sky.

At the conclusion of the novel, Jacob and Anette are sitting on a bench reading a letter from Youme, who has gone to live with her aunt on Anegada. Jacob and Anette are still in love with one another, but each have remained faithful to their respective spouses. Jacob and Anette see each other romantically in their dreams, but in real life, they are only the parents of a young woman each married to someone else.



Section 1: Freedom - Chapters 1 - 28

Summary

Section 1, titled "Freedom," switches voices between an omniscient narrator, and two sisters, Eeona and Anette. The novel takes place in the island cluster that starts as the Danish West Indies, but becomes owned by America within the first two chapters. Most of this first section takes place on the island of St. Thomas.

When the story starts, it is storming outside. The omniscient narrator tells of Owen Arthur Bradshaw, Eeona and Anette's father. He is at a party of one of his business partners. The men at the party are watching an electricity experiment being done on a little American girl. As the girl is tied up, Owen Arthur thinks of his daughter Eeona. He sees the little girl as beautiful, afraid, and brave. Her smallness reminds him of Eeona and makes him long for her. The reader learns that Owen Arthur Bradshaw has a sexual relationship with his daughter, even though he wishes he didn't.

Owen Arthur Bradshaw is the captain of a cargo ship named The Homecoming. The man whose party he's at is Mr. Lovernkrandt, a rum maker, who uses The Homecoming to ship his goods. Owen Arthur does not agree with the treatment of the little American girl, but feels pressured to go along with it so as to not lose Mr. Lovernkrandt's business. However, when it is Owen Arthur's turn to experiment with the electricity on the little girl, he pulls the plug and refuses to do so.

Anette tells the reader of Transfer Day, but it's important that the reader understand that Anette is telling the story of a time when she wasn't yet born. It is March 31, 1917, when the islands are transferred from Danish rule to American rule. Anette also tells about her family. Owen Arthur Bradshaw had promised his wife Antoinette all the riches in the world, but has thus far been unable to provide such riches. Antoinette wanted everything that comes with a life of wealth, but because of Owen Arthur's mediocre earnings, the Bradshaw family has only a maid-cook named Sheila Ladyinga whom they call Miss Lady, and a man-about-the-house named Hippolyte Lammartine whom they call Mr. Lyte.

On Transfer Day, the islanders are mostly happy about the transfer of ownership. Some talk about how they'll go to America and make their life there, or enjoy the free life of an American right there on the island of St. Thomas.

The omniscient narrator tells about the day after the Transfer, Antoinette and Owen argue about their future. They refer to each other as Madame Bradshaw and Mr. Bradshaw, though they are husband and wife. Antoinette is upset that her family cannot go to America because Mr. Bradshaw's business is there on the island, and Mr. Bradshaw is upset that his wife is quarreling with and questioning him.



Antoinette is pregnant. Her previous three children were intentionally miscarried by a process called washing of the womb. However, it's not working as Antoinette tries to rid her body of this fetus. Early in this pregnancy, Owen Arthur's family accompany him on The Homecoming on a trip to neighboring islands. On this trip, Antoinette bleeds more but still does not lose her child. The narrator tells the reader of Eeona's pubescent state, and how Eeona views her bleeding as a nuisance more than anything.

At one of their ports of call, Eeona and Antoinette get on a rowboat so Eeona can swim. Eeona is afraid to swim because she is on her period and thinks the sharks will be after her due to the blood. However, Antoinette views that as a fearful excuse. As Eeona prepares to swim, it is revealed that her pubic hair is gray and thin, like the wisps around her father's temples. Antoinette's response to Eeona's hair is to scrub Eeona's private area until it is raw. When they bathe in the open waters, Owen Arthur looks over the side of his ship to watch his wife and daughter bathing naked; he is turned on by both of them.

Owen Arthur wonders if it's not Eeona herself that turns him on, since his longing for her makes him feel guilty. He wonders if he just needs to visit his mistress more often, since his wife is not often giving of herself.

Eeona tells of her mother's jealousy toward her. Eeona believes her mother is jealous of Eeona's relationship with her father, Antoinette's husband. Eeona also believes her mother is scared for her because of Eeona's extreme beauty. Eeona's mother tells stories of the Duene, a magical creature-people of the islands. The female Duene live in the sea of the Anegada Passage and are so beautiful they are harmful, and the males live on St. Croix and are equally beautiful. Both the male and female Duene have feet that face backwards so that humans cannot follow them.

The omniscient narrator comes back to tell the reader of the Bradshaw's. Antoinette attends a lady's tea party at Mrs. Lovernkrandt's house where they discuss New York fashions. Antoinette plans a way to make and sell the kind of gloves New York women would buy, so that she could be commissioned to make more and be able to stay in New York.

Anette speaks of Anegada and Antoinette, who hails from Anegada. She got pregnant at a young age, and because her parents understood the wildness within Antoinette, they happily set her off with the captain (Owen Arthur Bradshaw).

The omniscient narrator returns to tell of Antoinette's attempted abortion, as Antoinette doesn't want the child in her womb and so punches her abdomen until she believes she's harmed the baby enough to kill it. Miss Lady knows what she's doing, and makes an effort to stop her. Antoinette doesn't want another child because all she wants to do is travel and have a high-society life with her husband. Since she knows that's not possible, and she can't seem to kill the fetus inside of her, Antoinette goes to the town market to visit Rebekah McKenzie, her husband's mistress.



At the market, the women meet. Antoinette threatens Rebekah to remember who is married to whom. Yet, Antoinette discreetly asks for a beverage that is supposed to flush the baby out of her system. Rebekah supplies a concoction, but it doesn't work. Instead, she is ill and Owen stays by her side during the sickness, much to Eeona and Rebekah's dismay.

When Antoinette is well enough to go back to the market, she asks Rebekah for another way to rid her body of the fetus. Rebekah rips a hair from her own foot—which is a hoof from the calf down—and Antoinette puts the strand of animal hair under her tongue. It doesn't work, and Rebekah tells Antoinette that the child will kill Antoinette before Antoinette kills the child.

As Antoinette's pregnancy goes on, Owen Arthur stays by her side when he is on the island, and Eeona is jealous of his time with her. Anette is born with fiery red skin and hair. Owen thinks he's going to be disappointed to have another girl, but he's not. Instead, he hopes her presence will squelch the love he has for Eeona.

In Eeona's voice, the reader learns that after Anette is born, Owen and Eeona spend most of their time together, for Eeona becomes the mistress of Villa by the Sea, which is the name of the Bradshaw home. Owen takes Eeona everywhere, and she is happy to have her father back to herself.

Still in Eeona's voice, she tells of Anette's lack of beauty. While Antoinette tends to Anette, Eeona and her father spend each evening together. Owen teaches Eeona how to dance. Eeona loved the time so much she wished she and her Papa were the only ones in that family. Eeona seems to be telling the story from the future, since she tells the reader that currently, The Homecoming is buried under the sea by Anegada and that the Villa by the Sea is a sort of bed-and-breakfast establishment.

The omniscient narrator tells the reader of the importance of Anette's red hair and that as a child it was a sign of her sunny disposition; as a grown woman it would be mean something greater, something almost dangerous. But Antoinette and Owen Arthur do not keep a record of Anette's life, because they do not care to leave a legacy of their family. By the time Anette is born, American Prohibition is hurting Owen Arthur's business, and the native islanders seemed to be alienated from American tourists.

Anette learns to swim at 11 months old at a deserted beach that is considered taboo, since a Navy man had drowned there many years before. Mr. Lyte takes them to the beach so Antoinette can make sure Anette is a sea person, since Antoinette, being from Anegada, is a sea person. Most beaches are social places, but this lone beach is for Antoinette to teach her daughter in secret, so as to not scare other people.

In Eeona's voice, she tells of how Owen Arthur and Antoinette send her to receive a proper scholarly education. Antoinette wants her to go to America; Owen sends her to Tortola.

Eeona cries while on the boat to Tortola, knowing she will miss Anette's wildness, her mother's stories of the Duene people of Anegada, and her father's very presence. Six



months after she arrives on Tortola, Eeona chooses to be with a Frenchman named Louis Moreau. The two sail from Tortola to Anegada, even though such a journey by a man and woman alone is forbidden for the time and culture. Louis is a real Frenchman, and Eeona is excited about the possibility of being a real Madame.

On Anegada, Eeona and Louis are acknowledged through Eeona, since it is her mother who originally hails from the island. Eeona hopes the acknowledgment comes from her beauty, and so is disappointed when someone refers to her as a Stemme, which is Antoinette's maiden name. The woman who calls Eeona a Stemme says Eeona is like the Duene people from the island stories told to children. On the beach of Anegada, Louis and Eeona are intimate with one another and Louis proposes to Eeona; she accepts.

The reader learns from the omniscient narrator of Jacob Esau McKenzie, Rebekah's son. He has Rebekah's surname, but is the offspring of Captain Bradshaw. Though Owen knows he cannot leave Esau everything, as he wishes, Owen hopes the fact that Esau is his son could be an open secret on St. Thomas.

Owen spends quality time with Esau so that Esau would know Owen is his father. They dance together while Rebekah plays the piano, and they laugh and share memories. Once, Esau sees his mother and his father being intimate. In this scene, the reader learns that Rebekah has one human foot and one hoof with bone-colored cleft in place of toes.

When Antoinette and Owen Arthur visit Eeona on Tortola, Antoinette objects to her marriage to Louis on the grounds that her silver-hair secret will become known, though Antoinette does not make this known. Eeona is brought back to St. Thomas the next morning to have a visit with her family. Eeona's father visits her room for a sexual encounter, claiming he tried other women but is only truly satisfied with her. Still, he tells Eeona she must marry Louis and go away with him, that they cannot continue their relationship. Eeona is furious, but he insists. The next day, The Homecoming wrecks and Owen Arthur is dead.

The losses of the wreck are mourned in different ways. Louis Moreau's father forbids him to marry Eeona, since it would now be a clear financial burden. Moreau loves her for years to come, but mourns almost silently, sometimes in secret and sometimes in front of others. Antoinette leaves St. Thomas for New York just three months after Owen's death, leaving Eeona in charge of Anette and Villa by the Sea.

Once in New York, Antoinette finds the Fashion Institute for Coloreds to be the place where she wants to study, as she has always wanted to create iguana-skin shoes to sell, believing they would make her enough money to be financially independent. However, the institute is a shell of an office because of The Great Depression currently happening in America.

Anette tells the reader how she remembers when her Mama left for America the second time. She remembers her Mama being in great pain, and wonders why God isn't saving



her Mama from the pain. Eeona tells her God doesn't save, that a person must do that herself.

The voice switches back to the narrator. Being on her own and suddenly a single mother, Eeona has her father's debts to pay, to Mr. Lovernkrandt and other businessmen who had helped Owen secure his cargo. Miss Lady quits Villa by the Sea and works for another hotel, and at this point, Eeona loses everything she's ever known except for her sister Anette.

In her own voice, Eeona reveals that her mother told her about Jacob Esau McKenzie, but she isn't sure if her Mama's warning was meant for Eeona to care for him or to be careful of him.

Eeona and Anette leave the Villa by the Sea. By burro, they leave with Mr. Lyte and go to a place called Savan. In Savan, Eeona teaches Anette how to be a lady, including how to curtsy, walk with good posture, sip properly from a tea cup, and speak proper English.

Anette speaks again. She doesn't remember Papa. She lets the reader know she doesn't trust boats because they killed both her parents, and she doesn't believe in ladylike-ness and lineage because that's not who she is. When Eeona tells her about boys, she tells of their different classes rather than a birds-and-the-bees talk. Eeona tells Anette that she is not to associate with any boy beneath their class, and especially one named Esau.

The omniscient narrator comes back to tell the reader of Rebekah McKenzie as she watches her sons swim in the sea. She is watching Eeona and Anette from a distance, who are enjoying the beach in modest clothing. Anette had been begging for a beach day and so Eeona gives in, but she does not allow Anette in the water. Eeona tells Anette the sea will kill her, as it did their Papa.

On the beach, Anette and Jacob find each other. They listen to a conch shell together, telling each other that they each come from the sea and so can hear themselves in the conch. Rebekah pulls Jacob away from Anette, but Jacob is enthralled with Anette and the friendship the two quickly strike up.

Back in Savan, Eeona toys with sending Anette to the orphanage on St. Croix in order to protect her from Jacob. She decides to meet with Liva Lovernkrandt.

The omniscient narrator tells the reader of the McKenzie men. Though Owen Arthur Bradshaw is Jacob's biological father, since Rebekah is a McKenzie, Jacob is considered a McKenzie. The McKenzie men are considered odd, full of muscles, but some of them grow up unable to dance or read well. McKenzie men are considered hard to love because they don't show affection, and the McKenzie women are considered outsiders, as the McKenzies only regard men as being of value.

Rebekah is unsure of what breed Jacob will grow to resemble; will he be a Duene, as she feared Owen was, or will he clearly be from Rebecca and therefore regarded as a



McKenzie? No matter what, Rebekah determines that she will try to keep Jacob from falling in love, though she knows it's inevitable since he in fact could love and be loved, since he is not a McKenzie. Rebekah knows his heart is geared toward Anette, but she will work to prevent it.

Eeona visits Mrs. Lovernkrandt at Villa by the Sea, which the reader learns the Lovernkrandt's have purchased from Eeona. Eeona wears a blue motherly dress on purpose, so as to not arouse any men that may be in the home, though it doesn't work. Eeona wants to see if she could do some work-for-hire for Mrs. Lovernkrandt, but when Mrs. Lovernkrandt suggests that Eeona become her housemaid, Eeona lets down her hair—which is offensive to Mrs. Lovernkrandt due to Eeona's intense beauty—and walks out of the Villa by the Sea.

Anette speaks again. She tells the reader of how she knows Eeona is trying to get rid of her, even though she is young. Eeona decides to send Anette to the St. Croix orphanage. When Anette realizes this, she works hard to be on her best behavior. However, Eeona still brings her to the docks to be sent off. Anette doesn't want to go and so throws a fit on the docks big enough that the captain of the ship will not let her on.

Eeona tells the last portion of Section 1. She knows her magic is in her beauty, and that men will always love her, but she doesn't want just any man; she still wants her father. Thus, though she admits she would have mourned Anette's dying, she mourns Anette's living just as well.

Analysis

The first section of "Land of Love and Drowning" is titled Freedom, and it has a quote from David A. Melford, an author who has written about the ship wrecks on or around Anegada. The author likely uses it to set a background for the reader, since one of the Bradshaw women, Antoinette, hails from Anegada, and her husband, Owen Arthur, shipwrecks near Anegada.

The sea is central part of the story, as the novel takes place in and around the Virgin Islands. The author wants it to be clear from the very beginning that the sea and at least one of the islands are dangerous. Though this quote speaks to the physical danger of sailing in the Caribbean, the author is likely paralleling it to the emotional and spiritual dangers, as well.

The first section of "Land of Love and Drowning" is an introduction to every major character and their relations to one another, and in the section are significant events that set in motion the majority of Eeona and Anette's life events from that point on. Since the entirety of the novel is a telling of the Bradshaw family from the early 1900s through about 60 years of history, it is important that the reader note the experiences of Eeona and Anette as young girls.



The family dynamics learned by Eeona and Anette can be seen in their parents. Owen Arthur and Antoinette clearly have a difficult time acquiescing to the fact that they are parents and they have children in their charge. Antoinette displays her disinterest in being a mother when she expresses jealousy over Eeona and Owen Arthur's relationship, when she admits to multiple intentional abortions, and when she disappears from her children's lives after Owen Arthur perishes. A woman who wants to be a mother acts in completely opposite ways.

Owen Arthur, on the other hand, has a parental sense to him as he cares for his children, but his sexual relationship with Eeona is not a healthy relationship. Even if it is somewhat culturally admissible, their shame is evident and therefore them being together is unhealthy. Furthermore, he touts Eeona around as his mistress when Antoinette is bedridden. He does not treat her like his daughter, but rather his wife.

Antoinette and Owen Arthur's lack of affection and parenting likely contributes to Eeona's sense of wildness, as well as Anette's future desperation to follow her heart. Eeona learns through her parents that the wildness of one's soul is to be indulged over obligation, and Anette learns from her parents—and subsequently her sister's actions—that togetherness with those you love makes a life complete.

The significance of Transfer Day lies in the identity piece of the novel. Personal and national identities are tested throughout the narrative, and when the Virgin Islands are transferred from Danish ownership to American ownership, suddenly the Islanders have an entirely new nationality. It takes them decades to work that out, and even then they are not treated as true Americans on their own land. The reader can see in the merriment yet chaos of how Anette describes Transfer Day that the Islanders will grapple with the meaning of the transfer for years to come.

Antoinette's actions throughout Section 1 speak of a woman desperate to live a different life. She doesn't want the child growing inside of her, instead she wants to be child-less. She doesn't want a husband who has a lover, instead she wants a man all to herself. She wants a high-society life in New York City, not a so-so life on a poverty-stricken island. Though Eeona and her mother do not have a good relationship, Eeona takes on her mother's sentiments of wanting a different life, as Eeona actively works toward creating the exact life she wants for most of her adult years.

Part of Antoinette's desperation can be seen when she meets Rebekah at the market. To willingly meet her husband's mistress because she might have something that would rid her body of the unwanted fetus is desperate; typically, a woman would not want to ask a favor of her husband's mistress.

It is important for the reader to note that once Anette is born, her lack of beauty is emphasized by Eeona, whose beauty is her magic. Eeona knows her beauty is her magic and that it can be used for good or for evil, sometimes it's even a curse. However, since Eeona desires to continue the sexual relationship she has with her father, Eeona is happy that Anette is not a beauty. For as wild and free as Eeona wants



to be, she also wants to be considered the most beautiful and most desirable in her community.

