

CHAPTER III

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Intrinsic Elements

3.1.1 Character

The protagonist of the novel, Jeanette is a fictionalized version of the writer Jeanette Winterson. She is a white-skinned woman with wavy black hair. Over the course of the book, Jeanette matures from a young girl to a young woman. Headstrong, independent, devout, and a gifted storyteller, she struggles with her homosexuality, her apprehensions about evangelism, and her relationship with her controlling adoptive mother.

Jeanette is a strong-willed, intelligent young girl deeply devoted to her religion and community. She is raised by her adoptive mother, a strict and domineering woman determined to raise Jeanette to become a missionary. Despite her mother's efforts, Jeanette begins to question her faith and her sexuality. "I don't know how to answer. I know what I think, but words in the head are like voices underwater. They are distorted" (Winterson, 1985: 121).

This quote speaks to the struggle of articulating one's thoughts and feelings. Jeanette knows what she thinks and feels, but when it comes to expressing these thoughts and feelings, she finds it challenging. The analogy of "*words in the head are like voices underwater*" suggests that thoughts can be clear in one's mind, but when trying to verbalize them, they become distorted, muffled, or misunderstood, just like how sounds are distorted underwater. It is a powerful metaphor for the difficulty of communication and the gap that can exist between our internal world and how we express it to others.

Jeanette's young age has precocious imagination and love of literature function as tools of self-liberation. They introduce her to new ideas that challenge her mother's ideological world-view and loosen the restrictive norms of her upbringing. This sets the stage for Jeanette's eventual rebellion against parental control. "In the library I felt better, words you could trust and look at till you understood them, they couldn't change half way through a sentence like people, so it was easier to spot a lie" (Winterson, 1985: 58).

Through tales of princes, knights, and sorcerers, Jeanette seeks to make sense of the complicated and rule-filled world around her as she matures. Despite their fantastical settings and characters, these tales all reflect the very real and complex struggles Jeanette faces as a young queer woman in a repressed environment. Sadly, Jeanette discovers that her blossoming sexuality is in direct conflict with her altruistic dedication to God and her religion.

Jeanette is a complex and fully realized character who embodies the themes and conflicts of the novel. She symbolizes the struggle for individuality and self-expression, and her journey is a powerful testament to the human spirit and the capacity for growth and change. Through her character, Winterson challenges societal norms and expectations and celebrates the power of individuality and self-determination. "I seem to have run in a great circle, and met myself again on the starting line" (Winterson, 1985: 129).

The quote encapsulates the theme of self-discovery, the complexities of identity, and the ongoing process of finding one's place in the world. It highlights the challenges and struggles faced by individuals who deviate from societal norms, and the continuous journey of self-acceptance and self-realization.

Throughout the novel, Jeanette struggles to reconcile her desires and beliefs with her family's and community's expectations. She faces rejection and condemnation from those around her but ultimately finds the strength to break free from their expectations and forge her path.

Jeanette is a complex and multi-faceted character who embodies many themes and conflicts throughout the novel. She symbolizes the struggle for self-discovery and self-acceptance, and her journey serves as a powerful critique of the rigid gender roles and social norms that can stifle individuality and creativity. "... Pillars hold things up, and salt keeps things clean, but it's a poor exchange for losing yourself. People do go back, but they don't survive, because two realities are claiming them at the same time" (Winterson, 1985: 156). "Pillars" in the given quote is a symbol for things in one's life that offer stability, support, or organization. It implies that even while outside circumstances could provide stability and strength, they are unable to make up for the loss of one's actual identity or self. As the novel progresses, Jeanette's character undergoes a significant transformation. At the beginning of the book, she is a devout and obedient child who is completely immersed in the world of her church and community. However, as she becomes more aware of her desires and begins to question the teachings of her church, she starts to rebel against the strictures that have defined her life up to that point. Despite the challenges she faces, Jeanette is a resilient and determined character who refuses to be defined by the expectations of others. "'My dear' she said, you are in danger of being burned by your own flame" (Winterson, 1985:14).

The quote when Jeanette's mother tells Jeanette she is at risk of being consumed by her own passion, desires, or individuality. It implies that her strong sense of self and nonconformity may lead to potential dangers or consequences. Young Jeanette was a little girl when she saw a Romany lady at the market who said that Jeanette would never remain still and would never get married. The woman's comments worry Jeanette, who is too young to fully comprehend what they imply but who will remember them throughout her formative years. The young Jeanette is uninterested in adult relationships like marriage and is naive to boot: she is aware that two unmarried women run a paper shop together, and while it is obvious to everyone in town that the women are a lesbian couple, Jeanette finds it difficult to

comprehend that there is even such a thing as a lesbian relationship. Like what Jeannette state “...You'll never marry,' she said, `not you, and you'll never be still.”(Winterson, 1985: 4). In the given quote, Jeanette has an encounter with an elderly woman who offers a mysterious prediction about her future. The quote captures the sense of ambiguity and intricacy surrounding Jeanette's development as a character. Through the old woman's words, it is suggested that Jeanette's path will be fraught with difficulties and opposition. This emphasizes the internal conflict she confronts as she tries to reconcile societal expectations with her own personal desires. Furthermore, the quote brings attention to the theme of societal judgment and the hardships faced by those who dare to diverge from conventional norms.

