Slave To Pain An Essay On Beloved Essay, Research Paper

Slave to Pain

Sethe, now free from slavery has become a slave again, but this time instead of being a slave to a white master she is a, slave to her own pain. The sources of her pain are numerous, including the stealing of her milk, the murdering of her child, Beloved, attempting to kill the rest of her children, and two of her children leaving her because of it. When Sethe’s murdered child, Beloved, returns, the pain she feels from these sources intensifies and begins to adversely effect her life. Beloved’s intentions put simply seem to be to control, Sethe to make her a slave, but Sethe, in the end, is able to break free of the slavery and pain by letting the pain go.

Beloved is the embodiment of Sethe’s pain. Beloved is the symbol, if not the child, whom she murdered, an event, which is closely tied to her worst pain. The action of killing Beloved occurred while she was trying to kill all her, children and it is the reason that two of her children run from her because they fear for their lives.

Beloved wishes to consume Sethe, she wants to own Sethe, a relation not unlike that of a master and slave. “I am Beloved and she is mine,” (Morrison 211) is one of the more eerie statements in the book. How Beloved traps Sethe is simple, for Sethe “the future was a matter of keeping the past at bay” (Morrison 42) and when her past, Beloved, catches up with her the future is gone and she is enslaved. What’s more, Beloved does not intend to allow her slave to go free, “I will not lose her again.” (Morrison 214)

When Beloved returns to the leaves it could be argued that she was either chased away by Sethe’s rejections and liberation from her slavery, or that the relationship between Beloved and Sethe has changed. The possible change in the relationship could be that Beloved is no longer the embodiment of Sethe’s pain, but just another part of her past that she can finally leave behind, making Beloved content to exist only in the deep recessed of Sethe’s conciseness. Either way, Sethe has broken the shackles and can now live in the present and look forward to the future with the past behind her.

Sethe’s slavery to her pain had her doomed to live forever in the past but with the letting go of her pain; she let herself be free. The stealing of her milk, murder of her child, and running away of two of her children are now allowed to remain in the past where they belong. Sethe no longer needs to keep the past at bay in order to continue in the future.