It is equally important to note Eeona's gratefulness that Antoinette now has to care for Anette, since that frees Owen Arthur to take Eeona around town, as the two of them act as though Eeona is Madame of Villa by the Sea.

Anette learning to swim at such a young age is an important part of her and Antoinette's story. Antoinette is from Anegada, and as laid out in the novel, people from Anegada consider themselves to be people of the sea. Thus, it is important to Antoinette that her daughters know how to swim well. The fact that they have to hide her swimming lessons from the rest of the island speaks to the wariness others have toward people from different islands, but it also speaks to Antoinette's determination to make her daughters a certain way.

When Eeona travels to Tortola for her education, her and her parents' attitudes are opposing, yet similar. Eeona doesn't want to go because she'll miss her father; he returns the sentiment, though he feels the right thing to do is to send her. Though he sometimes lets his urges get the best of him, Owen Arthur tries, most of the time, to do the right thing. Eeona thinks she'll miss her mother, too. Antoinette is happy to have Eeona out of her husband's mind, which is opposing to Eeona's feelings on the matter.

Eeona's relationship with and engagement to Louis Moreau is both sincere and a sort of protest. The affection is sincere because he is a real Frenchman, and when he is walking her around Anegada on his arm, it is Eeona that is regarded by passers-by. Eeona sees this as her opportunity to be a real Madame, which is something she cannot wholly obtain back on St. Thomas, at least not while her parents are alive. She knows she shouldn't be intimate with Louis Moreau, though she cannot help but work toward what she can't get at home.

The introduction of Jacob at this time may be meant for the reader to understand how each of their stories are intertwined. Owen Arthur dies soon after the reader finds out about Jacob, so it is important to know that Jacob is Owen Arthur's biological son. The significance of Jacob keeping the McKenzie name is somewhat answered in this first section: even though it is an open island secret that Owen Arthur and Rebekah are lovers, the McKenzie name holds much weight. To help Jacob lead a respected life, Rebekah keeps him a McKenzie.

Eeona's parents' resistance to her relationship with Louis are for similar reasons, though Antoinette and Owen Arthur don't seem to discuss the matter. Antoinette is worried her silver-hair secret will get out and the family will be shamed. Owen Arthur doesn't like another man knowing her silver-hair secret. However, he gives in to her relationship with Louis and ends their sexual relationship, therefore putting them on the outs with each other when he dies.

Owen Arthur's death creates a domino effect. The events that follow—Antoinette's leaving for New York, Antoinette's death back on St. Thomas, Eeona becoming Madame



of Villa by the Sea, Eeona trying to send off Anette, and Anette working hard to be good so Eeona will keep her—all went into motion because the patriarch of the family didn't foster good relationships during his life, and then left the women of his life in dire straights when he dies.

Eeona's attempt to make Anette into a lady like she are fairly futile. Anette knows from the get-go who she is and who she wants to be, and therefore Eeona's lessons don't hold a lot of water for Anette.

Eeona's early warning to Anette about staying away from Esau are important for their futures. First, Eeona's use of "Esau" instead of "Jacob" will come back to haunt her, as Anette doesn't know they are the same person. When Anette and Jacob meet on the beach, the author is setting up their future, as she is making it clear from early on that their paths are meant to cross because their souls are connected.

Now that Jacob has been introduced and he and Anette have met, the reader can learn more about the McKenzie men and why it's important to know that Jacob is not a McKenzie. As the author describes them, the McKenzie men can't love or be loved, because of their tendency to be emotionally distant. Jacob is not that way in the least; like his mother, he is full of passion and cares for others. However, the fact that he can love and be loved means that his mother will actively work toward making sure Jacob does not fall in love with Anette. She sees that they already care for each other, just through their short conversation on the beach, and she knows that since they are half-brother and sister, their intimacy would be unhealthy and damning.

The Lovernkrandt's don't have a large role in the overall narrative of "Land of Love and Drowning," but their purchase of Villa by the Sea is significant, as the purchase was used to pay off Owen Arthur's debts. For Eeona to go back there means that she is desperate, since she nor her father liked to owe anyone anything or to be shamed by anyone. Eeona's sense of inferiority is likely what leads her to letting down her hair, an offensive act to Mrs. Lovernkrandt, given that it ignites her beauty and tempts men in her presence.

Eeona's regretfulness at where her life currently stands continues in the last chapter of Section 1, as she mourns the fact that Anette does not go to the orphanage and instead stays with her. It seems she feels shame, disdain, regret, anger, and frustration, since she knows what she wanted and why she can't have it. However, the reader can note that Eeona calls Anette, "my Anette," indicating that even though Eeona feels her new motherhood is annoying, she is still Anette's sister and therefore carries a deep affection for and loyalty to her.

Discussion Question 1

Eeona makes it clear that she believes her mother is jealous of Eeona's relationship with her father; how can the reader tell of Antoinette's jealousy for her husband?



Discussion Question 2

Why might the girl being experimented on with electricity toward the beginning of the novel be American instead of from the Islands?

Discussion Question 3

Thus far, what is the significance of Anette's magic of speak-and-make-it-so?

Vocabulary

gale, toonchy, brash, bachanal, garrulous, quelbe, mete, courtesans, impetuousness, mongoose, atoll, obeah, mesple, nubile, shoal, albinism, sieve, harkening, mooring, contagion, mulattress, clairvoyant, pickney, bazadie



Section 2: Belonging - Chapters 29 - 60

Summary

Section 2 is titled "Belonging" and begins with a song lyric: "All hail our Virgin Islands. Em'ralds of the sea, Where beaches bright with coral sand, And trade winds bless our native land," from "Virgin Islands March" by Alton Adams.

Anette begins the storytelling by telling how sick she is and that when her fever finally breaks it's Ronald who is by her bedside. Once she's better, Eeona wants to take her to church in order for her to fully recover from her illness. However, Eeona plans to take Nelson, their ass (mule), but Anette cannot stay on. Eeona goes to church by herself, and Anette stays home. While she's home, Anette wants some fish and water, so she sits in her house and thinks how nice it would be to have some. Almost immediately after she thinks it, Ronald brings her some water and some fish to cook.

The narrator describes Eeona's conversation with Ronald, a boy of whom Eeona does not truly approve for Anette to marry. Anette doesn't want to marry him, but Ronald wants to marry her. However, since Ronald is persistent in his pursuit and is not Jacob Esau McKenzie, Eeona tells him he'll do for a husband for Anette, even though Anette still hasn't agreed to marry him.

The time has moved to World War II and the boys are getting drafted for the war since the Virgin Islands are now American territory. Anette and the omniscient narrator describe to the reader the scene on St. Thomas before the boys leave for the Army. There are Puerto Rican men on the island as they prepare to be drafted; they want to find a woman to marry before being sent for training and then overseas. Ronald continues to claim Anette and is persistent in his proposals. Anette's friend Gertie finds a boy to marry. The boys ship out for some training, and Anette decides during Ronald's absence that because he cares for her so much, he'll do. The two marry. Once the boys are shipped out, some die fairly soon into the deployment, including Gertie's husband.

The narrator tells the reader of Eeona and Mr. Barry, the man who runs the Hospitality Lounge at which Eeona works. Mr. Barry is in love with Eeona, but she is not with him. He asks Eeona to marry him several times, each time being rejected. Still, Eeona continues working for him because it pays a salary that will help her toward the life she says she wants, one of wealth and adventure and freedom.

The narrator continues the narrative by describing Jacob Esau McKenzie and giving the reader more information about him. Since he is not actually a McKenzie, he is clearly different from the rest: he is smart, even called brilliant and he is capable of loving and being loved. The narrative continues by describing the man who is not Jacob's father but is thought by everyone to be Jacob's father: Benjamin McKenzie. It is revealed that Benjamin did not die when his wife used obeah on him. She had banished him to the rainforest to die, but the magic failed.



The McKenzie bloodline could have gone on with Jacob's brothers who were actually Benjamin's sons, but for some reason not stated in the text, it is Jacob who carries on the strong McKenzie name. Jacob's brothers played the tuba, the saxophone, and the upright bass well before jazz music became popular on St. Thomas. Jacob was somewhat different, in that he wanted to play the steel pan. Saul became an architect, Mark became a lawyer; and Adam became a dentist. Jacob becomee a doctor because his mother said it would be so.

When Jacob is away for the Army, Rebekah sends him packages with stewed cherries and a new jacket. She treats him as her most cherished son.

The narrator goes back to Eeona and Mr. Barry. Eeona begins considering his marriage proposals, since she has fallen in love with the air-conditioning in his building, and she has fallen in love with the attention he gives her. She lets him pleasure her with his mouth, which makes him the only living person who has seen her silver pubic hair. However, Mr. Barry's oral pleasure makes Eeona feel dirty. She visits Anette, whom Eeona thinks might want some company.

Anette is pregnant, and both she and Eeona are surprised.

The narrator tells of Ronald, Jacob, and Spice, who are all in the same Army unit and are friends. They are in New Orleans for their military assignment. Ronald stays true to Anette, and even shows her picture to anybody who will look. Jacob's mother reminds him in letters that Jacob is headed for medical school, so he better not get entangled in a relationship. When Ronald shows the photos of Anette, Jacob knows that she looks familiar.

In New Orleans, the boys experience racism when they want to eat at a restaurant that only wants to serve white people. The racism is unexpected since they're islanders and soldiers, rather than African Americans. The boys leave without causing trouble.

Anette ponders marriage, Ronald—whom she sometimes calls Ronnie—and Eeona. Anette wants to be a history teacher, though she knows there are obstacles in her way for doing so. Eeona comments that Anette seems happy in her marriage, but Anette knows that it might actually not be Ronnie making her happy, since he hasn't been present for much of their marriage. Eeona questions Anette on how she's going to be a loving parent, since Anette didn't have a loving parental example. When Anette says her husband's love will be her example, Anette means the way to love in general but Eeona think she means that the way Anette and Ronnie love each other is the way Ronalda will be loved by her parents.

Anette decides that she and Ronald will raise Ronalda on their own, without Eeona and without Ronald's mother, since Eeona and Anette's mother-in-law are pushy with their opinions. Still, when Ronalda is born, Eeona brings Anette practical gifts to use for the baby. Anette decides that when Ronald gets home, she will be on the dry dock ready to receive him.



Jacob, Ronald, and Spice are split up by the Army because they are causing trouble being together. Jacob ends up in solitary confinement for two weeks for throwing a boot at a presenter. He is sent back to Puerto Rico, then on to St. Thomas. Jacob is happy to be home, but he feels incomplete and isn't sure why.

The narrator continues to tell the reader of Eeona, who is working to leave the island. She tells herself over and over that Anette is not really her concern, and that she is free to make her own choices.

The narrator moves to telling of Anette, who goes to the dock to meet Ronald off his boat. She is determined to love him and make the three of them—her, Ronald, and Ronald—a family. Eeona is mad, but Anette doesn't care. Yet, when Anette goes to the docks, Anette swears her man came off that boat, but Ronald is not on it. Anette sees Jacob kiss the ground when he gets home.

Anette tells the reader of the divorce letter she gives Ronald, because even though she was determined to make the three of them a family, she knows they won't be.

Eeona makes her opinion known; she is upset that Anette is divorcing Ronald. Eeona indicates that she knows to whom Anette is turning her affection, and she's not happy about it.

Anette returns to tell of her meeting Jacob at a dance at a Catholic school. She messes with Saul, as a friend, at the beginning of the dance, but once Jacob walks in from the rain that's where her attention goes. The two feel instantly that they are meant to be together and that they belong to one another. Without an explanation or a question, Jacob accepts Ronald. Anette and Jacob share a passionate kiss. When Anette goes toward her apartment, Jacob watches her the entire way. Upon entering, Eeona scolds her for coming home so late, and calls Anette Mrs. Smalls.

The morning after the dance, the narrator tells of Eeona going to return her boat ticket that was going to take her to New York City. Instead, Eeona ends up getting on a seaplane traveling to Freedom City, St. Croix. She does so because the attendant calls out for last boarding of the vessel to Freedom City at the moment Eeona is thinking about her desired freedom.

Anette wakes up the morning after the dance to Ronald stroking her face. She's happy because of Jacob, who tells his mom about Anette. Rebekah reacts strongly and asks him to be with any woman but her. Jacob is upset that his mother disapproves; he doesn't want her to put a spell on him or any part of his body, so he goes to a bar to drink away his problems.

The narrator continues telling the reader of how Eeona is doing on St. Croix. She meets a man named Kewku Prideux, who is actually Benjamin McKenzie, Rebekah's first husband. Benjamin was banished to forest long ago to die, but he didn't; instead, he reinvented himself and lives in Freedom City, St. Croix.



Eeona is used to men being enthralled with her and not being able to resist her. Kweku is not impressed with her, but he does want her. It's not clear if he wants her because she was Owen Arthur's daughter, and Owen Arthur was Rebekah's side lover. Either way, Kweku and Eeona share a sexual encounter on Kweku's balcony. His thick body hair almost disgusts her, but since they're already in the throes of sexual intimacy, she just continues on.

Anette tells of her day date with Jacob. The two take Ronalda to the beach. Jacob and Ronalda build a sand castle together. Anette knows Eeona is missing, but forgets as she spends time with Jacob and Ronalda, the two people in the world she most loves. However, as time goes on, Anette remembers again. Anette ends her portion by telling the reader that she's not telling everything she knows.

The narrator comes back to tell the reader that soon after Anette and Jacob's day date, Jacob takes Anette and Ronalda away in the middle of the night. He carries Ronalda to the beach as Anette follows. At the beach, Jacob teaches Anette how to swim; even though she learned when she was just 11 months old from her mother, she doesn't remember doing so. Jacob and Anette are then intimate with each other as Ronalda feeds off of Anette's breast.

The narrator goes back to Eeona and Kweku. His hair does gross her out, but the two are intimate with each other anyway. Eeona sees herself as the madame of Kweku's octogonanal house. She is pregnant, which is when Kweku backs off a bit from their relationship.

Anette and Jacob are not married yet, though they want to be. Rebekah still disapproves, and his mother's approval is very important to Jacob. However, Anette is now pregnant. Eeona doesn't know that Anette is pregnant when she arrives home from St. Croix.

In Eeona's words, she tells the reader of how she is desperate for Kweku's love, and how she's never had such problems getting a man to love her. She asks Kweku if they can go to the beach. He says no, but Eeona says she'll go on her own. She takes a kerosene lamp, makes it to the beach, swims naked, sexually relieves herself, and then runs home. Immediately upon finishing that story, Eeona tells the reader that she just told a lie. Instead what happens is she makes it to the beach and to the edge of the water, but then is scared to go in so she runs home. Yet again, immediately following the second story, Eeona tells the reader that, too, was a lie. The real story is that she barely made it down her road before turning back home, and when she got back home, Kweku acted as though he were not surprised at her quick return, and he didn't miss her at all.

The narrator comes back and speaks of Eeona begging for affection from Kweku. Eeona is pregnant, and as time goes on she hopes Kweku will come around to caring. The reader finds out from the narrator that Kweku doesn't really love Eeona, but he can't decide if he wants her to go or to stay. The baby is still-born; Eeona names him Owen Arthur. Kweku tosses the baby over the balcony. Eeona builds up her strength



until she can leave, and when she is strong enough, Eeona goes home to her sister by way of boat.

Anette carries on the narrative. Eeona is back home. She is adamant that Jacob and Anette not be together. Anette accuses Eeona of jealousy. Jacob accuses Eeona of insanity. Eeona tries telling Anette that Jacob hasn't had a good example of being a husband, and so he won't be able to love her like she needs. Anette reveals that she's pregnant and therefore must marry Jacob.

The narrator picks up the story-telling. Anette gives birth to a baby girl after Jacob relieves her with his hand in the ocean. They name the baby girl Eve Youme, eventually called simply "Me." Rebekah tells Jacob that if he stays with Anette he'll have to serve in the Army in the Korean War. Jacob decides to leave Anette so he can go to medical school; he sees the move as an investment for their future. He decides he will come back to Anette when he is a man.

Eeona begins telling the story. She finds that she can love a child as she loves Anette's daughter, even though she feels as though Eve's presence makes her own sins quite apparent.

The narrator tells the last part of Section 2. Jacob leaves for America on an airplane. He tells her he'll be back soon, that he loves her. He puts Ronald's hand into Anette's before he parts. Anette works hard to keep it together. The narrator says that the interactions between Jacob and Anette described in this section is the first part of their story.

Analysis

The title to Section 2 tells of the major theme played out in this section, as the characters work hard to find somewhere to which and someone to whom they can belong. The song lyric attached to the title page of this section speaks to the beauty of the Islands and how that beauty impacts its residents.

Anette's relationship with Ronald starts because he takes care of her when she's ill, the significance of which lies in that Anette has never been taken care of by anyone who had chosen to commit to her care. In the past, her mother's brief care was obligatory, as was Eeona's after the two were orphaned. Ronald, or "Ronnie" as he is later known, chooses to be by Anette and to nurse her back to health. It is also here that Anette discovers one of her abilities, which is to speak and make it so. The reader can see the uncertainty in Anette as she discovers this ability, likely as she wonders how and if she should use it in the future.

Eeona's need for control is evident as she disapproves of their relationship. However, since he is not Jacob, Eeona approves of their relationship on a purely functional level. Eeona's disapproval and subsequent sewing of Anette's wedding likely doesn't confuse Anette, rather it likely causes opposing emotions for her: since Anette doesn't like to be bossed around, Eeona's disapproval may propel Anette toward Ronnie. However, the



fact that Eeona is making Anette a wedding dress may push Anette away from Ronnie, since she doesn't want to be forced into anything.