3.1.2 Conflict

3.1.2.1 Internal Conflict

There is a conflict between Jeanette sexual identity and her congregation, family, and initially even herself. After that, Jeanette doubts the quality of men, slowly but getting higher, Jeanette falls in love with Melanie. One day Jeanette sleeps with Melanie. Jeanette is confronted about Melanie; Jeanette refuses to repent; Jeanette repents due to hunger but does not deny the idea that she is different. Jeanette starts a relationship with Kathy; Jeanette does not see her lesbian love and her love for God as incongruous; Jeanette is caught with Katy; Jeanette accepts her identity and chooses instead to leave the church and her society. "No guarantee of shore. Only a conviction that what she wanted could exist, if she dared to find it" (Winterson, 1985: 120). This quote essentially conveys the idea that even though there is no certainty in life, one should still have the conviction to pursue what they truly desire. It is about the courage to seek out and potentially create the life or identity that feels most authentic, despite uncertainties and potential challenges. It encapsulates the struggle and determination involved in a personal journey of self-discovery and acceptance. The

predictions imply that Jeanette's journey will be unconventional and fraught with challenges, as she deviates from societal expectations of marriage and stability. This glimpse into her future becomes a recurring motif that fuels the internal conflict within Jeanette as she grapples with understanding its meaning and reconciling it with her own desires and societal pressures. This is also foreshadowed by the old woman, whom she meets while collecting the black peas, as follows: “You’ll never marry, she said, not you and you’ll never be still” (Winterson, 1985: 7). As can be seen, from the start of the novel, it is obvious that she is not a stereotypical woman conforming to the patriarchal values and norms; but a rebellious figure as an individual against the repressive norms of her society. Her oppositional reaction to marriage can also be observed in her dream, in which she wears a pure white dress and a golden crown.

3.1.2.2 External Conflict

The main character of "*Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*", Jeanette, sets out on a deep journey of self-discovery that is characterized by a number of outside conflicts. Jeanette faces intense conflict within her family, especially with her devout and religious mother. Jeanette's own beliefs and desires are at odds with her mother's unshakable faith and her desire to lead her down a certain path. As Jeanette finds herself at odds with her family's expectations and longs to live life on her own terms, embracing her individuality and personal beliefs, this conflict causes a deep rift within the family. Jeanette said while she talked sadly to her mother “...I want someone who is fierce and will love me until death and knows that love is as strong as death, and be on my side forever and ever. I want someone who will destroy and be destroyed by me” (Winterson, 1985: 156).

The quote reflects Jeanette's deep-rooted desire for a love that is both fierce and enduring. She yearns for a bond that can withstand the test of time, one that is as potent and

inevitable as death itself. This longing for a powerful, unwavering love is a stark contrast to the conditional acceptance she receives from her family, particularly her mother. It signifies her quest for a connection that transcends societal norms and familial expectations, a relationship that is not bound by the limitations imposed on her due to her identity.

Furthermore, Jeanette's upbringing in a traditional and religious society creates additional conflict. Jeanette faces discrimination, rejection, and exclusion from the community as she explores her identity and her divergent sexuality. She is seen as a danger to the social order because her very existence questions accepted norms and values. This conflict ultimately shapes Jeanette's resilience and determination to forge her own path by making her question her place in the world and navigate the difficulties of being different in a community that values conformity.

In addition to the conflicts within her family and community, Jeanette also faces conflict with religious figures who hold authority in her community. These characters stand in for the dogmatic doctrine and beliefs that Jeanette starts to doubt and defy. Jeanette sets out on a personal quest of reflection and self-discovery as she aims to question their authority and reinterpret her own conception of faith and spirituality. Her desire to follow her own path and live a life that is consistent with her true beliefs even if it means going against the grain of established religious institutions is highlighted by this conflict. "... Jeanette embroiders grim religious mottoes and shakes her little tambourine for Jesus like a good missionary-to-be" (Winterson, 1985: 14). The quote reflects the tension between conformity and individuality, as well as the struggle to reconcile personal desires and beliefs with the expectations of a strict religious community. The phrase "like a good missionary-to-be" suggests that Jeanette is being groomed to become a missionary, someone who spreads religious teachings and converts others to the faith. It highlights the expectation placed upon Jeanette to conform to the religious ideals of her community and become a devout follower.

Jeanette exemplifies a profound religious commitment by channeling her spiritual fervor through a synthesis of artistic and musical avenues. Employing the intricate technique of embroidery, she skilfully sews contemplative religious messages onto fabric, showcasing a deep dedication to the solemn aspects of her faith. In addition to her proficiency in embroidery, Jeanette ardently plays a small tambourine, utilizing it as a musical instrument in acts of worship and reverence towards Jesus.

