CHAPTER - IV

Essential humanity in the novels written between 1955 and 1965

Eudora Welty looked at life and its multifaceted functions from various angles and describes in her novels its possible pitfalls for making people conscious of its dangers so that they may be able to ward it off for turning their life towards better future. Each and every novel of this period is replete with feelings of essential humanity – the very backbone of the living beings. Those characters who express the feelings of love, affection and sympathy get unqualified admiration from the novelist and on the other hand, those characters who are governed by the power of senses and body are described to caution others not to tread on these dangerous paths for getting love and confidence within the family and goodwill among the community. The story ‘No Place for You, My Love’ puts forth the meaninglessness of sensual life where a married man makes use of the body of the woman for a transitory pleasure. The relationship based on inner love has more strength to withstand the tribulations of life riven with angst. The story ‘The Burning’ shows the extermination of slavery as a system. The freedom of Delilah, a Negro servant girl from two
white ladies, Miss Theo and Myra comes with burning of their houses by Gen. Sherman and their subsequent suicide. Here this aspect has been symbolically presented through her crossing the river which means her coming out of her thralldom of white domination. ‘The Bride of Innisfallen’ centres round the concept of celebration of life which is guiding spirit of human life. The story ‘Ladies in Spring’ establishes a communion between mankind and natural objects. Both of them have innate desire to help each other. Hattie, who works in Post office, has these feelings when she takes upon herself the responsibility of rain making during a dry spell in Royals. The arrival of rains symbolizes all round happiness and prosperity for the people. Another story ‘Circe’ describes natural feeling in supernatural beings and grotesque in human beings and thus proves that the basic strata of both remain the same- the fountain of all activities. The story of ‘Going to Naples’ describes the behavior of young boys and girls on their sea journey from New York to Naples via Palermo. Their main motto was to get instant pleasure out of each other’s company without life long encumbrances. Keeping this in background, Welty also hints at the spirited love of the youths being affected by the Impetuosity of emotions. The story ‘Where is the Voice
coming from’ clearly points out the hostility of the whites against the provisions for making equal opportunities for the blacks. To give stress on the inherent ideas, the novelist has made us of autobiographical method as well as drew upon the real incident happened there some time back. The killing of civil rights leader Roland shows that radicals never want that there might be rapprochement between the white and the black. ‘The Demonstration’ brings to the viewpoint of the readers, the inner and outer squabbles taking place during those days. There was an open rivalry between the white and the black and they try to exterminate the other by getting an opportunity to do so. Different personages described in the story get killed by the other due to racial animosity.

In the children’s book ‘The Shoe Bird’ she has pointed out the role of Arturo, the parrot who hosts a party at a shoe store. It is replete with humour and wit which is infused with the deep understanding of human nature. Here Welty has shown the significance of words as forces. Hargrove says, “The most significant theme---is the importance of knowledge or learning the meanings of words, expressions and mottos”33. Eudora Welty’s

33 Hargrove, Nancy D., Humour in Eudora Welty’s The Shoe Bird. Children’s literature in Education 23.2, 1992, pp. 75-82
'The Shoe Bird' is about teaching young readers to think about words. A very deep meaning can be found in the words of Arturo, “The Surprise of my life was when I found myself learning, instead of repeating.”34

In all the stories of this period, the novelist tries to broaden the mental horizon of the readers by imparting them the lesson of kind heartedness and generosity with the touch of humour and wit. They should rise above sectarian and parochial considerations for bringing about a complete transformation to establish an egalitarian society where every body might live with pride and peace of mind.

**The Bride of the Innisfallen and Other Stories**

**No Place for You, My Love**

The story ‘No place for you, my love’ is the narration of relationship of two strangers who happen to meet each other at a party in New Orleans. The woman in early forties and a married man who is older to her by few years were attending a party. After the party was over in the late evening, the man offered to the woman a journey to the south of city. She agreed promptly and both started off on a drive on a road on the side of a river. They

---

34 Welty Eudora, *The Shoe Bird*, University Press of Mississippi Jackson, 1964, p. 88
continued and ultimately reached the end of road from where further it is possible to travel only by boat. They parked the car there and went to a pub called ‘Baba’s Place’. From inside it was like a barn. Shrimp was being boiled there, people were playing cards and there was newspaper reader. There he had cold beer and she had water. A dance called ‘Shrimp Dance sun PM’ was being performed there. Suddenly she made a move to slide down from her stool. He held her hand and got down from his stool and the next moment, both were dancing. In local patois a song was played. They danced like a perfect match. They danced like lovers with arms around each other. After they had danced their fill, they drove back to New Orleans. On the way back they stopped at two places and exchanged love feelings. They returned to New Orleans and he dropped her in her Hotel. She was received by a waiting figure who strolled there to meet her.

