

APPENDICES

I. Synopses and Biographies

I.1 Synopsis of A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

The story begins in 1912 in Brooklyn, where Francie and her brother Neeley start with the trip to the junkie. She and her brother, like other Brooklyn kids, collect rags, paper, metal, rubber and other junk. Her father is nineteen and her mother is seventeen when they get married. Francie's mother, Katie Roomely, is a janitress at that time and keep three tenement houses clean. Her father, Johnny Nolan, is an Irish singer, working at one-night places here and there. Francie is considered a white trash because her father is Irish and her mother is German. She is a lonely child and she longs for the companionship of other children at school. The society discriminates her; nevertheless, she expects great things from school although she is usually treated badly by other children and the teacher. Her family is very poor. The Nolans practically live on stale bread, sometimes on Saturday,

they have fried meat. Francie always feels hungry because there is no food.

Francie is an educated girl. She likes reading. She reads everything she can find : trash, classics, time tables and grocer's price lists. After all, Francie enjoys school because she likes studying in spite of the fact that society treats her so badly. Francie likes writing, the first time the school publishes a magazine, Francie's composition called "Winter Time" is in it. After her father dies because of drunkenness, Francie becomes a more independent person. She struggles during her life to achieve her dream as a successful person. After having graduated from school, she continues her study to university. Finally, Francie becomes a writer in the magazine.

I.2 Bioraphy of Betty Smith

Betty Smith was born Elisabeth Welmer on December 15, 1896, the same date as, although five years earlier than, her fictional heroine Francie Nolan. The daughter of German immigrants, she grew up poor in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, the very world she recreates with such meticulous detail in *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*.

After marrying fellow Brooklynite George H.E Smith, she moved with him to Ann Harbor, Michigan, where her husband was a law student at the University of Michigan. The young bride soon had two daughters, Nancy and Mary, and was forced to wait until the girls had entered grade school before endeavoring to complete her own formal education. Although she had not finished high school, the largely autodidactic Smith was permitted to take classes at the university, and she concentrated on her studies there in journalism, drama, writing and literature. She capped her education by winning the Avery Hopkins Award for work in drama, and did a three-year course in playwriting at the Yale drama school.

After writing features for a Detroit newspaper, reading plays for the Federal Theatre Project, and acting in summer stock, Smith landed in Chapel Hill, North Carolina under the auspices of the W.A.S.P. She and her first husband divorced in 1938. In 1943, she married Joe Jones, a writer, a journalist and associate editor of the *Chapel Hill Weekly*, while he was serving as a private in the wartime army. That same year, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, her first novel, was published. The prestige of writing a best-selling, critically lauded book brought assignments from the *New York Times Magazine*, for which she wrote

both light-hearted and serious commentaries. In a December 1943 piece called “Why Brooklyn is that Way,” Smith donned the mantle of her childhood borough’s unofficial champion.

Although most remembered for the phenomenal success of that first book, Smith wrote other novels, including Tomorrow Will Be Better (1947), Maggie-Now (1958), and Joy in the Morning (1963). She also had a long career as a dramatist, writing one-act and full-length plays for which she received both Rockefeller Fellowship and Dramatist Guild Fellowship. She died in 1972.

I.3 Synopsis of Bastard Out of Carolina

Bastard Out of Carolina is about a girl named Ruth Anne, also known as Bone. She lives in Greenville, South Carolina, the place where the poor people live. Her great-great-great granddaddy is a Cherokee, an Indian. The society at that time is really concerned about race. Thus she is considered as white trash because she is impure white and poor.. Her mother was sixteen when she gave birth to Bone. Bone has uncles; they keep dogs for hunting and drive old trucks with metal toolboxes bolted to reinforced wood sides. She has a sister named Reese after her mother marries a man named Lyle. Then Lyle dies because of an

accident. Her mother works as a waitress and she usually leaves Bone and Reese with Aunt Ruth or Aunt Alma.

In the spring, her mother marries Glen Waddel. After that they live together as a family. However, Bone does not like Daddy Glen. She does not trust any of his words. They live in no one house for more than eight months. They move and move again. Bone often gets hungry because of difficult economic conditions. She always moves from one school to another. Bone often suffers child abuse by Daddy Glen. Bone gets trauma and that is why she hates Daddy Glen very much. Bone grows up in anger and lack of affection from her mother and she needs a father's love. Instead of love, she only experiences sadness, disappointment, lack of affection and child abuse.

Basically, Bastard Out of Carolina convincingly portrays a poor white, "trashy" southern family living in the 1950s. The Boatwright clan is filled with women who pop out one baby after another, men who spend their lives drunk and unfaithful and in and out of jail, and under-educated children who will grow up to replicate their parents. Aunt Alma keeps a family. What predominates, however, is the newspaper headlines and photographs detailing the legal and social troubles that surround the Boatwrights.

In the end her mother leaves Bone with her aunt. The condition does not support Bone to achieve her success. Moreover, she lacks self-reliance. Finally, she fails to achieve her dream.

I.4 Biography of Dorothy Allison

Dorothy Allison (b.1949) was born in Greenville, South Carolina, the first child of a fifteen-year-old unwed mother who dropped out of the seventh grade to work as a waitress. Allison was raised in extreme poverty by her mother's parents; she remembers "hiding out under the porch" so she could listen to her grandmother and aunt tell randy stories. Her childhood was scarred from the time she was five to eleven years old, when she was often beaten and raped by her abusive stepfather. Allison writes of her lasting sense of shame and guilt.

After attending Florida Presbyterian College on a National Merit scholarship, Allison joined a feminist collective when the radical women's movement surfaced in the early 1970s. "Feminism saved my life. It was a substitute religion that made sense." She did not try to see her family until 1981, when she chose to return to her roots.

She understands that her first book of poetry, The Women Who Hate Me, (1983) "Wouldn't have happened if I hadn't started talking to my mother and my

sisters again." Her second book, Trash (1988), a collection of short stories originally published by small lesbian presses and alternative magazines, won two Lambda Literary Awards. Four years later Allison received mainstream recognition with her autobiographical novel Bastard Out of Carolina (1992), a finalist for the 1992 National Book Award. Allison's fifth book, Cave Dweller, was published in 1998.