The allusion to her resemblance to an aspiring missionary suggests ambitious aspirations, indicating meticulous preparations for an envisioned missionary role. This underscores her unwavering dedication to disseminating her religious convictions. Collectively, these activities provide a comprehensive illustration of Jeanette's diverse strategies for expressing and fortifying her spiritual bond. In addition, Jeanette's romantic relationships also turn into a point of contention. Social prejudice and discrimination cause her relationships to be met with rejection and challenges, especially when she starts interacting with people of the same gender. Jeanette faces obstacles in her quest for love and happiness and in her freedom to express her true self due to the deeply embedded societal norms and expectations surrounding hetero normativity. But these confrontations also act as growth-promoting factors for Jeanette, teaching her how to overcome social barriers and negotiate the complexities of love. Jeanette goes through a life-changing process of self-acceptance and self-discovery as a result of these external conflicts. Despite the obstacles in her path, she discovers how to live true to herself, question society norms, and find her own voice. "Eventually, I thought, I'll fall in love like everybody else. Then some years later, quite by mistake, I did" (Winterson, 1985: 58). The quote encapsulates Jeanette's initial anticipation of experiencing romantic love, viewing it as an eventual and ubiquitous aspect of human existence. This story highlights the unpredictable trajectory of romantic relationships,

underscoring the intrinsic unpredictability that often characterizes the manifestation of love in individuals' lives.

These conflicts shape Jeanette's character, as she emerges stronger and more resilient, embracing her individuality and paving her own path in a world that often seeks to suppress her true identity.

3.1.3 Setting

3.1.3.1 Setting of time

The setting of time explains when the story's action is carried out. The audience can learn when something happened or how long it took by changing the setting time. In addition, the place in the setting related to the time of the story, like hour, year and century.

The novel begins in the Early to mid-20th century, introducing Jeanette as a young girl growing up in a conservative working-class household. “That's why they buy everything from Maxi Ball's Catalogue Seconds. The Devil himself is a drunk' (sometimes my mother invented theology)” (Winterson, 1985: 3).

The setting reflects a time when societal attitudes were still deeply rooted in traditional values and religious beliefs. It is a time of social conformity, where strict gender roles and expectations are prevalent. The community is tightly knit, and religion plays a central role in people's lives, providing a sense of structure and moral guidance.

As the narrative progresses into the 1960s, the setting reflects a time of significant social and cultural change.

“...There were friends and there were enemies. Enemies were: The Devil (in his many forms), Next Door, Sex (in its many forms), Slugs. Friends were: God, Our dog, Auntie Madge, The Novels of Charlotte Brontë, Slug Pellets, and me, at first. I had been brought in to join her in a tag match against the Rest of the World” (Winterson, 1987: 28).

This decade marks the emergence of the sexual revolution, the civil rights movement, and the feminist movement. Jeanette, now a young girl on the higher end of adolescence, starts to question her own identity and sexuality. The changing attitudes towards gender,

sexuality, and individual freedom become more pronounced, contrasting with the conservative values of her upbringing.

The story continues into the 1970s, where Jeanette is now a teenager. This period represents a time of increased openness and acceptance of diverse sexual orientations and personal identities. It is a decade marked by the rise of the *LGBTQ+* rights movement and greater societal dialogue on these issues. Jeanette's exploration of her own sexuality brings her into conflict with the strict religious community she was raised in. "Knowing Melanie was a much happier thing, so why was I beginning to feel so uncomfortable? And why did I not always tell my mother where I stayed at night? It was usual for our church to spend time, days and nights, in each other's homes" (Winterson, 1985:14).

The setting reflects a clash between her personal desires for love and acceptance and the rigid moral codes imposed by her community. Overall, the varying time settings in the novel highlight the evolving social and cultural landscape of the mid-20th century. They provide a backdrop against which Jeanette's journey of self-discovery and her struggle with societal expectations unfold.

3.1.3.2 Setting of Place

The specific name of the town is not mentioned in the novel. However, it is described as a conservative and tightly-knit community located in the North West of England. It is a working-class area with a strong sense of community and shared values. "Lancashire and Cheshire had been particularly blighted; only the day before cleansed a whole family in Cheadle Hulme" (Winterson, 1985: 67).

This setting represents the protagonist Jeanette's childhood and early adolescence. It is where she grows up within her family and experiences the influence of her strict religious community.

As the story progresses, Jeanette moves to a convent, which serves as a significant setting in the novel. "In fact I was scared to death and going to live with a teacher who had some care for what was happening" (Winterson, 1985: 104). The convent is where she is sent to receive religious education and training to become a missionary. It is portrayed as a somewhat isolated and sheltered environment, further emphasizing the strict religious upbringing and the limited exposure to the outside world that Jeanette experiences.

3.1.3.3 Social Setting

Social setting is a natural, political, cultural work and a temporal environment. This set of social events tells about the social conditions that eventually occur in literary works. Other meaning, social setting a particular place or type of surroundings where something is or takes place.