The fact that the story has moved to World War II means that each character's national identity is about to be tested. The men of the Virgin Islands are about to be drafted because they're Americans. However, the only thing that has ever made them American is the fact that the Virgin Islands are an American territory. Nothing about the Islanders' lives changed after Transfer Day. The reader can see that since so many things are changing on the Islands, e.g. the Puerto Rican men, Anette choosing to marry Ronnie, etc., that life as they know it is likely about to change, as well.

Working at the Hospitality Lounge is likely a shameful thing for Eeona, since she views anything under being a Madame inappropriate. However, since she is determined to be free, it seems she works with gusto. Another desire of hers, however, is to belong. Eeona lost her sense of belonging when her father died. Even though her mother and sister remained, losing her father meant losing part of her identity and a sense of belonging. By working somewhere she is desired, Eeona may be attempting to fulfill that sense of belonging.

Later, when she and Mr. Barry are intimate, even though it makes Eeona feel dirty, it seems to also make her feel a part of something. Also, Eeona's sexual urges are satisfied, which seems to be important to her.

When the McKenzie men are described, Jacob is clearly one set apart, which should not be surprising to the reader since Jacob is not a McKenzie. The significance of his mother's first husband still being alive will be revealed later in the novel, though the fact that the information about Benjamin McKenzie is revealed directly after a snippet about Eeona is timely, since it hints at their future relationship.

Rebekah's protection of her son and Jacob's loyalty to his mother are two essential pieces of the story, as both work together to keep Anette and Jacob apart. Rebekah demands her son go to medical school, and because she has been a caring and faithful mother in raising him on her own, Jacob believes he owes it to his mother to follow through on going to medical school. Later in the story, it is because Jacob has to leave for medical school that he and Anette split up.

Anette's marriage to Ronnie makes sense, since an unwed mother at that time in history was hardly socially acceptable. It also makes sense, however, that Anette wants to love Ronnie, since he has been so good and so faithful to her. She has wanted to belong to a family since she was a child, and now she finally has a chance.

Eeona's choice to leave St. Thomas seems born out of multiple emotions, the first being her sense of wildness and desire for freedom. Since she and Anette were orphaned, Eeona has wanted to be free of obligation to care for her sister. Now that Anette is insisting on creating a family with or without Eeona, Eeona reminds herself that it is time to indulge her free spirit. Another emotion likely going into Eeona's decision is her sense



of isolation. She already has difficulty relating to others due to her free spirit, but out of a need to control, Eeona pushes Anette away, therefore further isolating herself.

When Anette goes to meet Ronnie at the docks, the reader can see her determination to be a family. However, the author has made it clear that Anette and Jacob are star-crossed lovers. Therefore, it should not be a surprise to the reader when Anette knows her husband has come off the boat but Ronnie doesn't come off the boat. The reader knows it's Jacob, but Anette has yet to meet him as an adult; she is so far unaware of how her and his souls are connected.

Eeona is not unaware of how Anette and Jacob's souls are connected, which is likely why she is so angry that Anette is divorcing Ronnie. Anette's marriage to Ronnie was supposed to keep Anette safe from Jacob; now Eeona knows that anything can happen. Eeona does not reiterate her warning to Anette not to fall for a man named Esau, but even if she did, Anette doesn't know Esau to be Jacob's middle name.

Eeona's decision to go to Freedom City, St. Croix, instead of New York City is likely colored by a few different happenings. For one, she is angry that Anette is divorcing Ronnie. Because she is upset, Eeona wants badly to be able to leave the island and be free from the family drama. However, she also wants to keep Anette from being with Jacob. New York is much farther than St. Croix, and even though she may not acknowledge it, Eeona likely does not want to be that far away in case she has to rush home to Anette. Second, Eeona's first desire has always been freedom. The fact that the city is named what she's always desired seems to be the tipping point in her decision.

The McKenzie men again take center stage, as the narrator describes Jacob's interactions with his mother regarding his dating Anette, and Eeona dating Benjamin McKenzie, now Kweku Prideux. The author is showing how the real McKenzie men are—unfeeling and not affectionate—versus how Jacob is: passionate and considerate. Jacob's internal conflict over what to do about loving Anette is in direct opposition to Kweku's flippant regard for anyone's feelings. The author's descriptions clearly illustrate how different these two men are, and how far from being a McKenzie Jacob actually is.

The fact that Kweku is not impressed with Eeona is a significant part of her story. She likely wants to be intimate with Kweku because of his connection to Owen Arthur, as Kweku used to lie with Rebekah and so did Owen Arthur. However, Kweku is not overly affectionate with her. He seems to take her simply because she's there and wants him. This lack of attention to Eeona's beauty is something she's never before experienced, and it does not sit well with her. Eeona's beauty has always been a part of her magic, and to lose that would be to lose part of her identity.

Anette and Jacob's continued relationship tells the reader that the two cannot stay away from each other and that they are indeed star-crossed lovers. The two seem to feel as though they innately belong to and with one another. Their continued relationship also tells the reader that both Eeona and Rebekah are ashamed of Anette and Jacob's love,



because to openly acknowledge that they are blood relatives is to acknowledge a shameful secret.

Eeona's returning to St. Thomas may stem from two factors. One, she is tired of not being loved by Kweku. Eeona likes to be desired and treated as a madame, which is not happening with Kweku. The fact that it takes Eeona three times to tell the reader the true story of what happened that night she wanted to go to the beach is an indication that she wants something with Kweku that doesn't exist.

Another reason may be that the characters of "Land of Love and Drowning" are spiritually in-tune, and so even though she doesn't know that Anette is pregnant, something in Eeona's gut may be telling her to return home to her sister.

The fact that Anette is pregnant with Jacob's child is both a blessing and a curse for the couple. It is a blessing because they love each other, and a child is a strong expression of that love. It is a curse, however, because they are blood relatives. Eeona and Rebekah are the only ones who know the conception is a curse, however, and both are still withholding that information from both Anette and Jacob.

When Youme is born, Anette and Jacob seem to hope that will be the deciding factor in Eeona and Rebekah letting them be a family. However, Rebekah continues to manipulate Jacob so that he will not be with Anette. Eeona seems to have forgiven their union, since she loves Eve immediately.

Rebekah is able to convince Jacob to go to medical school in America because Jacob continues to feel a strong sense of obligation to his mother. Her strength and consistency in raising him means a lot to him, and he feels a responsibility to fulfill the life she set out for him from early on. Anette wants him now, and is upset that Jacob is leaving her.

It is important to note that Jacob does not see this obligation to his mother as lessening his affection for or commitment to Anette. Jacob still plans to return to Anette once he finishes medical school, even thinking he'll be more worthy of her at that point because he'll be well-educated and a full-grown man.

Discussion Question 1

What theme runs most throughout this section? How can you tell?

Discussion Question 2

In all of her travels and experiences, what might Eeona's most prominent emotion be? How can you tell?



Discussion Question 3

What is Rebekah's biggest motivation for keeping Jacob and Eeona apart?

Vocabulary

bawna, parasol, vex, canter, jumbie, standpipe, woy, apothecary, yabba, bougainvillea, ruction, mangrove, eugenics, nepotism, johhnycakes, entreaties, pumpum, niggardly, scunt, octoroon, stockade, demobed, guayabera, cuckolded, phosphorescence, melee, layette, braying, soucouyant, drapetomania



Section 3: A Freedom - Chapters 61 - 75

Summary

The narrator begins Section 3 by telling the reader of Anette having a difficult time leaving the airport after Jacob leaves for America. She knows she has two young girls to care for and doesn't know how she'll do this by herself.

As Anette is walking home, an American couple pull up beside her and ask her to be a chambermaid at their establishment, the Gull Reef Club on Water Island. Anette is offended but is too brokenhearted to fight; instead, she goes home and goes to bed. The narrator indicates that Anette will in one year be at that very same club, though there is no indication of why.

In America, Jacob goes to his dentist brother and has his red tooth bleached and his wisdom teeth removed. Jacob screams, "I am real! I am real!" when he wakes up from the anesthesia. His brother tells him that screaming like that is quite normal, even though it isn't.

Eeona stays home with the girls and lets them play with her hair while Anette starts going out to dances. At a secular, non-Catholic dance, Anette is sitting against a wall. She is approached by a man who knows her name, though she doesn't know his. He reveals himself as Franky, the boy who made her an aluminum house when they were children. Anette knows Eeona won't approve, but she accepts his invitation to a date anyway.

Franky's history is explained. He was in the Coast Guard during the war. He has been in love with Anette since they were children and he built her a house out of aluminum. Back then, Eeona wouldn't let Anette keep the house because she disapproved of Franky. Yet, Franky's love has remained. He doesn't mind bringing the children when they go on a picnic, but Eeona watches the girls when Anette and Franky go to the movie filming on Water Island.

Anette goes to the filming, wearing her red fabric Jacob gave to her, so everyone can see that she's fine. People see Anette as a liar because she says Eve is Jacob's, but it's a well-known island fact that McKenzie men only conceive boys. Franky just wants to make sure Anette is completely his.

Jacob begins telling the story from his perspective for the first time. He explains to the reader that he leaves Anette, not because he doesn't love her, but out of obedience to his mother.

The narrator continues telling the story. Islanders who want to be part of the movie are taken over to the Water Island in small boats. As they approach they can see the set towering. As Anette sits in the boat on the way to Water Island, she tries not to think of Jacob but fails.



Anette is wearing the red fabric that Jacob gifted her in place of a wedding ring. Eeona doesn't think it's appropriate and expresses her dislike for Anette's wardrobe. Mr. Lyte, the former man-about-the-house from Villa by the Sea, is Anette and Eeona's boatman. On their trip, he wonders aloud to passengers why the movie is being made at the Grand Hotel.

The movie set is chaotic but Anette dances as though she must prove her happiness. The chef at the Gull Reef Club is Miss Lady, the Bradshaw's former maid, though Anette doesn't remember her.

The group of dancers plays limbo near a bonfire, and Anette wishes for the star of the movie to catch fire, and so her hair does catch fire. However, it ends up being only a wig. The movie wraps and Anette and Franky head home. On their drive home, Anette puts her hand on Franky's thigh, which he takes as his cue to propose marriage. Anette doesn't say yes, but she doesn't say no.

In America, Jacob is wondering about Anette. He is determined to go back to her after med school is complete. He sees Anette on a poster for the movie filmed on Water Island. He writes his brother Saul to ask if Anette is engaged, and Saul replies wondering how Jacob doesn't know she is engaged.

Anette and Franky are on the movie poster, which is the graphic on the front page of the local newspaper. Anette volunteers at an Anglican school to grade history papers. She is tired of waiting around and knows Franky will take care of her. She suggests she and Franky marry the next week; he suggests that day, so they do. Anette wears a yellow dress because yellow is the island's color.

Anette and her two daughters move in with Franky; Eeona stays alone. Now that she is married, Anette is offered a promotion at the school where she volunteers, with a possibility of actual employment. The narrator indicates that Jacob is coming back, though she doesn't indicate when or how.

While in America, Jacob saves his money to come home to Anette. When he returns to the island, he goes first to Ronald because he figures Ronald will know how he feels, since Anette left him. Jacob admits he's not ready for marriage but he needs to make sure Anette doesn't marry anyone else.

Jacob goes to his mother's house, but Rebekah isn't home. So, Jacob plays piano, cries, and has an interaction with his brother Saul, who touches his hand to Jacob's cheek.

Saul visits Anette and gives her a note from Jacob. She walks to the beach and the harbor to read it. Anette thinks of Franky taking care of her and the girls, and also of how she feels like she belongs with Jacob. Anette goes back home to get Eve so she can meet Jacob at the appointed time, as laid out in the note he gave Saul to give to her.



Anette goes home to fetch Eve and Franky has come home early; he is cooking. She asks him what he would do should he leave her. His response is strong; he throws a fit and storms out of the house. Anette walks into their bedroom and sees why Franky came home early: he had the movie poster with their faces on it framed and hung.

Jacob watches Anette from afar as she reads his second note, which he hid in the door-frame. Anette doesn't leave Franky, so Jacob gets back to the states as quickly as possible. He cuts off the rubberband wedding ring he had been using to remind himself of his commitment to Anette, and he changes his medical specialty from pediatrics to gynecology.

Anette tells the last part of the section. The movie is released into theaters and everyone on the island is excited. Anette works hard to forget about Jacob. She and Franky and most of the island go to see the movie. The only scene Anette has a hard time watching is when the star gets her hair caught on fire; Anette continues to feel guilty about that because she had wished the star would catch on fire.

Movie-goers become embarrassed because of the nudity and sex scenes present throughout the movie. The governor of the Virgin Islands complains, but the producers don't care. He drops the fight because the movie brought in a lot of money for the Gull Reef Club.

Anette continues to think of Jacob, even though it is Franky who is in bed beside her.

Analysis

Anette misses Jacob before he even leaves for America. She likely feels sad, already lonely, and somewhat abandoned, especially since she now has two young girls, one of whom is Jacob's. The extent to which Anette feels disheartened can be seen when she doesn't fight the American woman who asks her to be a chambermaid at the Gull Reef Club. Anette is someone who is passionate and not afraid to let her opinion be known. The fact that she ignores the offer without a fight tells the reader how sad Anette does feel.

The red tooth Saul bleaches may represent Anette, since Anette has fiery red hair. Once the dental work is done and Jacob wakes up, his screaming, "I am real! I am real!" may come from the fact that most McKenzie men cannot feel a range of emotions. Jacob can, which his dental surgery proves, and it is an ability he is happy to have. However, this seems to break the spell of Jacob and Anette's relationship, since it is just after then that Anette goes to a dance.

When Anette goes to the dance, it should be clear to the reader that Anette is attempting to channel Jacob in some capacity. All she wants is for him to come back and for them to marry. It seems she has a sense that her desires aren't going to happen, so she puts herself in a position that might make her feel like Jacob is just around the corner.



Similarly, when she is on the movie set, she wears the red fabric that Jacob gifted her in order to channel Jacob's presence and his feelings for her. Though she now has a companion in Franky, Anette remains lonely for Jacob since he is whom she considers to be the love of her life.

When Franky and Anette reunite at the dance, it seems another sort of kismet, for Franky has been trying to win her affection since they were children. Their courting seems a way for Anette to move on from Jacob, as well as to find a person to whom she can belong. She and Jacob are uncertain at this point, and Franky's presence seems to make a big difference for Anette and her choice of who to be with.

The club at which the movie is filmed is the one where Anette was offered a chambermaid position. Since she ignored the woman's offer the year before, Anette is now a visitor, hoping to be an extra on a movie. The connection between the two events is not coincidental, as the author is setting up future social unrest by showing how the business owners who come from the Continental United States think of the natives as lowly and worth only servitude labor. Anette's presence at the filming in a nice outfit is the very beginning of the natives protesting for their rights to enjoy their own land.

Since Jacob is still assuming he and Anette will be together when he's done with medical school, his thinking about her is natural. And since the two are a kind of soulmates, the fact that he has an inkling of her engagement should not surprise the reader.

It is important to note his reaction to the news when Saul lets him know that Anette is indeed engaged. Jacob's sense of urgency to get back to the Islands is met with fear when he actually returns to the Islands, evidenced by the fact that he doesn't go straight to Anette. Instead, he first goes somewhere where he'll be understood (Ronnie) and second to a place he knows he will meet comfort (his mother's home).

However, by the time Jacob returns home, Anette is already married. Her impatience in waiting for Jacob may stem from her being unsure if one, he is sincere in his commitment, and two, if he is ever coming back. Anette knows there are forces greater than herself working against she and Jacob's relationship, so her marrying Franky might be an acknowledgement and surrendering to said forces.

Using Saul as an intermediary is a way Jacob and Anette can communicate without worrying about the repercussions of Rebekah or Eeona. It is also a way of minimizing the societal consequences, since Anette's meeting with a man to whom she is not married may be considered inappropriate. When her feelings reignite during their meeting, Anette's pondering of leaving Franky last only a short time. Once he responds to her inquiry, she knows she can't leave him; he's been too good to her.

The end of Jacob and Anette means the end of pieces of each of them. Since the two are connected at the soul level, their seemingly permanent end is likely to hurt each of them deeply. However, Anette's sense of maturity and responsibility now outweighs her



passionate nature. She now considers who might be hurt by her actions, and then acts accordingly.

The fact that Anette continues to think of Jacob even though she's decided to stay with Franky does not speak to her lack of affection for Franky. Rather, it speaks to the fact that she still believes she and Jacob are soulmates, just that they are unable to be together. Her loyalty lies with Franky, as the two of them have established a family and a life together. Anette knows who she is in Franky, and though she knows who she is in Jacob, as well, it is with Franky Anette can find a lasting identity.

The embarrassment of the Islanders for the nature of the movie filmed on Water Island speaks both their obliviousness at the world outside of the Islands, and to their sense of solidarity, as the uproar seems to be a collective one from most Islanders. However the fact that the governor drops the issue when the profit margin is realized tells the reader that while national identity is important, so is continued commerce for the Islands.

Discussion Question 1

What are some of the reasons Anette answers "Yes" to Franky's invitation to the movies?

Discussion Question 2

What might Eeona think if she knew Miss Lady and Mr. Lyte both had thriving employment?

Discussion Question 3

What does Jacob's reaction to Anette's rejection say about his belief in their relationship?

Vocabulary

tykes, fete, chamermaid, austere, tart, pirogue, skedaddle, esquire, liming, skylarking, foci, clandestine, amulet, aboriginal



Section 4: A Belonging - Chapters 76 - 81

Summary

The omniscient narrator tells this entire section.

