

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the social and inner conflicts of the protagonist, Angela Murray, in Jessie Redmon Fauset's *Plum Bun: A Novel Without A Moral*, I will draw some conclusions of what has been discussed.

The novel tells the story of a mulatto named Angela Murray. Being a light-skinned black brings about problems in her relationship with the white people who at first think of her as white. Social conflicts are inevitable to happen in her hometown, Philadelphia.

Angela encounters three social conflicts in Philadelphia. The first social conflict between Angela and her highschool bestfriend, Mary Hastings. On learning the truth about Angela's background from another classmate, Mary is surprised and starts questioning why Angela does not tell her background to Mary. The relationship becomes not as good as before. Angela thinks that by telling or not telling her background should not affect their friendship.

Angela also has a conflict with Mr. Shields, her instructor in academy. The source of the conflict is the same as the first one. On knowing that Angela is

coloured, Mr. Shields also questions the reason why Angela does not tell her background to him. Angela thinks her background will not affect her good relationship with Mr. Shields, which is proved to be wrong. Angela feels uncomfortable because Mr. Shields' attitude towards her changed. The first and the second social conflicts cause Angela to think that being a black descendant has caused her to live an unhappy life. Thus, she decides to go to New York to do the act of passing.

The third social conflict between Angela and Virginia, her sister, is about the disagreement about the matter of colour that later confirms Angela's decision to go to New York. Having light skin, Angela wants to do the act of passing so that she will be considered white. However, Virginia thinks that Angela should accept her background as black. The conflict is solved as Virginia finally understands Angela's opinion and lets her go to New York. All the conflicts in Philadelphia show that Angela is unaccepted as black which later makes her go to New York in order to hide her identity. Angela decides to do the act of passing with a hope that she might be accepted as white in order to gain happiness.

Having done the act of passing, which means she is considered white, Angela still has to face problems. In New York, Angela encounters two social conflicts and three inner conflicts. Angela unintentionally neglects Virginia to avoid Roger finding the truth about her background, which causes Virginia to feel hurt because she thinks Angela does not want to acknowledge her anymore. Angela hopes that Virginia can understand her reason for doing so. The conflict is unsolved because Angela and Virginia decide to lead their own life.

Angela also has an inner conflict that relates to her relationship with Roger Fielding. After a 10-month relationship with Roger, Angela starts questioning it as she finds out that Roger does not pay her as much attention as before. Although she needs the relationship to later secure her financial matter, she thinks Roger's treatment towards her is intolerable. The conflict is solved unexpectedly as Roger breaks up their relationship because for him his relationship with Angela is not a special one. The conflict with Roger shows that even though Angela succeeds in passing for white, she still does not get her happiness.

The next social conflict happens between Angela and Anthony Cross, Angela's classmate who loves her. Her passing has caused Anthony to think that she is white. At the same time, Angela also thinks that Anthony is white so it is suitable for her to be together with Anthony. Anthony, however, insists that it is impossible for them to be together because he is coloured and Angela might not want to accept him; moreover, he does not want to see Angela anymore. The conflict is solved when both explains the truth about their background a a mulatto that they do not have a problem related to skin colour anymore.

The last inner conflict happens when Angela encounters four reporters that want to humiliate Angela's black friend, Rachel Powell. She wants to help her friend by revealing her own background but in doing so she will not get her prize. The conflict is solved as Angela decides to reveal her background to help Miss Powell. The resolution of this conflict shows that Angela has finally accepted herself being black. She also gains happiness from Anthony, her lover, Virginia, her own sister, and also some of her friends who still want to accept Angela in spite of her being black.

All the conflicts that Angela has encountered in New York have made her realize that pretending to be white by doing the act of passing does not guarantee her happiness. She comes to the realization that she should accept herself for what she is. The conflicts are used by the author of *Plum Bun: A Novel Without A Moral*, Jessie Redmon Fauset to convey the idea that the act of passing done by black women will not change the fact that they are black nor give them a guarantee of happiness. Thus, the most important thing for black women to gain happiness in life is by appreciating their being what they are.