The main social setting in the novel is a tightly-knit and strict religious community in which Jeanette grows up. Jeanette's mother is a fervent member of an evangelical Christian church.

Jeanette : "but I never see any priests."

Mother : "A girl's motto is BE PREPARED" (Winterson, 1985: 11). The dialogue captures a moment of interaction between Jeanette and her mother, shedding light on their perspectives and the values they hold. This community adheres to rigid moral rules and emphasizes obedience to traditional religious norms. It has a strong hierarchical structure and expects its members to conform to strict gender roles.

Jeanette is raised in a working-class family residing in a modest neighborhood. They face economic limitations and lead a simple life. The family's economic condition also reflects a part of the social setting in the novel. "She must find a boat and sail in it. No guarantee of shore. Only a conviction that what she wanted could exist, if she dared to find it" (Winterson, 1985: 120). This quote could be interpreted as a metaphor for the struggle and determination often found in working-class families. Just like the character in the book, these

families often have to navigate through life without any guarantees, relying solely on their conviction and courage to achieve what they want.

The novel portrays a period of social change in the 1960s. It was a time of sexual revolution, civil rights movements, and feminism. Despite the broader societal shifts, the community in which Jeanette resides maintains its traditions and conservative values. "I seemed to have run in a great circle, and met myself again on the starting line" (Winterson, 1985: 129). This quote is a reflection of the social changes in the 1960s. It was a time of significant change and upheaval, with many people questioning traditional norms and values, and embarking on a journey of self-discovery, much like the character in the book.

3.2 Extrinsic Aspect

3.2.1 Gender Transgression

Jeanette demonstrates a rebellious attitude towards the gender roles expected of her within her religious community. She does not fully conform to the conventional stereotypes of women that are deemed acceptable within her community. Instead, Jeanette exhibits an interest in and fascination with activities that are considered "masculine" or outside the established norms.

One example is Jeanette's interest in reading non-fiction books and exploring knowledge beyond the established norms within her community. In an environment that emphasizes traditional female roles focused on household chores and domestic responsibilities, Jeanette's interest is in knowledge and non-fiction things such as science, history, and abstract concepts. By refusing to fully conform to the prescribed gender roles, Jeanette shows resistance against the limitations imposed by her society. She explores different interests and passions, challenges gender stereotypes, and seeks the freedom to develop herself in accordance with her true identity.

Through this rebellion, Jeanette demonstrates bravery and determination in pursuing her authentic self beyond the confines of gender expectations imposed by her community. “But not all dark places need light, I have to remember that” (Winterson, 1985: 129). This quote can be seen as a metaphor for Jeanette's journey of self-discovery and her defiance of societal norms. The "dark places" could represent aspects of her identity that do not conform to traditional gender roles. By stating that not all dark places need light, she acknowledges that it is okay to be different and that not everything needs to be understood or accepted by society's standards. This reflects her resistance against the limitations imposed by her society and her determination to live authentically. Throughout the story, Jeanette begins to realize that her sexual orientation is different. She experiences an attraction to women, which goes against the prevailing heterosexual norms in her community. This awakening becomes a crucial turning point in Jeanette's journey of self-acceptance and self-understanding. As Jeanette becomes aware of her attraction to women, she confronts a conflict between her emerging sexual identity and the societal expectations of heterosexuality within her community. The norms and values upheld in her religious community prioritize heterosexual relationships, making Jeanette's same-sex attraction a challenge to the established order.

This realization of her sexual identity becomes a significant moment for Jeanette as she grapples with understanding herself and accepting who she truly is. It forces her to question the beliefs and norms she has internalized and navigate the tension between her own feelings and the expectations placed upon her. Jeanette's journey toward self-acceptance involves reconciling her sexual orientation with her personal identity and determining how to live authentically in a community that may not readily accept or understand her.

Ultimately, this process of self-awareness and acceptance allows Jeanette to embrace her true identity and embark on a path of self-discovery and empowerment. It represents a significant step in her journey toward living a life that aligns with her authentic self, rather than

conforming to societal expectations. "... Melanie, why do you have such a funny name? " said Jeanette. She blushed, "When I was born, I looked like a melon," Melanie answered in a shy tone...." (Winterson, 1985: 100). This quote includes a dialogue with Katy that shows Jeanette embarking on a journey of self-discovery and identity exploration beyond the confines of gender and sexuality norms established within her community. She begins to venture into a world outside of the rigid religious norms, seeking to understand and embrace her true self. Jeanette's search for identity takes her beyond the prescribed roles and expectations placed upon her based on gender and sexuality. She challenges the strict boundaries and limitations set by her community and explores different aspects of herself that may not align with the traditional norms. In her quest for self-discovery, Jeanette delves into realms of personal exploration that extend beyond the boundaries defined by religious doctrines. She seeks to understand her own desires, interests, and passions, and in doing so, she starts to comprehend her authentic identity that exists outside of the societal norms imposed upon her. This journey of self-exploration and identity realization is a profound and transformative experience for Jeanette. It allows her to break free from the limitations imposed by her community and opens up a world of self-acceptance and self-understanding. By stepping outside of the prescribed norms, Jeanette is able to embrace her true essence and live a life that aligns with her genuine self, rather than conforming to the expectations of her community.