The theme of the story is the portrayal of meaninglessness of life. The woman and man who have been strangers and having married partners, at least the man, went on a pleasure trip. They came back and parted even without exchanging the experiences of their life. They used each other as objects for a pleasure trip and for forming dancing partners. The theme of the story is well
narrated by the author in the following words: “Surely even those immune from the world, for the time being need the touch of one another, or all is lost. Their arms encircling each other, the bodies circling the odorous, just nailed down floor, they were, at last, imperviousness in motion. They had found it and had almost missed it: they had to dance. They were what their separate hearts desired that day, for themselves and each other.”  

“Further the author makes the relationship more mysterious when she writes, like people in love, they had a superstition about themselves almost as soon as they came out on the floor, and dared not think the words ‘happy’ or ‘unhappy’ which might strike them one or the other, like lightning.”  

Here the author describes the necessity of human beings for a loving relationship with other human beings, necessity of touch in particular. It is about the universal aspects of human life.

However, the relationship was transient and, therefore, contained something to be hidden from others with whom these two persons have permanent relationship. It is something like the pleasure of doing what is socially forbidden.

35 Ibid., p. 478
36 Ibid., p. 478
The Burning

The ‘Burning’ is a tragedy in which houses and fields are ruined, burnt and devastated in Southern United States of America during Civil War. General Sherman was leading these marches of the army. In one such instance two white ladies, Miss. Theo and Miss. Myra are living in their big house with Negro domestic servants; Delilah, Ophelia and Kitty. A small child, Phinny, is also in the house. He is son of Myra sired by an officer who used to come with her brother, Benton, for hunting. He was the result of impetuousness of Myra. On the orders of General Sherman, soldiers came on horse back and burnt the house of Miss. Theo and Miss. Myra. Both the ladies along with their Negro servant, Delilah, march towards woods. Miss. Theo untied the hammock from the Peacon tree and untwisted the rope into two stands. She asked Delilah to climb the woods and tie those two stands of rope at a distance. Delilah is asked to hold Myra in her hands and Miss. Theo helps to tie the knot on the neck of Myra. Delilah is asked to get away and Myra dies by hanging. Similarly, Theo used Delilah for her hanging. In this way both the ladies commit suicide. Delilah comes back to the Rose Hill where the remains of burnt house are there. She collects some articles
such as shoes and jewellery etc and takes them into her possession. Among ashes she finds the burnt bones of Phinny and ties them into the folds of her skirt. She goes away and follows the wheal tracks. She comes to the river. There she moved through the river where water reaches up her neck. But she knew that water would not rise until Saturday as rains are not expected till them.

The main theme of the story is the shock of dispossession due to burning of houses of Miss. Theo and Miss. Myra and of others. The marches of General Sherman during the Civil War in United States of America which caused a lot of misery to people as lot of houses, schools and other buildings were burnt in the south. Because of burning of their house, Theo and Myra, felt insulted and dispossessed and thought that the life is not worth living. The distress is reflected in the words of Theo when she says, “Come back here, Delilah! Too late for that!” Another, she said to Myra, ‘The Lord will provide we’ve got Delilah, and as long as we’ve got her we’ll use her, my dearie.’ Thereafter Theo got the rope ready for the hanging of both for herself and for Myra.

37 Ibid., p. 490
Other theme of the story is that the Negroes were being treated like objects of use or as commodities by the whites in Southern America during the period. This is clear from the statement of Theo which she addresses to the soldiers who come there for burning their house. She said, “Is it shame that is stopping your inspection? I am afraid you found the ladies of this house a trifle out of your element. My sister’s the more delicate one, as you see. May I offer you this young kitchen Negro, as I have already understood”\textsuperscript{38}.