Franky gets a promotion at the lighthouse to head keeper. He fixes the door he broke when just the night before he slammed out of the house in response to Anette's question of, "What would you do if I left you?" Jacob returns to St. Thomas, married and as a gynecologist. He becomes Eve Youme's gynecologist. His wife is a woman hand-picked by Rebekah. A maid transfers Eve to and from her appointments with Jacob, instead of Jacob picking her up or Anette escorting her.

Eeona warms to her new family. She gets a government job administering loans so she can help Franky with getting money to build the house he wants to build Anette; Eeona exchanges this favor for him teaching her how to drive.

Eeona purchases a vehicle, a Datsun. The salesman thinks she's beautiful and stands exceptionally close to her during the sale; however, he doesn't make a move on her. She goes to practice driving on the golf course with Franky as he attempts to teach her. Franky is patient, but Eeona is angry; the car won't start for her, though it starts and continues running for anyone else who attempts to drive it.

Eeona continues to hope for her lasting freedom. She even ferries over to St. John to look at some land. The priest is over Anette and Franky's house when Franky brings home a housewarming blessing for the family: a television.

News of racial unrest in the continental United States reaches the Virgin Islands via the television. Islanders debate the situation on a regular basis, as they have a hard time believing people are treated the way black people are being treated in America. Islanders have discussions about the British Virgin Islands and the American Virgin Islands, wondering who's really free, what freedom really means, and what the racial unrest in the States has to do with them.

Anette's children are quiet and scared as they hear the news on their family's television. RONALDA'S perspective dominates the last portion of chapter 79, as the narrator describes how RONALDA learns of the cheapness of the salt fish her family is eating, and of how RONALDA cannot even swallow it because of how it was meant as cheap food for slaves. She is worried about her mama being taken away by her father, RONNIE, since RONNIE has taken to visiting their family and stating that he and Anette are not truly divorced.

Eeona moves to St. John, despite Anette's belief that Eeona will never leave Savan. Eeona purchases land and opens an inn using her savings and pension taken from the government job she promptly left when she felt she had enough money. The inn is on



St. John on the Coral Bay side. St. Johnians welcome Eeona has one of their own, calling her Madame Bradshaw.

Eeona loves being called Madame Bradshaw, since she is treated with respect and a sense of authority. St. John residents shorten her name to Mada Bradshaw, which Eeona also loves. Here, Eeona has the life she has always wanted.

Eeona periodically visits Anette and her family. When this occurs, Eeona stays in Youme's bed. She tells stories of Antoinette and Owen Arthur Bradshaw. Ronalda and Anette listen to the stories, though neither can make true sense of them. Eventually, Eeona tells the story of the Duene. She tells of a male Duene with a smooth bald body and how he fell in love many, many years ago with a female Duene with wing-like hair. Ronalda thinks all of Eeona's island storytelling is foolish, Frank thinks the Duene people are heroes, and Eve identified with them.

Ronalda leaves home, a girl named Mary arrives, Eeona disappears, and the Joseph family gather on the beach.

Analysis

Section 4 is titled Belonging, likely because as the characters face a host of uncertainties, they each work hard to find somewhere and someone to which they can belong. Some characters don't look for a place or a person, but rather a cause.

Franky's response to his outburst the previous evening shows the dedication he has to his family. If he felt like giving up on Anette, knowing a part of her still loves Jacob, he wouldn't have come back and fix what he damaged when he stormed out of the house. Then, the arrangement of Youme going to see Jacob instead of Jacob coming to the house is a sign of Anette's commitment to her husband. Their relationship is built on mutual respect, and it is because of that mutual respect that their relationship lasts.

Eeona's actions in Section 4 speak to her maturity and her ability to move forward, despite her romantic disappointments of the past. Though she wants to be desired, she seems to understand that if she wants to get the life she thinks she wants, she'll have to work for it on her own instead of waiting for a man to provide it for her. Men and women are treated differently on the Islands, and Eeona's beauty isn't getting her everything it used to get her. The hard work doesn't seem to bother her. In fact, she seems to thrive on it.

The racial unrest happening in the States is an essential piece of the story, as it sets into motion sentiments of social unrest on the Islands, including for Ronalda. The racism experienced by the soldiers in WWII while they were stationed in Louisiana has intensified.



Discussion Question 1

What does Eeona's getting a car say about her assertion of independence?

Discussion Question 2

The omniscient narrator indicates that Eeona gets her life to be exactly how she wants it. What is meant by that?

Discussion Question 3

How does the Civil Rights Movement on the continental United States seem to impact Eeona, Anette, and Anette's family?

Vocabulary

captaincy, traipse, harpy, skittering, feeble-minded, calypso



Section 5: Drown - Chapters 82 - 85

Summary

The omniscient narrator tells the whole of Section 5. It begins with a quote from Derek Walcott, "It may seem so simple to say that it is sea. But it is the sea."

Ronalda goes to college in the states and is discouraged for the state of things. Mainly, it is the racism that bothers her. Still, she remains emotionally distant from her homeland of the Virgin Islands.

Hurricane Mary is on the news as a huge storm, but so far it's just a little rain and wind. Jacob and his wife go to a hurricane party. Franky is relieved of his lighthouse duty for safety purposes.

The storm remains on the news, but only in the Virgin Islands, not in the states. Therefore, Ronalda tells her mother that everything will be fine. Eeona calls from St. John and says it won't be okay, that Anette needs to be safe and take care of her family. Eeona is worried about Anegada because that's where their ancestors are from, but Anette is not worried about the same. The electricity goes out on St. Thomas, but Anette and Franky don't notice because they're asleep when it happens.

The storm comes full force once it makes landfall. Emergency personnel are called to their duties. Jacob stays with his wife, however, and the two are intimate in order for Jacob to attempt procreating a son. Jacob's wife is scared that if he goes to help with the emergency relief, he'll find his way into Anette's arms.

The Coast Guard calls Franky up, so he must go. As he leaves, Anette silently wishes him dead. It is discovered by the reader—and quickly by Anette—that Youme can read Anette's thoughts. Anette's thoughts scare Youme, since they involve her father dying, and Youme's ability to read Anette's thoughts feels like an intrusion to Anette. Anette warns Youme to be careful in other people's heads.

Anette's family, and by extension all of the islands, wait out the storm. Once the eye has seemed to pass, Frank goes into the neighborhood. Upon his return, he believes that the backside of the storm has yet to make an appearance.

When Hurricane Mary is completely over, life goes back to the way it was many years prior. Most people's electricity is out for months and most people's toilet water is drawn from a cistern under the house. Instead of watching television, Anette's family told each other stories, island myths and legends that have been around for longer than any of them have been alive.

Franky returns with a declaration: "Thank God for life!" Islanders are happy with life because it is as it used to be; they see it as more peaceful. Frank tells stories of Anancy; Franky tells the legend of a hoof-footed seductress who could sing like a piano.



F.E.M.A. hands out military rations. Youme planted her fruit cocktail, hoping it would grow; if it wouldn't grow from the ground, she didn't want to eat it.

Eeona's inn incurs no damage, though Kweku's octagonal home is destroyed in the storm. Anette sticks by extra close to Franky, as she feels guilty for having wished him dead. Hurricane Mary makes it way to the states, killing many and destroying much.

Analysis

Section 5 is the shortest section of the novel. The quote at the beginning matches the section's title, as the quote relates to the sea and the title is "Drown." The title hints at the section's most prominent event, which is Hurricane Mary. Though it technically drowns none of the characters present in the novel, it changes life for Islanders as they know it as heavy wind and rain pour onto St. Thomas.

Hurricane Mary has multiple parallels and draws many themes together. For one, the storm is given a gender: female. Though gender inequality and differences isn't a prominent theme throughout the novel, considering a destructive storm in the novel to be a female is a parallel to the wildness of Eeona and Antoinette's characters. The women create destruction down many of their paths, as they each desert their family in times of need or disappear without warning. Similarly, Hurricane Mary comes through the Islands with no regard for who she is hurting or destroying.

The fact that the storm is on the news in the Islands and not in the states further fuels the characters' sentiments that they remain Islanders, not Americans, no matter who owns the territory. Their national identity remains solid, even through trials such as a destructive storm.

Franky's obedience to the Coast Guard is expected, since he is loyal to his family and would therefore be loyal to his Armed Forces commitment. He is a man who follows through on his responsibilities, and even though this entails leaving his family during a storm, Franky really has no choice.

During and after the storm, people's lives are changed. During the storm, Anette and Youme discover that Youme can read/hear Anette's thoughts, the ones she doesn't speak aloud. The ability is a game-changer, since Anette's thoughts are not always pure, such as her wishing her husband dead. Youme likely already feels like an outsider because of what is eventually revealed (that she has a hoof and backwards feet), and this is likely to isolate her even more since Anette will not like Youme being able to read her thoughts.

Youme's refusal to eat anything that didn't come from the ground seems to be a sort of defiance, as though she is saying if something isn't organic to the Island, she wants nothing to do with it.

Franky's declaration, "Thank God for life!" shows the impact of the storm on him, which is that he feels rejuvenated and newly grateful for the life and family granted to him. His



sentiment being shared all across St. Thomas shows the reader that the Islanders are of like mind, and that they tend to band together in difficult situations.

The fact that Eeona's inn on St. John incurs no damage is a testament to how she and the sea are connected. The fact that her property, the fruit of her diligence and independence, went untouched, suggests to the reader that since she is of the sea—which she is, since she is a descendant of the Stemme family from Anegada—the sea respects her.

Discussion Question 1

Once she's in the states, what seems to most remove Ronalda from being from the Virgin Islands?

Discussion Question 2

What seems to be Anette's primary emotion regarding Franky during Hurricane Mary?

Discussion Question 3

How did the storm return the Virgin Islands to life as the Islanders once knew it?

Vocabulary

racist, sexist, persona, dubious, morose, jilted, galvanized, quelbe, coxswain, bumsie, cistern



Section 6: The BOMB - Chapters 86 - 95

Summary

Section 6, titled The BOMB, begins with a song lyric from the song LaBega Carousel: "I rather walk and drink rum whole night, Before me go ride on LaBega Carousel. You no hear what LaBega say? 'The people no worth more than fifteen cent a day.'"

The narrator tells most of Section 6. For months after Hurricane Mary, the islands have no electricity or running water. Eeona arrives to Anette's house about one month after the storm. Youme is in control of the cistern, even though it is the heaviest post-hurricane task. Frank's task is to climb the coconut tree and get water from the coconuts.

Eeona watches Youme and follows her into the bathroom, only to discover that Youme has silver pubic hair just like Eeona. Youme also has a backwards foot that turns in either direction. Eeona asks Youme who knows Youme's secret, but she says nobody does. Eeona insists they get the condition of her backwards foot fixed. The only doctor they know is Youme's father.

Jacob comes to Anette's house to examine Youme. Franky leaves the house and goes somewhere local to drink, so that he doesn't have to face his wife's former lover. Anette wears the white (now gray) dress she wore the last time she saw Jacob. Frank is embarrassed for his mom's tight dress. Youme cries as Jacob examines her. Jacob doesn't know what to do. Eeona tells Anette and Jacob that she warned them, and this is their fault. Then, Eeona disappears.

Jacob tells his mother about Youme being a Duene with the backwards foot and heel. Rebekah is upset that the two not only found each other, but made a child. Jacob and Anette decide to meet in order to discuss Youme.

Franky, Anette, Frank, and Youme go to the beach as a family. They feel like a family with it just being the four of them. Anette tries to forget Jacob, Franky tries to be what Anette and his family need. There is a chain at the entrance of the beach, so they walk down to the water instead of driving down.

On their way to the beach, Franky, Anette, Frank, and Youme see gravestones haphazardly lain on the ground. One gravestone is for Owen, and one is for a baby that, according to the birth year, would have been the same age as Youme.

When they get to the beach, Youme doesn't want to swim. Anette tells Youme she'll be fixed soon, and Youme somewhat shushes her. Franky and Anette sit on the beach together, mostly in silence. Frank sees a woman at a house on a hill; she appears to be shouting. He goes swimming, and he and his father race in the water.



A man comes to the family and asks them to leave the beach; he says the white woman waving own the land and she wants them off the land. Anette and Franky think of the movie that they were a part of years ago on that very same beach.

Anette begins telling the story for a short while. Anette and Jacob meet at the Hibiscus Hotel. Anette finds out it was the home in which she was born. Being near Jacob is trying her will because she just wants to be with him, but knows she can't.

Anette takes a bathroom break and runs into Mr. Lyte, who tells her the story of the Bradshaw before he realizes who she is. Anette finds out that Jacob is her half-brother and that her father and Eeona had a mutually-enjoyed sexual relationship. Anette feels like her life is ruined.

Anette calls Eeona, but Eeona is not at her inn when Anette calls. She has left a note saying, "I am more wild than Mama." Anette feels alone. She has returned home and can feel Youme's questions burning through Anette's own mind. Though she is discouraged, Anette knows she needs something bigger. She goes back to Frenchtown to see what is waiting for her there.

The narrator starts the story-telling yet again. Anette goes on the radio and encourages the islands to take back their beaches. The events happening around the world add to the unrest felt by the islanders, such as the Black Panthers in America, the Vietnam War, and the deaths of Che Guevara, Martin Luther King, Jr., and John F. Kennedy.

The movement to take back their islands is called BOMB: The Beach Occupation Movement and Bacchanal. Participants march on the sand, organize wade-ins, soak-ins, and they run into the water from the beach. Some protesters are jailed.

Back in the states, Ronalda writes for the SNCC but she can't think of a good slogan for the movement happening at home.

Frank becomes heavily involved in the protests and in the overall BOMB movement. He swims nine strokes after running into the water before he's caught by officials. Anette and Frank run training sessions in their living room for helping islands protest in the water. Then, they host swimming lessons after they find out that many islanders do not know how to swim.

Slowly, hotels on the islands get their electricity back. The Caribbean goes back to normal, which is still a state of poverty even with their running water and electricity back. Tourists are drawn back to the islands, as well.

Franky can't protest because of his employment with the Coast Guard. Anette wants to call Jacob during the chaos, but she can't. Frank convinces Youme to forget about her deformed foot and join the movement.

Islanders hold their most significant protest at the beach on Water Island. To the tourists, the protest feels like an invasion. The islanders' plan is to get to shore and party like they belong there, since they feel they do belong there. Security lines the



shoreline; the men are natives in American blue suits. Some security men abandon their post and join their fellow islanders.

More police are added to the scene. The Coast Guard arrives and threaten the protesters to either go home, or go to jail. The protesters yell, "We already home!" Youme breaks through the crowd and runs into the water. She is watched by protesters because of her stunning beauty. For a short while, the crowd is silenced. Other run in after her and they all splash like it is a carnival.

Frank is proud of his sister, even though her chest is revealed, as her bikini top falls off in the water. In support of Youme, the protesters scream, "Let me go!" The Coast Guard don't know what to do with all the people. As Youme is dragged out of the water, her footprints go in two different directions. Only the protest organizers are arrested; others are docked and set free.

Young Frank is jailed and does a hunger strike to prove his point of who the islands really belong to. Anette wants to give him food, but Franky says to let him be a man and go through it alone. Frank is eventually released. When he gets home, he asks Youme why she ran into the water as she did. Youme says she isn't sure, something just came over her.

The BOMB ends after three months. The Free Beach Act is signed and passed, letting the islanders enjoy their beaches again. The Lighthouse land is sold and Franky is relieved of his duty. He is given other responsibilities, but feels as though he lost his prominent position because it was his step-daughter who made a scene at the protest.

At the conclusion of the section, Eeona returns from wherever she had run away.

Analysis

The reader learns that the BOMB is a beach occupation movement by Islands natives meant to assert their home and native land as theirs. As such, the lyric at the beginning of the section fits in with the rest of the section text, as it is a Caribbean song with cultural meaning to its people.

Youme takes prominence in this section, which is unique to the rest of the novel, as Eeona and Anette are the main stories told. However, Youme is tied to Anette, of course, as her daughter, but also to Eeona, since Youme is Jacob's daughter and Jacob is Owen Arthur's son, and Eeona is always looking for a way to connect herself back to Owen Arthur.

The fact that Youme has a hoof and backwards feet may surprise the reader, but the author has foreshadowed the condition before. Also, since Youme is born of an incestuous and therefore cursed relationship, an oddity in her form might be expected.

The reader might take note that Youme seems ashamed of the condition when Eeona walks into the bathroom, but in reality is not. Youme doesn't mind her condition, but



rather doesn't want it to be made into a big deal with attention drawn to her. Though Youme draws the attention of almost all the Islanders when she makes herself the center of the BOMB movement, it seems Youme wants attention for only that which she approves.

Jacob telling his mother that Youme has a hoof and backwards feet is courageous, since Rebekah has been disapproving of their relationship from day one. What's ironic is that Jacob left Anette so that Rebekah would not use obeah and curse one of them, only to have conceived a cursed child anyway.

When Anette finds out that she and Jacob are blood-related, she is devastated, since what she thought to be true is underscored with scandal. The fact that Anette finds out the truth about her relation to Jacob from Mr. Lyte is full-circle, since he was their man-about-the-house when Anette was born. He knew more than he led on, likely out of a sense of loyalty to his employers and propriety for those involved.

The BOMB protests can be said to have started with the Joseph family, as they are the first to argue having to leave the beach. The Islanders' national identity and sense of home and belonging are all challenged, as the wealthy—and typically white—residents actively work to keep whom they believe to be the lesser natives off "their" beaches.

Eeona's leaving seems to have appropriate timing. Though she claims a wild spirit, a protest to protect the Islanders' rights on the Virgin Island beaches may be too connected to her homeland for Eeona to feel propelled to participate. Eeona's wildness has always drawn her away from her homeland. Thus, a movement to assert the rights of her fellow natives on their homeland may not appeal to Eeona. Also, though Eeona identifies with the sea and feels the sea is a part of her, the beaches don't seem to hold as much value for her as they do for Anette and Anette's family.