3.2.2 Triggers of transgression

Jeanette, as the main character in this novel, undergoes a slow journey of realizing and understanding her romantic attraction to women. Initially, she may feel confused or not fully comprehend her own feelings. However, over time, she begins to experience a deep sense of attraction and love towards the same gender. In the conservative and religious society in which Jeanette grows up, homosexuality is considered a violation of existing

gender norms. These norms emphasize that accepted romantic and sexual relationships are between men and women. As a result, Jeanette faces complex internal conflicts. On one hand, she feels trapped and constrained by the expectations of her surrounding community, which require her to adhere to gender norms. On the other hand, she feels the power of her own feelings and identity that draw her towards women. This conflict forces Jeanette to navigate her conflicting feelings of love in the face of existing norms and determine how she will confront them. She has to decide whether she will choose to suppress and hide her feelings and identity or take the risk and choose honesty with herself and those around her. This is a complex struggle as it affects Jeanette's core identity and how she sees herself in relation to the society and religion that influence her life. In this journey, Jeanette also encounters challenges from the perspective of her religious beliefs. Conservative religions tend to view homosexuality as a sin or a violation of religious rules. This adds another layer of conflict and questions to Jeanette's struggle, as she feels bound by the religious beliefs taught to her since childhood. She has to seek a deeper understanding of how religion and sexuality can coexist or reconcile religious views with the rejection of norms that limit her freedom.

"But where was God now, with heaven full of astronauts, and the Lord overthrown? I miss God. I miss the company of someone utterly loyal. I still don't think of God as my betrayer. The servants of God, yes, but servants by their very nature betray. I miss God who was my friend. I don't even know if God exists, but I do know that if God is your emotional role model, very few human relationships will match up to it. I have an idea that one day it might be possible, I thought once it had become possible, and that glimpse has set me wandering, trying to find the balance between earth and sky. If the servants hadn't rushed in and parted us, I might have been disappointed, might have snatched off the white smite to find a bowl of soup" (Winterson, 1985: 127).

The opening lines of the quote are grappling with the conflict between science and religion. The mention of astronauts could be seen as a metaphor for how advancements in science and technology have challenged traditional religious beliefs. There is a sense of longing expressed, which could be interpreted as missing the comfort and certainty that faith once provided. The mention of loyalty could refer to the unconditional love and acceptance

traditionally associated with a divine entity. This could stem from religious teachings that conflict with personal identity, such as the church's stance on homosexuality. The doubts about the existence of a divine entity are shared, but there is also an acknowledgement of the profound impact that such a relationship has on emotional expectations from human relationships. This could reflect the struggle with expectations and reality in personal relationships. The struggle to reconcile personal desires with spiritual beliefs is represented as a journey to find balance. This could indicate the ongoing process of trying to align personal truth with faith.

The symbolic reference to a luxurious fabric and a bowl of soup could represent the fear of disillusionment. The luxurious fabric represents the lofty ideals of religion, while the bowl of soup signifies a potentially disappointing reality beneath these ideals. This could be seen as a commentary on the fear of facing the potential disillusionment that comes with questioning faith.

Jeanette deeply questions the gender roles that have been established by the patriarchal society around her. She observes and critically analyzes the expectations placed on women to conform to specific roles and social norms. She feels confined and limited by these expectations, which require women to be passive, obedient, and dependent on men. Jeanette sees that these roles restrict the potential and freedom of women to fully express themselves. Jeanette begins to question the reasons behind these gender roles. She reflects on why women are expected to adhere to these roles and why they are not given equal opportunities and freedoms as men. She realizes that these gender roles limit freedom and hinder the personal development of women. Jeanette becomes increasingly uncomfortable with the constraints imposed by these gender roles and starts to reject them. For Jeanette, these gender roles are social constructs that suppress the uniqueness and potential of women. She sees that these norms restrict the autonomy of women and limit their ability to fully

express themselves. This awareness becomes a catalyst for her to free herself from these limitations and explore her own identity beyond the established gender boundaries. Jeanette embarks on a journey of self-discovery, seeking to define herself on her own terms rather than conforming to societal expectations. She wants to determine her own path and live her life authentically, without being bound by norms that hinder her freedom. The exploration of her identity and the rejection of gender roles become central themes in her personal growth and development throughout the novel. Through Jeanette's questioning of gender roles, the author aims to highlight the complexity and injustice inherent in the gender norms established by patriarchal society. Jeanette realizes that the struggle to free oneself from these limitations involves deep reflection on identity, freedom, and the right of every individual to determine their own path in life.