In the broader context, the burning of houses, other buildings and farms was basically on the order of General Sherman who was fighting a civil war against slavery. Destruction was essentially to facilitate the arrival of freedom for slaves like Delilah and Ophelia. This aspect is portrayed in the words: “The sisters showed no surprise to see soldiers and Negroes alike strike into and out of the doors of the house, the front now the same as the back, to carry off beds, tables, candle stick, wash stands, coder buckets, china pictures with their backs bend double”\textsuperscript{39}.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., p. 484
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., p. 486
This aspect of the tragedy is also depicted when Delilah comes back from the site where Myra and Theo commit suicide. She collects different things from the ashes of house and then goes away towards the river. Then she crosses the river in neck deep water with these articles on her head balanced by both the hands. This crossing of river by Delilah is symbolic of her liberation from slavery. Similarly, suicide by Myra and Theo is also symbolic of the death of slavery as a system.

**The Bride of the Innisfallen**

The story ‘The Bride of Innisfallen’ is about a journey first by train and then by boat from London to Cork via Fishguard. The main characters who travel are a fat middle aged lady in raincoat, an American girl, a man from Conniemera, a little boy, a pregnant young woman and a pair of lovers. On the way, a school girl also boards the train. She got down on the way and one tall Welshman got in and took the seat vacated by the school girl. The Welshman also got down after few stations. Other passengers reached fishguard from where they boarded the boat to cock in Ireland. The name of the boat they traveled was ‘Innisfallen’. When the passenger reached Cock, among them somebody announced that there is a bride on board. She was in
white spring hat and wore a white bunny muff on her hands. A delight gathered all around; singing began on board. The bride was all smiles on the dock. At Cock, the passengers went their different ways. The American girl finds on her suitcase a mark by custom officials and she leaves the place without taking her suitcase. She feels very lonely, as lonely as the little bride. She thinks that she should send a telegram to her husband in London. She feels loneliness and lack of joy in love. At last she enters the company of complete strangers who are assembled in a lovely room. She enters there without protection.

The main theme of the story is the celebration of life which is depicted through journey by train and then by boat. The middle aged fat lady enjoys eating in the train. She shares her food with others and others enjoy her company as well as food.

There is also an element of mystery which is obvious from the thinking of American girl when she is walking in Cock. She thinks: ‘Out of joy I hide for fear it is promiscuous, I may walk for ever at the fall of the evening by the river, and find this river street by the red rock, this first, last house, that is perhaps a boarding house now, standing full face to the hide, and looks up
to that window-that upper window from which the mystery will never go”. This is expression of moral loneliness.

**Ladies in Spring**

‘Ladies in spring’ is a short story about the belief of rain making during a dry spell in the spring season. It deals about a place called Royals. Dewey is school going boy. One morning he goes to the school in the school bus. Skimming around the school door he sees his father, Blackie, walking down the road with two fishing poles, and approaches him. His father first asks him to go back to the school and then declares that he already knew that his son was bound to come along with him. He further said that chances of catching fish are dim as there is very little water left in the river. They headed for the river.

On the way they saw a woman ahead of them and on being asked by Dewey, his father told that the woman was Miss. Hattie Purcell who calls herself a rainmaker. She entered down in a gully and father and son, skipped her and reached the river. There, they perched themselves on the old bridge of which one end is detached from the bank. They tried catching fish but were not successful till noon. Then they started having their lunch there by themselves.
At a distance in the wood a woman’s face came to their sight who then in a soft voice uttered ‘Blackie’. Blackie ignored the call. Again, she was seen after sometime and repeated ‘Blackie’. This time also Blackie did not respond. After a while she was seen in the open on the sand on the bank of river and out of woods. This time she was staring and did not utter even a single word. She stood in such a way as if she was inviting rain. Soon thereafter, rain started and Blackie and his son started back their journey. In the meanwhile Dewey is successful in catching one fish about six inches long which he held at one end of the pole. After they walked some distance a voice of woman was heard. It was that of Miss. Hattie. Miss. Hattie came in view holding a big umbrella and invited both of them under it. The umbrella was large enough for three. When they left behind woods and came in open land, Dewey saw the lady, who earlier had been seen near river, at a distance. Dewey call her under the umbrella. But the lady entered a pear orchard and disappeared.