Similarly, it is befitting that Eeona return to St. Thomas when the BOMB is over. After the Free Beach Act is passed, there is no more protesting to do. The hard stuff is over and Eeona can come back to her homeland free of any kind of responsibility.

Anette's children take the BOMB to heart. Even Ronald, who is in America when the BOMB occurs, participates by writing a slogan for the campaign. Franky and Youme put themselves in the very center of the campaign, as they are part of a civil rights generation. With the Civil Rights Movement going on simultaneously in the States, it is fitting that it be happening on the Islands. It is equally fitting that Franky, Youme, and Ronald are part of their respective land's movement.

One of the cornerstones of the BOMB is that the natives feel put out by tourists. On the flip side, the tourists feel put out by the Islanders' protests. The difference in perspective lets the reader see that class differences and social unrest occur even in places that are considered by outsiders to be a kind of paradise. In fact, that is one of the paradoxes of "Land of Love and Drowning," is that the environment is paradise-esque, and yet the characters are in turmoil almost the entire time. The aesthetic beauty doesn't match the



internal conflict—and sometimes internal ugliness—going on for each major character of the novel.

Discussion Question 1

What seems to be Anette's primary emotion as she meets Jacob at the Hibiscus? How can you tell?

Discussion Question 2

Why do the islanders use the beach as their site of protest?

Discussion Question 3

Why might Jacob be insistent on he and Anette figuring out what to do about Youme, just the two of them?

Vocabulary

oldwife, standpipe, bristle, queue, nyam, louvers, bakra, monied, careening, niggling, gyaso, abby, squire, brocade, pustule



Section 7: Love - Chapters 96 - 102

Summary

Section 7 begins with a poem by Habib Tiwoni, titled "Al-Habib": "My name is love/I am the beloved one/The last romantic;Coming out of the islands/Of the sea/Coming out of the mossed ocean."

Jacob begins storytelling for Section 7. He is trying to explain his position and why he has made the choices that he's made. He writes to doctors all over the world in order to find a solution for Youme's oddity. Only one Spanish doctor priest responds to Jacob. The Spanish priest tells Jacob to bring him Youme and he will fix her.

Jacob calls Anette's house for weeks until Youme answers; he doesn't speak unless it is her or Anette who answers. When Youme does answer, Jacob tells her his plan to fix her. However, Youme wants to stay as she is. Jacob allows her request, as he regrets his recent "niggardly" attitude.

The narrator returns to tell the story. Anette visits Eeona's inn on St. John's island. Eeona disappeared some time ago, but there has been rumors of her being on the island. The room Anette stays in recreates her own childhood bedroom. Eeona's room, which Anette has to fight to unlock, mirrors their mother's room except for one detail: there is writing on the wall in Eeona's handwriting. The writing is pieces of island myths, legends, and folklore.

Anette calls Franky to check in, and Franky tells her the lights just came back on at the house.

Anette and Eeona talk. Eeona insists on Anette's ladylike manners. Anette asks Eeona where she went when she disappeared; Anette guesses America, or maybe the Villa by the Sea. Eeona says she went after something greater.

Eeona travels to Anegada. She stays with a woman named Angela who is her cousin; Angela used to be a Stemme. Eeona thinks that Angela's lobsterman husband looks a lot like her father. The three of them go to swim in the sea, as Eeona states that she'd like to see The Homecoming. She tries to touch the boat but can't get down that far. The lobsterman saves her. It is revealed in the narrator's tale that he pulls Eeona into the very same boat in which he once proposed his life and love to Antoinette Stemme, Eeona's mother.

Anette and Eeona meet back in Eeona's room. Eeona invites Anette in to show Anette that she's cut her hair. Anette is holding onto the cut-off strands as the sisters discuss Eeona's moving to Anegada. Anette begs her not to move there, but Eeona insists that not only is she moving there, but she's taking Youme. Anette insists that Youme is sick with obeah, but Eeona reminds Anette that on Anegada, Youme will find people like her.



Eeona calls Anette Nettie, which makes Anette uncomfortable though she doesn't voice her discomfort. A wind comes through the open door of the balcony and Anette releases Eeona's cut hair.

Jacob and Anette meet on the beach to read a letter from Youme, who is living on Anegada with Eeona. After they read the letter, the narrator notes that Jacob will go home to his spouse and Anette will go home to hers. The two are still in love, but have remained faithful to their spouses. In their dreams, though, they are with each other.

Analysis

The concluding section of the novel begins with a poem by another Virgin Islands author. The poem is an homage to the sea, which is an integral part of the characters' fates and personalities. It is also likely a nod to the weight of Caribbean culture in the novel, as well as in the author's own personal life.

The fact that Jacob begins telling this final section tells the reader that though he has only told one other part of the novel, his love for Anette has not waned. His and Anette's souls are connected, and his defensive position seems to mean that he wants the reader to know how much he cares. He is regretful of his "niggardly," meaning stingy, attitude of the past. By this, Jacob does not mean financially stingy. Rather, he likely means emotionally stingy, since he and Youme have only related to one another as doctor/patient and never as father/daughter. His offer to fix her is likely an attempt to repair a broken relationship. However, his giving in to Youme's desire to stay the same is his true act of affection, since he accepts her not wanting to change herself.

Jacob's affection for Anette has not gone away, which the reader can see in his offer to Youme and in how Jacob and Anette relate to one another as they read Youme's letter from Anegada. The two are star-crossed lovers who understand that, due to circumstances beyond their control, they are unable to be together as lovers for the rest of their days. Each is accepting of the time together they do get, but they each also work to respect their respective spouses by not advancing on one another.

Anette and Eeona somewhat repair their terse relationship. Eeona's offering, and then insistence, that she take Youme to Anegada is Eeona's way of saying that she has finally settled in to who she is, and that is a descendant of Antoinette Stemme, whose family hails from Anegada. If the reader can remember, Anegada starts the entire novel as being the subject of the quote at the beginning of the first section. It is the island from which the Bradshaw women truly hail, as Antoinette claims it as her home of origin. Anegada seems synonymous with the sea, in that those from Anegada have a deep and meaningful relationship with the waters.

Eeona's settling into herself can also be seen in how she relates to Angela's lobsterman husband. The fact that she at first believes it is her father shows the reader that old habits die hard. Eeona has wanted her father's attention since she was very young, and losing him at such a young age ended their relationship in a haphazard way for which



she wasn't prepared. Eeona spends years searching for the same kind of attention Owen Arthur gave her, only to come to peace with herself when she returns to her mother's homeland. As she ultimately sees her mother in the lobsterman, the reader can presume that Eeona has come to realize that the wildness within her offers her a safe place to land, since Anegada offers people like her and of her.

The significance of Eeona's hair being cut and then released by Anette relates to how Eeona finally comes to peace with herself, specifically with her inner self. Eeona's hair has always been the most obvious point of her beauty. It was her hair she kept pinned up so as to not entice men who had no business being enticed. Since Eeona has always been quite protective of her beauty, the fact that she cuts her hair and is unaffected when Anette releases it shows the reader that Eeona has, in fact, accepted all of herself, inside and out.

The fact that the author ends the novel acknowledging that Jacob and Anette love each other in their dreams, yet tend to their actual spouses in real life, may suggest to the reader that the love between the two of them is so strong and steadfast that it remains—and will continue to remain—for the rest of the characters' days, no matter the reality of the situation.

Discussion Question 1

What might Anette have thought when she saw Eeona had written pieces of island folklore on the walls of her own bedroom?

Discussion Question 2

What seems to be the primary emotion between Eeona and Anette when they interact at Eeona's inn?

Discussion Question 3

Why does it seem Jacob feels like he has to defend himself by stating part of his story himself, instead of letting the narrator tell his side?

Vocabulary

codeine, exorcism, kaiso, banality, reticent, baroque, chiaroscuro, acolyte, bazadie, whelks, capoeira



Characters

Eeona Bradshaw

Eeona Bradshaw is one of the two main characters in "Land of Love and Drowning." When the story begins, she is a young girl who has a consensual sexual relationship with her father. Both know it's considered wrong to others, but both also enjoy it and believe it's right for them.

Eeona is someone who desperately wants to grow up. She wants to be Madame of the Villa by the Sea instead of her mother, she wants to be touted around town by her father as a Madame, and she wants to be independent, save for her father. To express this, Eeona is resentful of Anette, as she keeps Owen Arthur occupied when Antoinette is pregnant with her, and then keeps Eeona from being a free woman after her parents die.

Eeona's beauty is both a blessing and a curse for her. It is a blessing because it gets her what she wants, mainly her father's affection. It also gets her attention any time she wants it, for people cannot help but stare at her for her beauty is so intense. Yet, Eeona's beauty is also a curse, as it is a burden since it is something from which she cannot escape. Even as she grows older, there is only one period of time where her beauty seems to diminish, and even then, she is living the life she wants by independently owning and running an inn. At the conclusion of the novel, she releases the burden of her beauty by cutting off her hair, but she still gets what she wants by going to live on Anegada.

Anette Bradshaw

Anette Bradshaw is the second main character in "Land of Love and Drowning." She is the younger sister to Eeona and craves independence just as much as Eeona. However, she craves true love and stability more than Eeona does.

From the time she was young and her parents died, Anette has worked to have a stable home. She throws a fit when Eeona is set to send her to an orphanage on St. Croix because she wants to stay with her sister. Later, she marries Ronnie because he promises her a stable life and for awhile, he is right; she lives with his mother and holds a routine and a simple, easy life with Ronnie's mother and the child Anette and Ronnie conceive.

Later still, Anette leaves Ronnie for Jacob because of her true love for him. She gives into her passions and they create a child. Anette holds on to the promises he makes her, and waits many months for them to be able to be together. When she knows they won't be together, however, Anette marries Franky, again in an effort to be part of a stable home.



Anette is open about not understanding why Eeona searches so hard for her identity. Anette is unafraid to go after what she wants and what she thinks will make her life what she wants it to be. Even though it is Jacob that ignites a fiery passion within her, Anette feels a strong sense of obligation and responsibility to Franky and uses those strong feelings to create a life with him that she can accept and even enjoy. Anette is a steadfast mother and wife, caring for her family without hesitation.

Owen Arthur Bradshaw

Owen Arthur Bradshaw is only in the novel until page 64, yet he influences the direction of the rest of the novel. His relationship with Eeona gives her something to long for for the rest of her days. His disappearance causes Antoinette's disappearance and subsequent death, which makes Eeona and Anette orphans, setting into motion their tumultuous existence.

Owen Arthur is first a businessman, then a family man, though his business nature is to provide for his family. He feels guilty and angry at his feelings for Eeona, yet he has extreme difficulty controlling them.

Owen Arthur has a respectable side to him, as well. When he is visiting a client's home and the group is experimenting with electricity on a young girl, it is Owen Arthur who pulls the plug on the experiment. He knows it will likely cost him an important business relationship, but he is unwilling to watch an innocent young girl suffer at the hands of curious men. Further, he stays by Antoinette's side when she is ill during her pregnancy, making sure she is well and the baby survives, as he hopes it's a boy.

Jacob Esau McKenzie

Jacob Esau McKenzie is the birth son of Rebekah McKenzie and Owen Arthur Bradshaw, though everyone outside of the Bradshaw family believes him to be the son of Rebekah and her former husband Benjamin McKenzie.

As an assumed McKenzie, Jacob is expected to become something great, show little-to-no affection, breed males, and marry well. However, since he is not a true McKenzie, he is prone to strong passions and he impregnates Anette with a female. He still does something great by becoming a doctor, and he marries a beautiful woman, but other markings of being a McKenzie are absent.

Jacob is eager to please his mother, which is the only reason he does not marry Anette. Even after the two find out they are half-brother and sister, their affection for one another doesn't wane. Yet, he is his mother's prized son, and so he goes to medical school as she desires him to do.

Jacob is also eager to do right by Anette and their daughter. Though he cannot be physically present as a father, he accepts Youme as a patient of his. He also allows Youme to stay as she is, a Duene, with a hoof and backwards-facing feet.



Franky Joseph

Franky is the one to whom Anette stays married to the longest. He is loyal, steadfast, true, and eager to love and be loved. Franky has loved Anette since they were children and he built her a house out of aluminum. Eeona told Anette to give it back because she felt—and continues to feel—that Franky is not worthy of Anette; he is too low-class for her. However, Franky proves his love for Anette as he remains by her side for all of their days.

Franky is a hard worker. He takes his post with the Coast Guard at the lighthouse quite seriously, and is disappointed when he is demoted. He builds a house for Anette, both to provide for her and to prove his love to her, though she really doesn't need proving. He is grateful when Anette decides to stay with him instead of going to be with Jacob; his love for her does not wane at any point in their relationship.

Rebekah McKenzie

Rebekah McKenzie is Jacob's birth mother. She is Owen Arthur's mistress when he is alive, and it is with him she conceives Jacob. She has a hoof for a heel, and sells her magic potions at the town market.

Rebekah has a stronghold on Jacob, as it is because of her that he leaves Anette and goes to medical school. They share a close bond, but Rebekah possesses a certain kind of magic that she uses to her advantage. Though it is never written that Rebekah uses obeah on her son Jacob, she uses it on her former husband Benjamin in order to rid him from her life.

Rebekah's continual insistence that Jacob and Anette not be together does nothing to lessen their affection for one another. However, she is successful in the long run, as the two of them stay with their respective spouses.

Benjamin McKenzie/Kweku Prideux

Benjamin McKenzie is Rebekah's former husband, and Jacob's assumed father. He is banished to the forest on St. Croix by Rebekah's obeah, meant to kill him. However, Benjamin survives and becomes Kweku Prideux.

As Kweku Prideux, he becomes involved with Eeona. He has thick body hair that disgusts Eeona. He lives in an octagonal home on St. Croix with a large balcony off of his bedroom. He impregnates Eeona, but backs off the relationship once he finds out. McKenzie men do not have strong loving feeling toward other people, even toward the women in their lives.



Ronald Smalls

Ronald Smalls is Anette's first husband. He pursues Anette as he cares for her while she's sick and is persistent in his longing for a relationship with her. He is from a lower class than Anette and Eeona, which bothers Eeona but not Anette.

Ronald is sent to Puerto Rico then to America for training as a soldier for World War II. He continues to claim Anette even though they're not yet together. During his absence for his training is when Anette decides she'll marry him, since he cares so much for her.

Madame Antoinette

Madame Antoinette is Owen Arthur's wife. Her place in the story is similar to Owen Arthur's; she is only in part of the first section, but her actions set in motion the rest of the story. Furthermore, her personality helps to explain Eeona's, since they are mother and daughter.

Madame Antoinette is a woman who, like Eeona, wants her freedom. Yet, she feels tied to Villa by the Sea and to her husband. Even though Owen Arthur is cheating on her, they have a daughter together and Antoinette is the Madame of the property. She has responsibilities, even if she doesn't like them.

The reader can see Antoinette's desperation for independence in the fact that she intentionally aborts any fetus she can from her womb, though she is unsuccessful with Anette. Another action that tells of her wanted independence, is her fleeing to New York City as soon as possible after Owen Arthur dies. She leaves her daughters to seek her own ambitions.

Without Antoinette's example of wanton freedom, Eeona may not have felt like she could exhibit her freedom-seeking tendencies. Also, if Antoinette had stayed on St. Thomas instead of going to New York City, she may have lived longer and therefore not orphaned Eeona and Anette.

Mr. Barry

Mr. Barry is the owner of the Hospitality Lounge where Eeona works. Though he is only in a portion of the novel, his presence is important.

Mr. Barry is an elderly gentleman in his 70s. He is in love with Eeona, and Eeona is in love with the air conditioning in his building. Mr. Barry proposes to Eeona 40 times—each time with a new bouquet of flowers—until she finally says yes. His multiple proposals suggest he is a patient and persistent man who sets a goal and continues toward that goal until it's met. Also, the fact that he has a fresh bouquet of flowers each time he proposes suggests he does not concern himself with cost when there is something he wants.



Mr. Barry's attention to Eeona confirms Eeona's perception of herself. At this point in the novel, she has lost some of the attention she used to get for her beauty. Mr. Barry gives Eeona the attention she wants, and the sexual satisfaction she's been missing. Once he pleases her, he's the only living person who's seen her silver pubic hair. Eeona's silver hair on her private parts is both a shame and a mystic wonder for Eeona, making Mr. Barry an undesirable acquaintance as well as a privileged person.

Eve Youme McKenzie

Eve Youme McKenzie is the child conceived by Anette and Jacob. She is quiet and thoughtful, she considers others' needs along with her own and able to invade her mother's thoughts seemingly on command. Eve is strong-willed, though she chooses when to show it. Eeona and Rebekah believe Youme to be a cursed child, since Anette and Jacob are half-blood relatives and bred her.

Youme has the strongest presence in the BOMB protests on Water Island when she breaks through the crowd and runs into the water, unafraid of what secrets will be revealed. She has a hoof instead of a heel and feet that face backwards. Her bravery and strength can also be seen after the hurricane when Youme insists on being the one tasked with maintaining the cistern, a heavy yet imperative job.

When Eeona discovers Youme's secret of her feet and also that she has silver pubic hair, Youme seems ashamed at first. However, when Jacob offers to send her to a doctor priest in Spain, Youme asks that she be left alone. Eeona takes Youme to live on Anegada. The reader does not know the details of the move, but Youme writes letters back to her parents, further showing her thoughtfulness and tendency toward consideration for others.