Jeanette immerses herself in an LGBTQ+ community that is known for its openness, acceptance, and celebration of diversity. She actively participates in various community events, such as pride parades, support group meetings, workshops, and social gatherings. Through these engagements, Jeanette forms connections with individuals who have had similar experiences and faced similar challenges related to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Within the community, Jeanette finds a supportive network of friends and acquaintances who understand and empathize with her journey. She engages in conversations and shares personal stories, discovering that her feelings, struggles, and aspirations are shared by others. "I want someone who is fierce and will love me until death and knows that love is as strong as death, and be on my side forever and ever. I want someone who will destroy and be destroyed by me" (Winterson, 1985: 127).

This realization brings her a sense of relief, validation, and empowerment, as she no longer feels isolated or misunderstood. Through her interactions with diverse individuals in the LGBTQ+ community, Jeanette gains a deeper understanding of the spectrum of sexual

orientations and gender identities. She learns about different labels, terms, and identities that exist beyond the traditional binary concepts of male and female. This exposure helps her explore her own identity, question societal expectations, and embrace her authentic self. Within the community, Jeanette also encounters mentors and role models who have navigated similar journeys of self-discovery. They provide guidance, support, and advice on topics such as self-acceptance, coming out, building healthy relationships, and dealing with discrimination. These mentorships and friendships offer Jeanette a sense of guidance and reassurance as she navigates the complexities of her own journey. However, Jeanette's involvement with the LGBT community also exposes her to the challenges and prejudices that exist in society. Outside the community's safe and accepting bubble, she may face discrimination, homophobia, and a phobia from individuals who hold conservative beliefs or harbour biases against the community. This can manifest in forms of verbal abuse, social exclusion, or even physical harm. Moreover, Jeanette's family dynamics may be strained as they grapple with accepting her sexual orientation or gender identity. Some family members may struggle to understand or come to terms with her truth, leading to conflicts, misunderstandings, and emotional distress. Jeanette may experience feelings of rejection, disappointment, or guilt as she tries to reconcile her authentic self with her family's expectations. Despite these challenges, Jeanette remains resilient and determined to live her life authentically. She draws strength from the unwavering support and understanding she receives within the LGBT community. She actively engages in advocacy work, aiming to raise awareness, fight for equal rights, and promote acceptance and inclusion for all sexual orientations and gender identities.

Through her involvement with the community, Jeanette becomes an advocate for change and a beacon of hope for others who may be struggling with their own identities. She learns the importance of self-acceptance, resilience, and finding a supportive community that

embraces diversity. Ultimately, Jeanette's journey leads her to a place of empowerment, where she can fully embrace her true self and inspire others to do the same. "I want someone who is fierce and will love me until death and know that love is as strong as death, and be on my side forever and ever" (Winterson, 1985: 127). This quote reflects the desire for a deep and passionate connection, where love is intense and all-consuming. It speaks to the longing for a partner who will stand by one's side through thick and thin, embracing the complexities and challenges that come with a profound love.

3.2.3 Forgiveness

According to the author, forgiveness in this novel is depicted through the profound conflict between Jeanette and her mother. Her mother is a devout religious follower with strong convictions. She believes that Jeanette's sexual orientation as a lesbian is wrong and tries to change or suppress it. This conflict creates prolonged emotional tension between Jeanette and her mother. Her mother uses her religious approach and beliefs to try to change Jeanette's sexual orientation. She imposes strict religious rules and imposes her views on Jeanette, hoping that Jeanette will change her orientation and live according to the norms she believes in. However, amidst this conflict, there are moments of expressing differences of opinion and disagreement between Jeanette and her mother. In their conversations, they confront each other with conflicting views on Jeanette's sexual orientation. They debate and defend their respective perspectives, often with strong emotions. "I don't know how to answer. I know what I think, but words in the head are like voices underwater. They are distorted" (Winterson, 1985: 121).

This conflict reflects fundamental differences in their beliefs and values. Nevertheless, alongside these moments of conflict, there are also moments where Jeanette and her mother attempt to understand and forgive each other. In various parts of the novel, there are moments that show emotional support between them. Despite her unwavering

religious beliefs, her mother shows concern and affection for Jeanette in difficult situations. She tries to protect Jeanette from negative influences that may come from their community and provides emotional support to help Jeanette face the difficulties she experiences. It is important to remember that the process of forgiveness and the journey towards understanding do not happen instantly or easily. The deep-seated conflict and differences of opinion between Jeanette and her mother persist throughout the story. However, the moments where they attempt to understand and support each other demonstrate genuine efforts to overcome the conflict and find common ground amidst their differences.

3.2.4 Stages of forgiveness

Forgiveness is the ability to let go of anger, blame, or resentment towards someone who has wronged us. There are widely thought to be numerous phases of forgiveness. However, they vary depending on the person and the circumstance.