Hattie, Blackie and Dewey reached Royals and there Hattie saw her niece, Opal Purcell, who worked at ‘seed and feed’. She joined them and journey continued towards the post office where Miss. Hattie worked. Dewey, now walked in front, out in the rain.
When they reached the post office, Hattie instructed Opal to go home and dry quilts near the fire place. Blackie left for home thanking Hattie. When Dewey asked for leave Hattie told him to go only when rain stops. Hattie gets into her motor and starts for railway station to deliver the sack of post and to bring the sack of new post. They came back to post office and Hattie distributed the post to those who had arrived to pick it up. Dewey took a paper and drew fish on it and kept it in the mail box meant for Hattie. Then the rain stops. Dewey asked for going home. Hattie agreed and he rushed to his home. On the way he got the school bus and alighted as a hero holding fish and pole with one hand. He reached home and all his younger siblings got delighted. He found that their cow had given birth to a calf. He asked his mother that this will be his. She said that for that he should ask his father, first.

A few days later Dewey again went to the river in one clear afternoon, after attending school. There, in the woods, he strolled and was happy to see the bounty of nature i.e. river dancing. That moment, he heard the lonesome sound in creation of an unknown bird and realized that he alone at that moment was the listener of it. He recalls Hattie when she stood in the door of post office
looking at the rain and declaring to the whole world, ‘Well, I’d say that’s right persnickety’.

The main theme of the short story is the mystery of life in the relationship of human beings to the forces of nature. The manners of people inhabiting a small place called Royals in Mississippi, is another theme. The peculiarities of behaviour of Miss. Hattie who works in post office and also takes upon herself the responsibility of rain-making whenever it is a dry spell in Royals have been depicted as a sense of professionalism in her. She would sit near a water body and stare and act in a fashion as if she is really in communion with the natural forces, particularly those which are responsible for bringing rain. And when the rain really starts she takes pride in it and in a tone of expert on the subject says that it is only a beginning. Similarly, she thinks that it is her duty to help others under her umbrella when it is raining. The manner of her running the post office is also very noteworthy. She is highly punctual and takes pride in her duty.

Dewey is a student who loves going out to imbibe and enjoy nature at work. He does not like to miss the school; however, he can’t resist the temptation of going to the river for fishing along with his father. Not only that, he visits the place after some days
and gets a unique experience of listening to the song of an unknown bird, the only voice at that moment and where he is the only listener. He is amazed at the mystery of nature.

The incident of lady appearing three times before Dewey and his father, Blackie, and than her disappearance is also full of mystery. Dewey, after meeting Opal feels that she may be the lady who appeared thrice in the woods and then disappeared. This he realizes after fifteen years. A sublime love develops between Opal and Dewey while they walked in the rain along with Hattie and Blackie. When Dewey goes home after the rain his three siblings rush to receive him out of joy on his arrival .The author has portrayed the simple and joyful life of children in the family in Royals. Birth of calf on the arrival of rains is symbolic of happiness in the life of the family. Moreover, it is celebration of life and its changing mood along with changes in the reasons.

**Circe**

‘Circe’ is a short story about a witch of the same name who lives on an isolated island. She has captivated men who came in a ship on this island and turned them into swine. They enter her house and she serves them a broth. After that by swinging a wand, she sends them all out. But to her surprise one of them,
who is their leader, remains in the house. She discovers that it is because of one herb that Odysseus remains unaffected by her powers. She claims her descent from Sun and is proud to be Sun’s daughter because Sun does not get corrupted even by shedding its light continuously.

The island girls who were there to assist her in kitchen smiled at her seeing that Odysseus remained unaffected by her powers and that he was laughing at her. She threw a kettle at them and commented, ‘Un-magical people are put into the world to justify and serve the magical’. Circe had the powers to be invisible. She removed his cloths, sent them for washing and gave bath to him with her own hands. Later she served him food but he refused to dine unless his men are brought back, she goes out and observes them in the shapes of hanging bones and brings all of them back. They dine, drink and sleep. Morning they had breakfast. They all gather and converse together to decide to sail. Odysseus comes forward and thanked Circe for the hospitality. She replies that no thanks were due as she did as much as she undid. She becomes aware of the fact that men are mortals and she will live endlessly. But she said philosophically, “Hospitality is one thing, but I must consider how my time is endless, how I
shall need wine endlessly.”  

Further she observed, “Magic is the tree, and intoxication is just the little bird that files in it to sing and flies out again.”

She goes up on the roof of her house and watch the moonlight dance of bones in the willows. She looks up at Cassiopeia, old frail woman, who sits in the stream of heaven and needs nothing.