Ronalda Smalls

Ronalda is Anette's first child, fathered by Ronnie. Anette is unafraid to love Ronalda, despite Eeona's claims that she and Ronnie don't know how to properly love a child. In fact, Anette is determined to make her, Ronalda, and Ronnie a family. However, she discovers that she is meant to love someone else, and therefore doesn't stay with Ronnie.

Ronalda is an easy-going, peace-keeping child in her home until she's old enough to do whatever she wants. She readily accepts Jacob and his presence in her and her mom's life, and she keeps her opinions about the racial unrest to herself.

As Ronalda gets older, her sense of identity seems to shift more toward her as part-African rather than the family she belongs to. For example, she is sick over the origin of the salt fish, so she doesn't eat it. She thinks her mother's folklore is ridiculous, and looks forward to being in the states.



Once in the states, Ronalda distances herself from the Virgin Islands, though she works for the Civil Rights Movement. Ronalda's actions seem independent of her mother's or her aunt's, meaning she wants something completely different for her life than they want for theirs. Yet, the principal is the same: freedom and independence.

Frank Joseph

Frank Joseph is Anette's third child. He, like the others, is strong-willed and a hard worker. He is adamant about being the man of the house when his father isn't home, especially during Hurricane Mary. His actions suggest strength and maturity beyond his age.

Frank also doesn't complain, even when he is embarrassed for his mother when she wears a tight dress to see Jacob; he keeps those thoughts to himself.

Frank seems to easily identify himself as an islander. He loves Eeona's folklore telling and later tells stories of Anancy. He runs training sessions with Anette for islanders who want to know how to swim for the protests. Most extremely, Frank goes on a hunger strike in an effort to show to whom the islands truly belong. He doesn't waver on his identity, nor does he apologize for it.

Louis Moreau

Louis Moreau is a young man Eeona meets on Tortola when she's supposed to be getting her education. The two sail to another island together, which at that time is considered completely improper. Yet, Eeona is working quite hard to distance herself from her father and the feelings she has for her father. Louis Moreau is captivated with Eeona's beauty and is a real Frenchman, and so she figures he'll do.

For a time, Louis walks Eeona around on his arm like a prize, and she loves it. Eeona loves being considered to be of importance, though on Tortola she already is considered important without Louis toting her around. Still, Eeona seems to feel that her beauty is best observed when on display via another man's arm.

The two of them are split up when Eeona's parents insist she return to St. John without Louis. Louis continues to love her for the rest of his life, even during his marriage that lasts. Eeona moves on fairly quickly, and doesn't seem to think of him for the rest of the novel.



Symbols and Symbolism

Cultural folklore

The author works in cultural folklore throughout the novel, specifically stories of the Duene people and the Anancy genre of Caribbean folklore. While only folklore of the Duene people are laid out in detail, the narrator makes sure to tell the reader that at different points in the novel, different characters share their versions of Caribbean folklore.

The significance of these stories to the meta-narrative of "Land of Love and Drowning" lies in the fact that the characters are both solid in and struggle with their identity. Since the folklore told is a significant part of Caribbean culture, the stories are part of the characters holding onto their identities as natives of the Virgin Islands.

The Homecoming

The Homecoming is Owen Arthur Bradshaw's ship. Its wreck causes the death of Owen Arthur, which sets in motion for Eeona a long and difficult road of finding the life she wants. The irony lies in its name: The Homecoming would suggest that the ship offers solace and comfort. Instead, it is a great source of stress for Owen Arthur, since his cargo business is in flux while he is alive. Also, The Homecoming never makes it home on its last journey.

Pile of dead flowers

Mr. Barry, the man who owns the Hospitality Lounge where Eeona works, proposes to Eeona with various flowers over the course of many months. Eeona resists 40 times, meaning hundreds of flowers are dumped in a small yard behind where she tied up Nelson the donkey. The pile becomes a dune, as described by the narrator.

The pile of dead flowers reminds Eeona of her last days at Villa by the Sea. At this point in the novel, Eeona is lonely and still wishes for her father's love. The pile of dead flowers are symbolic of the beautiful life Eeona once lived that is now dull and void of life.

Eeona ripping her American itinerary

One of Eeona's greatest desires throughout "Land of Love and Drowning" is to be independent. New York City is one of her beacons of said independence. Yet, as she is strolling by the docks, headed for the boat that will take her to New York, she tears her itinerary and instead boards a sea plane headed for Freedom City, St. Croix.



Eeona's quick change-of-mind is indicative of her internal struggle: she wants so badly to see what her mother saw, to be independent far, far away from her family; yet, she cannot follow through due to her commitment not only to the islands, but to the sea. Eeona had the ticket in hand for New York City. She saved her money specifically for that ticket, but when it came time to leave her home and everything she's known, Eeona couldn't follow through. The independence she seeks battles with the desire for belonging.

Hurricane Mary

Hurricane Mary comes at a time when America is in disarray, and the main characters are experiencing internal and relational storms of their own.

In America, the racism and the start of the Civil Rights Movement discourage Ronald; the events are a sort of storm of their own, throwing the country into a state of unrest.

Eeona is still living far from the family, so her and Anette's relationship remains somewhat tense. Anette continues her internal struggle of commitment to Franky versus her love for Jacob. Youme and Anette's relationship changes, too, as Youme starts to be able to read Anette's thoughts just as Anette wishes Franky would die. Frank seems to be going through an internal struggle as he works to do things that make him the man of the house while his father is gone.

The Joseph's house surviving Mary

The house Franky built survives Mary, even though houses around it do not. This is a testament to the commitment of Anette and Franky to keep their family together. Through the course of many obstacles—three children by three fathers, a challenging sister, Anette's ever-burning passion for Jacob, and the difference between Franky's love for Anette and vice versa—the Joseph family stands. Anette chooses to remain faithful, and Franky never leaves her; the two create a stable home that withstands pressure, much like the house remains after withstanding a hurricane.

Anette's dream about the piano and lace

The night Anette finds out Eeona is making her a wedding dress so Anette can marry Ronnie, Anette dreams of someone playing piano as she walks down a church aisle in lace. Though a piano playing is normal for a wedding, Rebekah, Jacob's mother, is known for how well she plays the piano. The presence of a piano in Anette's dream about a wedding may be the author's way of showing how even before Anette knows she will love Jacob, her soul knows.



Franky's engagement ring to Anette

To promise his love to Anette, Franky gives her an engagement ring. Whereas Jacob's promise to Anette was a fabric that covers her entire body, Franky's ring is a traditional never-ending circle. The significance of the ring lies in the tradition of it, as the ring is a simple declaration of one's commitment to another. Anette does not have grand, all-encompassing feelings for Franky; her affection for him is more out of functionality and the promise of stability, since she knows Franky will remain faithful to her for all their days, a favor Anette returns.

Franky's nickname for Anette

Franky's nickname for Anette is Nettie, which is the nickname Owen Arthur had for his wife, Antoinette, when they were both alive. Owen Arthur and Antoinette's relationship was similar to Franky and Anette's, though Franky and Anette's did not contain as much drama. Yet, both relationships were held together more by loyalty and commitment than a passionate love for one another. The author may have paralleled the two relationships to show how generational trends tend to occur.

Jacob's dream about Anette

When Jacob is in New Orleans, he sees Anette's photograph when Ronnie shows it around. That same night, Jacob dreams of Anette in a red dress and she is wet. In the dream, when Jacob opens his mouth to talk to her, his teeth begin to crumble and fall at her feet like seashells.

Jacob doesn't know that Anette is the young girl he met at the beach when he was a child. Since Jacob and Anette feel as though they belong to one another, Jacob's dream seems to be his soul's way of connecting to Anette, since red is her color and her wetness could be a metaphor for their meeting when they were children at the beach.

Anette's white dress

Anette wears a white dress when she sees off Jacob at the airport, and again when she meets him to discuss Youme's condition. The fact that it's white when she sees him off tells Jacob that she wants a clean slate with him; she doesn't want to be married, she doesn't want her other child to count toward their relationship.

Over time, the dress grays, as does Anette and Jacob's relationship. Even though Anette and Jacob still feel passionately for one another, their relationship naturally dims as they are held apart by various obstacles. Still, Anette wears the dress the next time she sees Jacob, likely to indicate that she hasn't forgotten their promises from long ago, and also that time has passed but her feelings haven't.



Jacob's red tooth

Jacob has a red tooth that he eventually has removed. Red is Anette's color, so the red tooth may be another metaphor for how connected Anette and Jacob are. He has the tooth removed because it is bothering him, which is the opposite of how he feels about Anette; he wants her in his life, but she is getting pulled out by forces greater than he.

Fabric given to Anette from Jacob

Jacob gives Anette fabric in place of an engagement ring. One reason may have been because he cannot afford a ring. However, the fabric as a promise to Anette holds weight for Anette. Fabric covers more of one's body than a ring might, possibly indicating that when Anette wears the fabric, she is keeping her entire self for Jacob. Given that Anette and Jacob feel extraordinarily connected, fabric to cover her entire self versus just a ring would follow suit with their relationship.

Eeona's hair

Eeona's hair is a symbol of her beauty. When she is young, she keeps it pinned up so as not to tempt or arouse the men whom she is around. When she wants to irritate a woman in her presence by tempting that woman's man, she will let down her hair. It is described as being golden and perfect.

Toward the end of the novel, in Eeona and Anette's last interaction, Eeona cuts off her hair and hands it to Anette, who releases it at the end of their disagreement. Eeona's, then Anette's, releasing of Eeona's hair is a way for Eeona to release her beauty, which has been both a blessing and a curse for her entire life.

By cutting and then releasing her hair to someone else, Eeona is expressing her desire to part with a piece of her that has both propelled her into and held her back from achieving the kind of independence she's always wanted.

Eeona's blue clothing

Eeona makes it a point to wear blue clothing when she wants to manipulate her company's feelings toward her. She does so when she visits the Lovernkrandt's, and again later in the novel when she interacts with Anette. Eeona's choice of clothing, meant to calm those in her company, is indicative of her belief that she can control her beauty, and her beauty can control others.



Settings

St. Thomas

St. Thomas is the main island setting of "Land of Love and Drowning." Villa by the Sea/Hibiscus Hotel is on St. Thomas, as well as Anette and Franky's home, Ronnie's mother's home where Anette lives while Ronnie is deployed, and a couple of the beaches visited by the characters.

St. Thomas is described as a typical Caribbean island: full of natives and tourists, most of the natives being much poorer than the tourists. There are palm trees, white sandy beaches, big and small houses, and no television and radio until the 1950s. Everyone on the island seems to know each other, since it is a small community.

Villa by the Sea

Villa by the Sea is located on St. Thomas. It is the Bradshaw home, and is therefore a significant setting for Eeona, Anette, Owen Arthur, and Antoinette. It is described as a large home with wide halls and a balcony off the master bedroom.

Anette is born in her mother's bedroom. After Owen Arthur dies, Antoinette leaves for New York City and Eeona is put in charge of the inn. After Antoinette perishes, Eeona and Anette leave it all together. It is later converted to the Hibiscus Hotel and Restaurant.

Hibiscus Hotel and Restaurant

The Hibiscus Hotel and Restaurant is formerly Villa by the Sea. Anette laments the name, because Hibiscus is a kind of flower that swallows and kills things at night. The way it is described, the reader can assume it has been restored to its original decor when it was Villa by the Sea.

St. Croix

St. Croix is another one of the American Virgin Islands. It is where Freedom City is located, which is where Eeona runs to instead of America. On St. Croix, Eeona meets Kweku Prideux, who is formerly Benjamin McKenzie. It is another typically-Caribbean island, with palm trees, white sandy beaches, and tourists who are wealthier than most natives.



St. John

St. John is another one of the American Virgin Islands visited by characters. It is accessible by sea plane or ferry. On St. John is where Eeona has her inn, and it is then that Eeona feels as though she's finally obtained the life she's always wanted. She is considered a Madame, shortened to Mada, and she is known and respected in the community. Again, St. John is described as a typical Caribbean island, with some small and big homes, and most tourists wealthier than most natives.

Water Island

Water Island is where the tourist resort the Gull Reef Club is located. Outside of the Gull Reef Club, on a beach on Water Island, is where an American movie is filmed using native islanders. It is also where the biggest protest of the BOMB is held. The way it is described, Water Island and subsequently the Gull Reef Club are for wealthier natives and tourists; there is an exclusivity to it the reader can pick up by the language of the workers.

Anegada

Anegada is the place where Antoinette is from. It is treated as somewhat of a taboo, but also as a highly desired location in the Virgin Islands. The author seems to parallel its description to Eeona, that is beauty is too strong to look straight at it. Anegada is known for breeding witches who possess a certain kind of magic, obeah. Anegada is also known for breeding the Duene people. Anegada may also be called the tip of Atlantis, Onigada, or Anigada.

America

America is a setting as well as a symbol of freedom. Antoinette goes to New York City to assert her freedom, only to find out the Fashion Institute for Coloreds is a sham. Eeona longs for New York as her mother did, but at the last minute changes her mind and goes somewhere else.

New Orleans, Louisiana, is where the boys are stationed during the war. Jacob, Ronald, and a guy named Spice are in New Orleans when they're not deployed. They enjoy dinners and drinks together, but experience racism, which they fight. Jacob ends up in an American jail for throwing a boot at a Negro Olympian presenter.

Tortola

Tortola is one of the Virgin Islands. Eeona is sent there to receive her education when she is a young woman. Eeona doesn't want to go, but only because she will miss her

father. As a Caribbean island, Tortola has the same scenery as the others, however it is considered to be more rural than St. Thomas. On Tortola is where Eeona meets Louis Moreau.



Themes and Motifs

Family

Family is a central theme in "Land of Love and Drowning," if only because all of main the characters are blood-related in one way or another. Eeona and Anette are sisters, daughters of Owen Arthur and Antoinette Bradshaw. Jacob Esau is Anette's lover, Youme's father, and the son of Rebekah and Owen Arthur. Ronalda and Youme are Anette's daughters. It is a family with many parts, but a family nonetheless.

The author uses family in this novel to show the reader that the idea of one's family can take on varying forms. For example, Eeona and Anette are sisters. Their relationship evolves from resentment to caring for one another, to trying to escape one another, and finally to an amicable relationship. As the older sister and the only living caretaker for Anette, Eeona feels a sense of responsibility to keep Anette from harm, which in her case means keeping Anette away from Jacob Esau McKenzie.

Anette's relation to her parents is fairly non-existent, since both Antoinette and Owen Arthur die before Anette is old enough to really have a relationship with either of them. For Eeona, her relation to her parents is quite different, as she has a mutually enjoyed sexual relationship with her father and a competitive relationship with her mother. The dynamics between the original Bradshaw's are fraught with tension.

Anette's three children are from three different fathers. With the first child/father, Anette attempts to make a stable family since Ronnie cares so much for her. However, she is drawn away by Jacob, whom she really and truly wants to make a family with but can't because of medical school and his mother's warnings to stay away from her. So even though they have a child together, Anette and Jacob cannot be a family. Later, Franky and Anette make a family when they have little Frank, and it is with Franky that Anette settles down and once and for all creates a stable, consistent family environment.

The various family dynamics between the main characters shows the reader that one definition of 'family' is not only irrelevant, but impossible. To have so many connecting pieces, so many typical and atypical relationships within the group, and for the characters to have things they don't want and long for things they don't have, seems to mean that one's family is the family he or she creates instead of something he or she just comes upon.

Independence

One of the strongest themes present throughout "Land of Love and Drowning" is the concept of independence. Each character works hard to assert his or her independence in one way or another, to include children and adults.



Eeona and Anette show their desire for independence more than anyone else. The other character who shows her desired independence almost just as strongly is their mother, Antoinette. Eeona's expression of independence starts at a later age than Anette's. Once their parents are both gone, Eeona must care for Anette, a situation she resents. Eeona wants to be free of responsibility and anything that keeps her from living a high, wealthy life.

Eeona's strongest expression of independence is when she goes to the docks to leave for America. She's ready to go to America and make her own life. However, once a dock worker calls for boarding to Freedom City, St. Croix, the name of the city beckons Eeona, and she leaves for there instead of the states. Though she visits St. Thomas and her family from time to time, Eeona makes the life she wants in Freedom City.

Anette's assertion for independence starts at a young age, as she doesn't understand why Eeona does everything she thinks she's supposed to do instead of everything she wants to do. Anette wants to be a history teacher, even though at the time, women—especially single women—were not welcomed into the workforce. Anette is also dead-set on loving Jacob Esau McKenzie, no matter what Eeona says. She wants to do what she wants to do, and she wants to love who she wants to love.

Anette's children are the same way: Ronalda goes to the states as soon as she can; Youme insists on filling the cistern after the hurricane, even though it's the heaviest task; and Frank goes into the streets after the storm to see what damage has been done, taking the role of Man of the House since his father is out on Coast Guard duty.

Antoinette's desire for independence comes in multiple forms: intentional abortion of most pregnancies; episodes of escape; and her long-time plot to leave for America and make a lot of money by creating a certain type of shoe. She wants to be free of her children, and once her husband perishes, Antoinette sees no reason to stay on St. Thomas. Though she does come back to die, she doesn't come back out of obligation to her daughters.

The sense of independence that the characters in the novel wish to assert are all shown in different ways. However, for each character, the assertion is real, calculated, and tailored to each individual situation. Despite each man and woman's sense of loyalty to the islands, each also seems to have a fire within him or herself that demands independence and freedom from anyone or anything that would hold a person back from a life he or she is truly meant to live.

Beauty

Beauty is counted as a major theme throughout "Land of Love and Drowning." For external beauty, Eeona and the setting are at the forefront. The Virgin Islands are described in such a way that make them sound beautiful. Yet, it is a beautiful backdrop to the characters' tumultuous lives. It is an irony that the characters experience such great turmoil amidst palm trees, coconut trees, beaches, sunshine, and paradise-like



surroundings. The islands' natural beauty is in direct opposition to the internal conflicts going on for all of the main characters.