3.2.4.1 Acknowledgement

Initially, Jeanette experiences internal conflict, leading her to feel uncertain and hesitant about her deep feelings towards Melanie. But as time goes on, Jeanette bravely faces and accepts her deep feelings for Melanie. She no longer hides or denies her attraction to and love for her friend. Jeanette gets more honest in her emotional expression and achieves a greater degree of self-acceptance by recognising and accepting these sentiments. This transformation holds the potential to strengthen their relationship and pave the way for a deeper connection beyond mere friendship. "I don't know how to answer. I know what I think, but words in the head are like voices underwater. They are distorted" (Winterson, 1985: 121). Jeanette demonstrates her ability to be open to diverse viewpoints and perspectives. She does not adhere to a singular truth, but acknowledges the existence of multiple possibilities and realities. This is reflected in her experiences within her dreams,

where she embraces various possibilities as part of her life journey. Jeanette's willingness to embrace different perspectives and consider alternative paths highlights her intellectual flexibility and openness to new ideas. Her recognition of the multifaceted nature of truth and reality showcases her capacity for critical thinking and intellectual growth. Jeanette's ability to be open-minded and receptive to different viewpoints is a testament to her intellectual maturity and willingness to engage with diverse perspectives. By recognizing that there is not just one absolute truth, she demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the complexity of the world. Instead of rigidly adhering to a singular perspective, she embraces the idea that there are multiple possibilities and realities that coexist. Her experiences within her dreams serve as a metaphor for this acceptance of diverse possibilities. Dreams often present us with scenarios that may seem fantastical or outside the realm of our waking reality. Jeanette's willingness to embrace these various possibilities within her dreams reflects her openness to exploring different paths and potential outcomes in her life. "I have a theory that every time you make an important choice, the part of you left behind continues the other life you could have had" (Winterson, 1985: 121).

Another evidence of this stage of acknowledgement is Jeanette's growth in recognizing and accepting her different identity, including her sexual orientation. She makes the decision to leave the church and community that reject her and choose to live authentically according to her true identity. This represents a strong form of self-acknowledgement and autonomy in her decision-making process. Jeanette's journey of self-acceptance is an important aspect of personal and social development. By acknowledging and embracing her true identity, she demonstrates resilience and the ability to challenge societal norms and expectations. This act of self-affirmation showcases her commitment to living a life that aligns with her genuine self, even in the face of adversity and rejection.

3.2.4.2 Anger and hurt

One compelling evidence of Jeanette's stage of acknowledgement is her journey towards recognizing and embracing her unique identity, including her sexual orientation. In a bold move, she makes the decision to distance herself from the church and community that reject her, opting instead to live in accordance with her authentic self. This act signifies a powerful form of self-acknowledgement and personal agency, as Jeanette demonstrates the strength to confront societal norms and make choices that align with her true identity. "It is not possible to control the outside of yourself until you have mastered your breathing space. It is not possible to change anything until you understand the substance you wish to change" (Winterson, 1985: 135). Jeanette's path towards self-acceptance represents a significant aspect of individual and societal development. By acknowledging and embracing her true identity, she exhibits resilience and a willingness to challenge prevailing societal expectations. Her act of self-affirmation highlights her commitment to living a life that is congruent with her genuine self, even in the face of adversity and rejection. "Of course, people will laugh at you, but people laugh at a great many things so there is no need to take it personally" (Winterson, 1985: 105). The quote from the priest above said that Jeanette's need to separate herself from the church and community that has rejected her showcases, her agency and autonomy in making choices that honor her true self. In exercising her self-determination, she empowers herself to select paths that are aligned with her identity. This act of self-assertion is a crucial element of personal empowerment, serving as an inspiration for others who may be navigating similar challenges in their own journeys of self-discovery and acceptance. Jeanette's story serves as a valuable example of the significance of self-acknowledgement and autonomy within personal and social contexts, illustrating the transformative effects of embracing one's authentic self.

3.2.4.3 Empathy and Understanding

One compelling evidence of Jeanette's stage of acknowledgement is her journey towards recognizing and embracing her unique identity, including her sexual orientation. Jeanette made the courageous decision to distance herself from the church and community that has rejected her, demonstrating her self-acknowledgement and personal agency. By consciously choosing to live in accordance with her authentic self, she challenges societal norms and expectations. This act signifies a powerful form of self-acknowledgement, as Jeanette embraces her true identity rather than conforming to external pressures. "I want someone who is fierce and will love me until death and knows that love is as strong as death, and be on my side forever and ever. I want someone who will destroy and be destroyed by me" (Winterson: 1985: 127). Jeanette's path towards self-acceptance represents a significant aspect of individual and societal development. Her willingness to acknowledge and embrace her true identity showcases her resilience and authenticity. By accepting and affirming her identity, Jeanette demonstrates the strength to confront societal expectations that may contradict her personal truth. This journey of self-acceptance shows the importance of self-awareness and self-acceptance in personal growth and well-being. It highlights the transformative power of individuals embracing their true selves and living in alignment with their values and beliefs. "I want someone who is fierce and will love me until death and knows that love is as strong as death, and be on my side forever and ever. I want someone who will destroy and be destroyed by me" (Winterson, 1985: 121). Furthermore, Jeanette's decision to separate herself from the church and community that has rejected her showcases her agency and autonomy in making choices that honor her true self.