Eeona's beauty is counted as her magic. Her beauty is so strong that men and women watch, enthralled with her presence, wherever she goes. She keeps her hair pinned up when she visits other people's homes so that husbands aren't tempted by her and she pays attention to the color of her clothing so as to manipulate people's feelings one way or another, either toward her or away from her.

The author shows Eeona's beauty as having the ability to destroy her. Eeona is so caught up in what her beauty can do for her, that when men stop noticing her, everything she's ever counted on is no longer. Thus proving that external beauty is a fading entity, and cannot be counted on for the entirety of one's life.

Beauty is a fluctuating and subjective thing. The men and women enthralled with Eeona are enthralled with her as she looks a certain way. Once that changes, the enthrallment may end, leaving the subject—in this case Eeona—lonely and confused.

Identity

Identity is a strong theme throughout "Land of Love and Drowning." Each character struggles to belong in one way or another, whether it's with his or her family, community, wider culture, or just in the world as a whole.

For Antoinette and Eeona, their struggle is the same. Not only do they love the same man whose affections are split between multiple women, but their desire for independence calls to them in a very deep way. Each woman at varying times is conflicted on which piece of her life she should identify with: the man she loves, the culture she is a part of, or the freedom calling to her? Antoinette answers that question by fleeing to New York City then actively working towards dying. Eeona answers the question by living on a different island for most of the novel, constructing the life she wants.

Anette's children each seem to know their identity at a young age, though the aspect of their lives with which they identify is different for each child. Youme is a Duene and wishes to stay that way; Frank leans toward Caribbean folklore and Caribbean rights; and Ronalda believes in rights but identifies more with Americans than her fellow Caribbean people.

Anette's children's early sense of self likely stems from Anette, since she makes no apologies for who she is and what she wants. Anette also knows at an early age what she wants: to be a history teacher and to have a family she loves and that loves her.

Some of the tension between Anette and Eeona stems from Anette's desire and ability to love well, and Eeona's tendency to flee and reject honest love. The two women identify with completely separate parts of themselves, causing friction and misunderstanding between the sisters.



Legacy

Legacy is something that the characters in "Land of Love and Drowning" concern themselves with, even if it is not explicitly stated as being a legacy.

For Eeona, being a Bradshaw means something on St. Thomas, and being a Stemme (her mother's maiden name) means something on Anegada. The legacy of Owen Arthur Bradshaw as a prominent business man holds weight for Eeona, as she is considered Madame of Villa by the Sea in her mother's absence and after her father dies, the community continues to regard her as someone who matters.

The legacy of the Stemme family means that on Anegada, Eeona is regarded as important. When she walks with Louis Moreau on Anegada, she is acknowledged rather than he when the two walk through the streets. The legacy of being a Stemme also affords Eeona an immediate friendship with Angela when she travels to Anegada to see The Homecoming's wreckage.

Though Franky's legacy is not acknowledged, it is implied in the home he builds for Anette and in his faithfulness toward his family. The reader might see that Franky's steadfastness and persistence is his way of trying to leave a legacy of such character for his children. He carries the traits over to his work with the Coast Guard, as he takes his post at the lighthouse quite seriously.

Rebekah is another character who seems concerned with legacy. She married a McKenzie because she and Benjamin loved each other, but she remained a McKenzie because she wanted the name. Having that name means prominence in the Virgin Islands, and so she uses her obeah to banish Benjamin. She kept the name and passed it down to her son who isn't really Jacob's, all so he could reap the benefits of being a McKenzie.

Home

Home seems to be a constant theme for the original Bradshaw family in "Land of Love and Drowning."

Eeona searches for it as she searches for her belonging, though she does not seem to feel as though she belongs anywhere outside of either her father's grasp when she's young, or the inn she runs when she's older. Whereas one would typically find home to be with their blood family or those whom they choose to love, Eeona finds home to be nowhere, hence her tendency to wander.

Anette's sense of home is somewhat more stable than Eeona's, as she easily finds rest in the man she loves. Even though Anette's male partner changes three times, the reader can see that she adapts more easily to a home situation than does Eeona. Once Anette has children, she seems to desire a place to call home, and she doesn't get the



urge to wander or disappear like her sister. Anette's home is always wherever the person or people she loves reside, and for most of her life that place is with Franky.

Antoinette is similar to her eldest daughter, and in fact may have passed down her wanderlust tendencies to Eeona. Antoinette's sense of home doesn't ever seem solid or permanent, especially since she goes to New York City after Owen Arthur dies, even though that means leaving her two daughters alone. If a person has a solid home in which she can rest, that person may be more likely to have positive feelings about life in general. However, since Antoinette let herself die after returning from America, the reader might assume that Antoinette never found the place she belonged, that she never found a place to permanently call Home.

Owen Arthur's sense of home is different than the rest, in that he identifies the sea as his home. He feels most at home on his ship, *The Homecoming*, and remains at sea in his death. Owen Arthur acts toward his obligations, in that he provides for his family and cares for Antoinette when she's ill, but it seems his true self is most at home when he's at sea.

Caribbean culture

The Caribbean culture is a central theme of "Land of Love and Drowning," and might even be considered an entity in and of itself. Traditional Caribbean folklore, such as stories of Anancy and the Duene are told and subsequently referred to throughout the narrative. The folklore is used to explain Antoinette's wandering tendencies, Youme's oddity, and the different classes of people. The stories matter to the overall story of this novel, as they give insight into the characters' and the author's background, belief and value systems, and cultural traditions.

Anette and Jacob's dialect also speak to the Caribbean culture. Phrasing such as "He miss we" instead of the American English of, "He misses us," is used regularly when Anette and Jacob are telling the story. Eeona is not happy with Anette's improper English, however she is simply speaking in the traditional dialect of her people.

The background and scene details also matter for the author's use of the Caribbean culture, including the beaches, the cuisine, and the way locals and tourists interact or don't interact, all of which add to the overall sense the reader gets of traditional Caribbean culture by reading the novel.

Facade of propriety

Holding up a Facade of Propriety is one of the underlying themes in "Land of Love and Drowning." Characters in the novel hold certain values and therefore act a certain way, but only in front of certain people.

The most prominent example of this concept is with Eeona and her father. A sexual relationship between father and daughter is considered highly improper, even shameful.



The two do not flaunt it, as that would be improper. Yet, the two pursue it any chance they get. Eeona and Owen Arthur hold up a facade of propriety of their father/daughter relationship, when in fact it is improper and seemingly cursed.

Ironically, it is Eeona who tells Anette to act properly with ladylike manners. Anette wears tight clothing and meets with a man who is not her husband, of which Eeona is ashamed. Anette also speaks in the Island dialect as opposed to proper English, which irritates and embarrasses Eeona. However, Eeona's supposed shame is hypocritical, considering she had an improper relationship with her father as a young woman.

A further facade of propriety is Youme. To the community, Youme is a regular girl. She wears regular clothes, goes to school, and is part of the Joseph family. However, Eeona eventually discovers that Youme has a hoof instead of a heel and backwards-facing feet like the Duene people of Anegada. Youme's differences are never shared with the St. Thomas community; instead, Youme is moved to Anegada where there are more people like her. The reader might presume that Youme is moved under the guise of being with family, so that Anette doesn't have to share that her daughter is different.

War

War as it appears in "Land of Love and Drowning" is both World War II and the war the characters fight among themselves and within themselves.

The second World War has a great impact on the characters' lives, since it brings men from the states to the islands, and sends the island men away for a time. The uncertainty of the war encourages Anette to marry Ronnie, which sends her life in a certain direction she wasn't prepared for. The war may have also been part of Eeona's marrying Mr. Barry, since she didn't marry any of the Puerto Rican men who visited the island before shipping out.

The war between the characters holds more weight throughout the narrative than the World War going on for only part of the story. Eeona and Anette are at war with each other, since they have opposing viewpoints on how to live their lives.

Anette and Franky have a short-term civil war when Anette considers leaving Franky, though it ends quickly when Anette decides to remain with Franky. Then tension in the house goes away for the most part, and only returns when Jacob has to come examine Youme.

The rest of the wars in the novel are all internal conflicts, such as the following: Eeona with herself and her inner conflict about her fluctuating beauty; Anette with the difference between who she loves and to whom she's committed her life; Ronald between her mother's love and care and the American life she wants to live; Franky with working hard to satisfy Anette and still not feeling worthy; Youme with being ashamed to show her Duene feet yet not wanting to change or fix it.



The internal conflicts going on within each of the characters mirrors a war. There are two sides to each conflict, and the winning side changes depending on the character's current situation. The wars are fought by giving in to certain tendencies, i.e. Eeona escaping to St. Croix or Anette wondering if she should leave Franky to be with Jacob.

When decisions are made in favor of one side of an internal conflict, the results are evaluated and it is then determined whether or not the decision made coincides with what the character truly wants, i.e. Eeona remains on St. Croix for a long period of time in order to assert her independence, and Anette does not leave Franky so as to remain faithful to the one who has proven his love to her time and again.

Racism and prejudice

Racism runs throughout "Land of Love and Drowning," both in the Virgin Islands and the United States.

It may be surprising to the reader that racism is happening in the Virgin Islands, since the native islanders are just that: native. There seems to be no reason why racism should exist on an island where the natives are constantly present. However, as more tourists come in, especially after the war, clubs become more exclusive and the type of native one is begins to matter more.

The racism in the Virgin Islands seems be an overflow from the United States, where soldiers first experience racism while trying to eat at an establishment in New Orleans, Louisiana. The boys order a meal and are asked to leave because they are dark-skinned, and the Civil Rights Movement had yet to really take off. Spice, Ronnie, and Jacob are split up because they start to cause a ruckus, demanding their right to be served while holding firearms on their shoulders.

The impact of racism is mostly on the identity and actions of the characters. Racism impacts the boys, as they find it maddening that they are protecting a nation that not only they belong to, but is refusing to serve them because of the color of their skin. There is confusion, since the boys are from the Virgin Islands, an American property, yet they are being told by Americans that they are not worthy of being served.

So to whom do they belong, they seem to wonder. Do they belong to a nation that deems them worthy to fight but unworthy to be served based on the color of their skin? Or do they belong to the Virgin Islands, an American territory yet their native land? The racism experienced by the boys puts those questions in the forefront of their minds, and seems to dampen their desire to serve from that point forward.

Wanderlust

Wanderlust is a theme that runs throughout the novel, mostly present with Antoinette and Eeona. Antoinette shows her tendency toward wanderlust when she escapes to



New York City after Owen Arthur perishes. However, she is disappointed when what she thought she'd find was not at all what she expected.

Eeona's sense of wanderlust has a significant impact on the course of the narrative. She doesn't stay in one place for very long, leaving St. Thomas as soon as she can and living on St. Croix, St. John, and then finally on Anegada. She searches the islands for a sense of identity, all under the guise of needing to escape.

Eeona's need to escape is so prominent, it takes on a name of its own, as her periods of wandering are called episodes. These episodes are compared to those of Antoinette, but Eeona's are described as being stronger than her mother's. During her episodes, Eeona flees from wherever she is currently living. Sometimes she disappears so that nobody knows where she is, and other times she just goes to visit someone or something.

Eeona insists, and so does the author, that she cannot help these tendencies; her sense of wanderlust is a part of her. And even though her wanderlust hurts those she loves, the feeling is so deeply held within her that it cannot and will not be ignored.

Star-crossed lovers

Star-crossed Lovers is one of the themes present in "Land of Love and Drowning," present in the relationship of Jacob and Anette. The two of them, though half-brother and sister, feel connected at the soul-level. Before they've even met in person, Jacob and Anette feel tied together.

Jacob feels as though he knows Anette through the photograph Ronnie shows around the unit. Anette, on the other hand, goes to the docks to welcome Ronnie home. When she gets there, Anette knows the man of her life and of her heart is at the docks, but Ronnie isn't there. He's coming home on another ship. The man is Jacob.

Because Jacob and Anette feel so connected, the two of them have a difficult time staying apart. They feel pulled together by something greater than themselves. Even Rebekah and Eeona seem to know it, for they are proactive in keeping the two lovers apart.

Since Jacob and Anette are half-brother and sister, the fact that they are also star-crossed lovers presents a problem. Once the secret is revealed, neither feels right leaving their respective spouses. Neither feels right about giving up their affection for one another, either. The universe has given them these feelings, but the universe has also made them blood relatives, posing a problem for their togetherness.

The magic Anette possesses is that she can state something and make it so, meaning that if she wanted to, she could will the situation into what she wants it to be. The idea of star-crossed lovers, however, seems to be that the universe dictates where one's affections lie. Though Anette has the power within her to will a situation to be, she does not seem to want to toy with something the universe has done.



Magic

Magic is a theme throughout "Land of Love and Drowning." Select characters possess a certain magic that helps and/or harms the character and others, depending on how it is used.

Rebekah is known for her obeah, though the fact is not discussed openly. However, she uses her obeah to banish her husband to the forest on another island so that he may die. In this respect, her magic is meant to help her and harm others. However, when Antoinette hopes to purchase a concoction from Rebekah in order to rid her body of Anette's fetus, Rebekah's obeah is meant to help others.

Rebekah also has a hoof instead of a heal, just as Youme does. This is a kind of magic, too, as she is not fully human but not anything else, either. Their differences make it so they have special abilities, such as Rebekah's stated above. Youme's ability is that she can hear her mother's thoughts.

For Eeona, her magic lies in her beauty, as it has the ability to entrance those around her. As such, Eeona uses her beauty to get what she wants. For example, she uses her beauty to seduce her father into multiple consensual sexual encounters. Eeona also uses her beauty to help in the community's consideration of her as a madame, both for Villa by the Sea and the inn she runs on St. John. Eeona's use of her beauty is meant to help her. While she doesn't necessarily want to harm others, she has no regard for the consequences of her magical beauty, since she only seeks what she wants.

Anette has the magic of speaking-and-making-it-so, and also of sensing people's arrival. She discovers this ability when she wants a certain kind of food, and so she thinks it and Ronnie appears with it. This magic might be used to get exactly as she wants, and to create the exact life she wants. However, after the guilt Anette feels in using her magic on the blond star of the movie filming on Water Island, Anette uses her magic no more. She realizes her magic can hurt other people, and she would rather not use her ability to harm.

The last of the magical abilities lie with the McKenzie family, Jacob's supposed birth family. The McKenzie family breeds only men, though Jacob is the birth father of Youme. The fact that he conceives a daughter tells the reader and Jacob that he is not a true McKenzie. However, the name stays with Jacob and he goes on to conceive multiple male children with his wife. It may be only because he is intimate with his half-sister that he breeds a female; the relationship is cursed and therefore the conception may be, as well.

Self-preservation

Self-preservation is a common theme for the characters of "Land of Love and Drowning." As each character experiences something in his or her life that seems



unpleasant, most of them go with their first instinct of self-preservation, starting with Antoinette and going all the way to Youme.

For Antoinette, the self-preservation starts when she attempts to abort multiple fetuses, only failing with Anette. Then, once her husband dies, she seems to think that staying on St. Thomas will be the end of her. Never mind her children or the obligation she has to Villa by the Sea, Antoinette leaves for New York City because that's what she thinks she needs to stay sane. She takes care of herself first.

Eeona follows suit and attempts to send Anette to an orphanage on St. Croix, in order to protect herself and help herself into the life she wants. Eeona continues with this pattern by disappearing when she wants and not considering the impact on her extended family. Eeona's goal is to save herself from herself and her insanity.

Jacob's self-preservation is masked as an obligation to his mother. When Rebekah threatens Jacob to go to medical school instead of staying with Anette, he does so, seemingly out of obligation. However, he also follows his mother's orders out of self-preservation, as he doesn't want Rebekah to put obeah on him. Though Jacob does act out of some sense of selflessness, as he doesn't want obeah on Anette or their child, either, some of his motive is for self-preservation.

Ronalda and Youme both decide to live somewhere other than St. Thomas, likely out of self-preservation instincts. Ronalda becomes increasingly socially minded, and therefore wants to be somewhere that is not full of slaves. She also wants to make a difference in the Civil Rights Movement. So, to satisfy her need to do something great, she moves to America.

Youme, born with an oddity, chooses to keep her body the way it is. She self-preserved so that she can maintain her identity. As demonstrated by her protester spirit, Youme wants to be bold in her beliefs. Pressure from Jacob, Eeona, and Anette do nothing to dissuade her decision to stay as she is.

Modernization

Social progression and modernization happen during "Land of Love and Drowning" because the story spans approximately 60 years. Over time, it is only natural that a society will shift and progress.

The progression of the Virgin Islands seems to begin with the advent of electricity and running water. With more conveniences comes a higher standard for living, but also tourists who make new rules about who belongs where. Though natives may be unhappy with the shift in the hierarchy, they seem unable to do anything about it at first, since the tourists tend to be wealthier than the natives.

After the war, when radio and television come to the island, social progress and unrest continue. The radio and television bring news of the Civil Rights Movement happening



in America, as well as of other events around the globe. Suddenly, islanders are discussing current events and their opinions on such events.

The social progression (more rights for more people, a wider array of technology available, etc.) seems to create additional social unrest. For it is from the Civil Rights Movement happening in the states that the BOMB occurs. Islanders grow tired of being told they don't belong on their beaches and that they don't matter, when the islands are their homeland. Caribbean people are native to the Virgin Islands, and have been since well before the islands became American property.

Obligation

Obligation is one of the themes present in "Land of Love and Drowning." Each main character has certain obligations to either themselves or to other people in their lives they must fulfill. Sometimes the obligations are easy, sometimes they are difficult.