This act of self-determination empowers Jeanette to select paths that are congruent with her identity and values. By asserting her autonomy, Jeanette takes control of her own narrative and shapes her life according to her authentic self. This act of self-assertion is a

crucial element of personal empowerment, serving as an inspiration for others who may be navigating similar challenges in their own journeys of self-discovery and acceptance.

Jeanette's story serves as a valuable example of the significance of self-acknowledgement and autonomy within personal and social contexts. It illustrates the transformative effects of embracing one's authentic self and the potential for personal growth and fulfillment that comes with it. By recognizing and accepting her different identity, Jeanette challenges societal norms and encourages others to do the same. Jeanette's journey showcases the importance of self-affirmation and the power of living in alignment with one's true self, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and accepting society.

3.2.4.4 Decision to forgive

Jeanette's stage of acknowledgement is exemplified by her courageous journey of recognizing and embracing her unique identity, including her sexual orientation. By embracing her true identity and choosing to live authentically, Jeanette challenges societal norms and expectations, making a powerful statement of self-acceptance. “ “You’ll get over it...” It’s the clichés that cause the trouble. To lose someone you love is to alter your life forever. You don’t get over it because ‘it’ is the person you loved. The pain stops, there are new people, but the gap never closes. How could it?” (Winterson, 1985: 110).

The given quotes show that Jeanette’s mother believes that she will forget about someone who is not supposed to be loved. This journey of self-acceptance carries significant implications for both individual and societal development. Jeanette's willingness to acknowledge and embrace her true identity showcases her resilience and authenticity. By affirming her identity, she demonstrates the courage to confront societal expectations that may contradict her personal truth. Jeanette speaks to her mom “I miss God. I miss the company of someone utterly loyal. I still don't think of God as my betrayer. The servants of

God, yes, but servants by their very nature betray. I miss God who was my friend. I don't even know if God exists, but I do know that if God is your emotional role model, very few human relationships will match up to it" (Winterson, 1985: 127).

This quote speaks to the longing for a sense of loyalty and the struggle to find someone who can match the ideal of God's unwavering support. It acknowledges the complexities of human relationships and the difficulty of finding forgiveness and understanding in others. It reflects the decision to forgive by recognizing the limitations of human relationships and the need to seek solace and forgiveness within oneself.

Moreover, Jeanette's decision to separate herself from the church and community that has rejected her reflects her agency and autonomy in making choices that align with her true self. By exercising her self-determination, she empowers herself to navigate a path that honors her identity and values. This act of self-assertion is a crucial element of personal empowerment, serving as an inspiration for others who may be facing similar challenges in their own journeys of self-discovery and acceptance. Jeanette's story serves as a powerful reminder of the significance of self-acknowledgement and autonomy within personal and social contexts, illuminating the transformative effects of embracing one's authentic self.

Jeanette's journey of acknowledgement and self-acceptance is a testament to the power of embracing one true identity and living authentically. Her decision to distance herself from societal pressures and embrace her unique self reflects her resilience, authenticity, and personal agency. Jeanette's story serves as an inspiration and a call to others to embrace their true selves, contributing to a more inclusive and accepting society.

3.2.4.5 Letting Go

One important aspect of Jeanette's journey is her ability to let go of the expectations and opinions of others. Despite feeling pressured to meet the expectations of her family,

society, or religion, Jeanette learns to disregard these expectations and choose to live according to her own truth and desires. She realizes that her happiness and fulfillment should not depend on the approval or expectations of others, but rather should be based on her own truth and personal values. Jeanette told her mom “I seem to have run in a great circle, and met myself again on the starting line” (Winterson, 1985: 129)

During her character's journey, Jeanette also goes through the process of releasing a painful past. There may have been traumatic experiences or suffering in her past, and she learns to let go of the emotional burdens and pain associated with those experiences. By releasing the pain of the past, Jeanette is able to focus on the future and build a more satisfying life. She recognizes that carrying the weight of the past will only hinder her growth and happiness. “It is not possible to control the outside of yourself until you have mastered your breathing space. It is not possible to change anything until you understand the substance you wish to change” (Winterson, 1985: 105).

Additionally, Jeanette chooses to let go of unhealthy relationships in her life. She may find herself trapped in relationships that do not support her growth and happiness, whether within her family or romantic partnerships. However, with courage and determination, she chooses to release those unhealthy relationships. By letting go of the non-constructive relationships, Jeanette opens herself up to seek and build healthier, more positive relationships that support her personal growth.

Through Jeanette's journey, the importance of the ability to release the expectations and opinions of others, let go of a painful past, and release unhealthy relationships. This process allows her to live in her own truth and personal satisfaction. Jeanette's journey serves as a reminder to all of us that personal happiness and growth should not depend on others or a painful past, but rather should be based on truth, satisfaction, and healthy relationships with oneself and others.