For Eeona and Anette, their obligation to one another is partly because they're sisters, but more so because they're orphans. As sisters, the women would feel obliged to care for and look out for one another. As orphans, those tendencies would be magnified since they are each other's only living immediate family. Though their commitment level to each other ebbs and flows with their changing life seasons, ultimately, Eeona and Anette remain true to one another as sisters.

Anette is also obligated to her family, which grows to three children and her husband Franky. Anette's husband remains by her side, marries her even though she has two children that are not his, and builds her a house. Though he doesn't do these things to manipulate or blackmail her into staying with him, Franky's sense of faithfulness puts on Anette an obligation to see her marriage through.

Jacob's significant obligation lies in his going to medical school. Rebekah decided long ago that medical school would be his destiny, and because he feels obligated to his mother for raising him on her own, it is to medical school Jacob goes. He fulfills the obligation regardless of how much it hurts him and Anette, because that is what he feels is the right thing to do.

Gender inequality

Gender Inequality is an underlying theme in "Land of Love and Drowning." It is one that is recognized only a handful of times, but it is present all throughout the novel, starting with Owen Arthur and Antoinette.

Owen Arthur and Antoinette, though married and of the same socioeconomic class, are given different allowances by society. As a female, Antoinette is expected to stay with her family, be loyal to her husband, and raise her children. Being with another man or going out on her family would be considered an egregious act for a woman. Owen Arthur, on the other hand, has a mistress the whole town knows about, can be out to



sea for as long as he desires and it's considered respectable because it's his work, and his role in raising his children is almost non-existent.

For Anette, she is an unwed mother of two. Eeona notes the shame in that for a woman, and states how lucky she is that any man would still want to marry her. Though Franky doesn't seem to subscribe to the socially acceptable gender roles, Eeona does and she makes herself have great sway in Anette's life.

The reader might also note that the McKenzie men are supposed to only be able to breed more men, not women. The McKenzie men are considered of a top breed of people, and therefore their revered ability to only further procreate males would suggest that the society in which "Land of Love and Drowning" takes place favors the male over the female in terms of worthiness.

Youme is a character that makes sure she is not hindered because of her gender. After Hurricane Mary, Youme insists on being the one who maintains the cistern, a heavy task typically reserved for a male in the household. However, her strong-willed spirit and resoluteness lend to Youme's dismissal of traditionally accepted male-female roles.

Isolation

Isolation is present in select characters and in the geography of "Land of Love and Drowning."

For Eeona, her isolation comes in her wildness. She is unable to relate to anyone and therefore feels it necessary to isolate herself from the people in her life, hence her multiple disappearances. Even when Anette wishes Eeona would be present, the wild spirit within Eeona makes her want to be free, but it also makes her relationship with Anette strained enough that the two don't see eye to eye, making them feel isolated from each other.

Another character that seems to feel a sense of isolation is Ronalda. Even before she leaves for America, Ronalda separates herself from her family because of the turmoil she's feeling inside. Once she gets to America, not only do she and her family not talk often, but the racism in America isolates her, as well.

Antoinette and Owen Arthur, before their deaths, are two more characters who seem to feel a sense of isolation. Antoinette likely feels isolated because of the wildness inside of her. Like Eeona, Antoinette cannot relate to anyone so she must isolate herself in order to feel free. Owen Arthur is a man away from his family on a very regular basis, transporting goods on his cargo ship, thus likely creating a sense of isolation in him, as well.

Each character who deals with isolation does so in a similar fashion: by giving into whatever it is that isolates them, claiming it to be part of his or her character. Eeona and Antoinette's wildness, they believe, is unavoidable and therefore should be indulged. Ronalda's differing values and views from her family are important to her, so she goes

somewhere they can be appreciated. Finally, Owen Arthur's whole identity is wrapped up in being a man at sea, and so that is where he spends most of his time.

The geography of the novel also speaks to the general theme of isolation, as the majority of the story takes place on the U.S. Virgin Islands, which are 1,100 miles Southeast from Miami. Especially during the time "Land of Love and Drowning" takes place, when travel options were more limited than today, the Virgin Islands were fairly isolated from the Continental United States, despite the Islands being a territory of America. The fact that news of the happenings in the states don't immediately make it to the Virgin Islands also speaks to their geographic isolation.



Styles

Point of View

"Land of Love and Drowning" is told from the perspective of four distinct voices: Eeona Bradshaw, Anette Bradshaw, Jacob McKenzie, and an omniscient narrator.

The omniscient narrator tells most of the story in proper American English. The reader can assume it's a female, since there are a handful of times the narrator refers to herself as "we old wives." Since the story takes place in the Caribbean, and old wives tales and folklore are taken fairly seriously, the reader can put a lot of weight on the narrator's telling of the story.

Anette is the second most prominent storyteller. She tells her side of the story in the St. Thomas dialect, which when read, seems like a form of broken English. However, it should be noted, it is not broken English; it is simply the Caribbean English dialect. For example, Anette states, "But from the minute I tell she that I going around with somebody new, her eyes them now squinching up like they full of sand," (page 220). "He" and "she" are used in place of "him" and "her", and "we" is used in place of "us." The dialect is influenced by English-based Creole.

Eeona is the third most prominent storyteller. She speaks in perfect American English. Her tone is slightly different than Anette's, for it is more morose than Anette's. Eeona's storytelling is unapologetic.

Jacob tells only two chapters of the narrative. His stance each time is defensive, hoping the reader will consider his perspective.

Language and Meaning

The language switches between American English and Caribbean English, which is based on English Creole. The author is from St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, where most of "Land of Love and Drowning" takes place. Her Caribbean language likely holds great meaning for her and was therefore important that part of the novel include the dialect.

The switch between the two dialects indicates a number of things. For one, the author lives between St. Thomas and America, so she is familiar with both styles of communicating. Second, the switch indicates the characters' tension between their homeland and the problems they have with it, how they wish some things could be different. Third, the switch between perfect English and Caribbean English shows the vast difference between the characters.

Structure

"Land of Love and Drowning" is broken up into 7 sections, which are the following: Freedom; Belonging; A Freedom; A Belonging; Drown; The Bomb; and Love. Each section contains a different number of chapters, since each section is of a varying length. There is no pattern to who tells the stories at what time. The author chose whose perspective she'd like to have tell certain parts.

Since the omniscient narrator tells most of the story, the reader can assume the authors wants the story told as more of a whole than just by one person at a time.



Quotes

Here, she would pause in her sewing to look directly at me. 'The wildness is many things besides a gathering of trees or a pooling of water.' I came to understand that the wildness could be inside of me.

-- Eeona (chapter 5 paragraph 4-5)

Importance: This statement by Eeona indicates to the reader what Eeona will be dealing with for the rest of the novel: her natural tendency toward wildness and her strong desire for independence. Eeona spends time being jealous of her mother, but in fact she is so much like her mother. Antoinette was prone to periods of wildness, as is Eeona throughout the course of the novel. Her statement at the end of Chapter 5 foreshadows to the reader pieces of Eeona's part in the narrative.

But there is no legacy of any of this. Families who are determined to keep their legacy make legacy arrangements.

-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 13 paragraph 2)

Importance: Family and legacy are two themes present throughout "Land of Love and Drowning." Though the narrator states that there is no legacy for the Bradshaw family, the rest of the narrative would prove otherwise. Eeona and Anette carry on things from both of their parents. At this point in the novel, though, the family is in disarray and nothing is as anyone hoped it would be.

Still, I wanted to be a woman who made my own life, found my own place, not one who must ask for it like Mama.

-- Eeona (chapter 14 paragraph 2)

Importance: Eeona's desire for independence is significant. In fact, it runs her life. Especially after both of her parents die, Eeona is determined to make her own way. She knows from early on the kind of life she does and does not want.

So those two things, orphan and American, always seem the same to me.

-- Anette (chapter 23 paragraph 3)

Importance: Anette was born a little after Transfer Day, which is the day the ownership of the Virgin Islands transferred to America. Around the same time, both of her parents died and Anette became an orphan, thus associating the two events: citizenship-wise, being an American, and becoming an orphan. Later, being an American doesn't matter when the native Islanders are kept off their islands. In this statement, Anette is speaking for an entire generation and their future rights as native islanders.

Men may marry despite their inabilities. We women must seek a life based on our abilities.

-- Eeona (chapter 28 paragraph 3)



Importance: Gender differences is one of the themes present in "Land of Love and Drowning," and it is never so clear as when the author writes about relationships. Here, Eeona is commenting on how men have more freedom in whom they might marry, since they can marry any woman they so choose no matter what disabilities the man may carry. Women, she says, must marry what they can find; he disabilities act as a hindrance to a relationship, as opposed to the man's that are neutral.

Nothing ever happen just so. It must be a story.
-- Anette (chapter 29 paragraph 1)

Importance: The characters of "Land of Love and Drowning" seem to believe strongly in destiny, even when they are working to avoid it or working to create their own. Anette's statement here, in St. Thomas dialect instead of the perfect English Eeona speaks and expects, is to let the reader know that nothing in these characters' lives just happens by happenstance, there is a reason for everything.

Them woman. They think that their dreams supposed to be mine. I ain studying them. I know what I want.
-- Anette (chapter 38 paragraph 1)

Importance: Anette's comment here is in regard to what her sister and Ronnie's mother seem to expect from Anette, which are two things that Anette doesn't care about. She knows what she wants her life to be, and she has no problem working to make it so. Anette's driven and independent personality impacts her relationships, as well as the outcome of the story.

Family can be like an anchor. An anchor may tether you. An anchor may also pull and sink your ship.
-- Eeona (chapter 44 paragraph 1)

Importance: Family dynamics shift throughout the entire novel. At this point, Eeona is working to prevent Anette from divorcing, as Eeona believes that will shame the family since it would make Anette unwed and available to marry Jacob. Eeona cares more than anyone else alive about the Bradshaw name, and since she feels like it's already been sabotaged enough, she wants to prevent it from being disparaged any more. The statement also shows Eeona's internal conflict in respecting her sister and respecting her father and the name he passed down to her.

She speaking slowly and quietly, like she trying not to say the wrong thing, even though everything she saying sounding wrong to me.
-- Anette (chapter 57 paragraph 7)

Importance: Anette's statement speaks to the amount of subtext the characters exchange, especially Anette and Eeona. There are many things each woman tries to say to the other without actually saying the words. For example, just before this quote, Eeona tells Anette that she doesn't know the half of Jacob. She means the literal half,



since Jacob is half Owen Arthur's and half Rebekah's. However, that is not explicitly stated. Instead, Eeona just seems to be giving Anette a general warning.

But naming is a voodoo all parents do.
-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 58 paragraph 6)

Importance: This statement is connected to a statement in the first section in which the narrator states that naming is a parent's last form of sorcery. Magic is one of the themes of "Land of Love and Drowning," and this statement is evidence of that. The statement also shows a Caribbean parent's interest in his or her child's future, as naming as voodoo impacts the child's life path.

They were the worst kind of white. They were tourists.
-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 61 paragraph 1)

Importance: Racial unrest and class prejudice show themselves throughout "Land of Love and Drowning." In various points of the novel, there is tension between blacks and whites, both on the Islands and in the United States. However, not all Islanders thought all whites to be bad. Yet it seemed that every Islander agreed that tourists were the worst, for the following reasons: they were wealthier than the natives and treated the Caribbean like a playground instead of someone's home; they sought to overtake the beaches of the Virgin Islands because they thought it a beautiful destination for people with money, instead of someone's home; and they showed no regard for natives as worthy human beings.

Anette bought a simple yellow dress. Green was his color and red was hers, but yellow was the island's and Anette needed this nuptial to be bigger than her alone.
-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 68 paragraph 8)

Importance: Anette is marrying Franky, and though she knows he will provide her with a stable life, it is not him she wants to marry. Thus, Anette needs to remind herself that she is doing this—marrying Franky—for the betterment of her children's futures, for the betterment of her future, and to honor a man who has been nothing but patient and good to her.

But she also knew that her grown-up life was finally beginning. Not this back-and-forth, running-behind-some-man, driving-in-a-car-without-doors life.
-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 70 paragraph 3)

Importance: Anette and Franky have just gotten married, and Anette knows that this choice, more than almost any other in her life, propels her into real adulthood. She knows that she cannot flip-flop on her choice of man, and that choosing Franky means choosing him for the rest of her life. This choice means that despite her feelings of passion and love for Jacob, she will not pursue that relationship.

Jacob and me, we was never a proper thing outside of our own hearts.
-- Anette (chapter 75 paragraph 3)



Importance: Anette's statement shows that two things: how real her relationship to Jacob was, and her acknowledgement that their relationship will never be treated as acceptable by anyone else in their lives. At this point, Anette doesn't know why Eeona and Jacob's mother disapprove of Jacob and Anette's relationship. The reader can see that because of that lack of knowledge, Anette remains faithful to her feelings for Jacob but bitter toward others who worked to tear them apart.

The last major contact with America had been the Second World War, when the boys came back with their stories of segregation, and with sharp chips on their shoulders.
-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 79 paragraph 7)

Importance: Isolation and national identity are two themes present in "Land of Love and Drowning," and this statement about the boys' experience coming home from war displays both ideas. The men who were drafted or voluntarily joined World War II were Americans, but treated as outsiders because of the color of their skin and their country of origin. Isolation was likely felt on both pieces of land, one for being an outsider, and the other for experiences had while away.

The same thing that makes a man dive into the sea for your rescue can make him hold your head underwater.
-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 79 paragraph 3)

Importance: The sea is an essential part of "Land of Love and Drowning," as it surrounds the Virgin Islands and is a part of the characters' identities. At this point in the novel, racial unrest was just starting to gain ground. Franky is in the Coast Guard and is meant to protect his people. However, once his people started protesting, his presence as a man in uniform would change. As a Coast Guardsman, if protesters act out of line, it is his duty to apprehend them, which is the opposite of guarding them.

Anette had begun to keep the TV off more often, because now she didn't want any of the children watching the glass-and-flimsy-wood box without her supervision.
-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 81 paragraph 2)

Importance: Social progression is a natural thing, and one that some people welcome and/or resist, depending on the type of progress being made. Here, Anette is trying to pull back a little on the technological advances that have made it to St. Thomas. There were images and scenes on the television that Anette clearly didn't want her children watching, whether they had to do with the Civil Rights Movement or American television is unclear.

This now was a wild-woman storm.
-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 84 paragraph 5)

Importance: Hurricane Mary has turned into a full-fledged storm. The women of "Land of Love and Drowning" tend to have wild spirits. They act on their whims and sometimes work hard to escape any of sense of obligation. Though Anette does not end up this



way, she gives in to her pull toward Jacob even though is married to Ronnie. Antoinette and especially Eeona are the two characters who especially personify a wild woman, and Hurricane Mary may be the author's way of showing their wildness in another form.

Life was changed on the island. It was not something new. It was not something opening or awakening. It was an expired life—even though only three people had died between all three islands, and they had been tourists.

-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 85 paragraph 5)

Importance: After Hurricane Mary, life on the Islands goes back to an old way of living. Mary wipes out electricity and water for months, putting life back a couple decades. Islanders didn't feel awakened or jolted by the storm. Instead, they felt like it was an old song, one they knew too well and could pick up right where it had left off.

Eve Youme listened and could feel the tingle in her toes. Her feet sometimes ached, as though they were trying to run away from her.

-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 85 paragraph 1)

Importance: Since Youme is a child born out of an incestuous relationship, the reader may notice that she is different than the other children. This specific description is the author's foreshadowing Youme's condition of a hoof instead of a heel and backwards feet, which is an oddity the reader doesn't find out until later in the novel.

Then she looked out the window and tried to conjure the appropriate shame.

-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 86 paragraph 5)

Importance: The narrator is speaking of Anette, who during this statement is thinking of Jacob. She is unashamed of her relationship with Jacob, since she had his baby even though the two weren't married. At this point, Anette hasn't found out that she and Jacob are half-brother and sister. However, even after that knowledge comes to light, Jacob and Anette's feelings for another don't wane, as they loved each other at the soul level first.

I decide I going to make myself a witch and fix my daughter since I can't fix the other things.

-- Anette (chapter 90 paragraph 2)

Importance: Anette has just found out that Youme has a hoof instead of a heel. Anette's declaration to the reader here speaks of her desperation to fix something in her life, since Hurricane Mary has changed life on the island and she is not married to the great love of her life. Also, magic is a significant component of the narrative, so Anette's acknowledgement of it adds to the greater story of the Bradshaw women and their abilities.

She did not tell him about the antique furniture, the curtains, or about the possession of her speech. She couldn't explain that.

-- Omniscient narrator (chapter 97 paragraph 3)



Importance: Anette's inability to explain items from her childhood bedroom, as well as the fact that her speech changed to something guttural and demanding just a short while ago, speaks to the fact that she has never really understood where she comes from, but that she wants to. Anette was quite young when her family left Villa by the Sea. She remembers very little of her parents. That fact doesn't always bother her, but not knowing exactly where she comes from could pose a hindrance to her being fully content in her life.

Perhaps you would have been able to walk through mountains instead of carry them on your back.

-- Eeona (chapter 100 paragraph 4)

Importance: Eeona's statement to Anette speaks to a few different things. For one, Anette is someone who feels a greater sense of obligation and responsibility than Eeona, who is easily indulged by her wildness. Anette carries the burdens of others more heavily than Eeona, and Eeona wonders if she had sent her little sister to their mother's homeland early on, would Anette have had an easier life. The statement also speaks to Eeona's care for Anette, which is something rarely acknowledged by Eeona. Yet, Eeona stating that she wishes she could have made life easier for Anette is her way of showing affection to her little sister.