One of the sailors, Elpenor, who had drunk too much, last night, fell from roof and was lying with his face down. They all wept for Elpenor and in turn he wept for them, she spoke from the door that when they dig the grave of Elpenor and bury him, they may write on the stone, “I died of love.” Hearing this they all left Elpenor and ran to sail. She stood on her rock and wished for grief. But it did not come because grief is like mystery and it knows where to hide itself. She thinks that grief is a ghost and is in Hades where Odysseus is going.

The main theme in this story is mystery and fantasy in life, Circe is tormented by her endless existence. Even though men are mortal but according to her they only have secret of divinity.

---

40 Ibid., p. 535
41 Ibid., p. 535
42 Ibid., p. 536
which she would like to have at any cost. She is ready to become a harmless dove for eternity for this.

This is clear from her utterance, “Yet I know they keep something from me, asleep and awake. There exists a mortal mystery, that, if I know where it was, I could crush like an island grape. Only frailty it seems, can divine it – and I was not endowed with that property. They live by fraility! By the moment! I tell myself that it is only a mystery, and mystery is only uncertainty (There is no mystery in magic! Men are swine: let it be said, and no sooner said than done). Yet mortals alone can divine where it lies in each other, can find it and prick it in all its peril, with an instrument made of air, I swear that only to possess that one, trifling secret, I would willingly turn myself into a harmless dove for the rest of eternity!”43.

Again, the author fathoms the depth of human heart and their similarity with witches in this regard. She comes to the conclusion that the basic strata or bed rock is the passion. It is elaborated nicely when Circe goes to her tower room hand in hand with Odysseus and observes “We conversed of signs, omens, premonitions, riddles and dreams and ended in fierce, cold sleep.

43 Ibid p. 533
Strange man, as unflinching and as wound up as I am. His short life and my long one have their ground in common. Passion is our ground, one Island –do others exist?"  

The story is about the uncertainties, passions and mysteries of life and the fear of unknown and grotesque in human beings.

**Kin**

‘Kin’ is a short story about the relationships and their dynamics in closely related families. The main characters are Kate, a young unmarried woman, her cousin Miss. Dicey Hastings, Sister Ann Fry and Uncle Felix. Sister Ann Fry lives with her cousin Felix in Ming about nine miles from court house where Kate lives with her mother. Kate’s cousin, Miss. Dicey Hastings who is a year or so younger to Kate is on visit from Jackson to their place. Miss. Hasting, though younger to Kate was engaged and marriage date was yet to be decided by her. Kate and Dicey are good pals and have been together in childhood when Dicey with her mother and grandmother used to stay at Courthouse just across the house of Kate’s grandfather. Sister Ann Fry is addressed sister Ann by Miss. Ethel. Ethel is mother of Kate and aunt to Dicey. She calls Ann Fry as Sister Ann Fry

---

44 Ibid p. 534
because she is cousin to Beck who in turn is cousin to Ethel. Now Sister Ann and her cousin, Mr. Flex, who is very old, live at Mingo. Ann Fry sent a letter to Ethel asking that she along with Dicey and Kate may visit Ming soon. They have a deep attachment for Uncle Flex. Ethel instructs Kate and Dicey to visit Mingo as she is not inclined to go that week. Both the cousins who keep on talking to each other always, set for Mingo. On reaching Mingo they find that house is full of people: men, woman and children. They gather that Ann Fry has permitted one photographer to take photos of her and other people in her house. In return he will shoot some snaps of Ann Fry for free. Ann Fry is in her forties and has reputation of falling in the well on the occasion of Eva’s marriage function. It was talked about that she wanted to steal a part of glory of the function and was sure of being saved as many people had already gathered near the well.

Now, inside her house, uncle Flex is under her care. Kate and Dicey meet Ann Fry and hand over a big cake and rose flower, which they carried, to her. Three of them went to the room of uncle Flex.

Uncle Flex is very old and was lying on his cot. He looked in general at three ladies and did not show any expression. When
Ann Fry went out of the room, uncle Flex caught hold of the hand of Dicey and asked for pencil. He then himself took it from the dusty floor. He took the hymn book from the table and started working out something on paper which he tore and gave to Dicey. Dicey and Kate, then went to window and watched Ann Fry posing for the photographs like a newly married woman. Dicey recalls her childhood days and how uncle Flex used to play with children and hold stereopticon. He would see in it different scenery and share the experience with children. She recollects all this as a rich experience full of and fond memories.

When asked by Kate as to what uncle Felix wrote on the paper Dicey replied, “River – Daisy – Midnight – please”. They worked out that the meaning of what uncle Felix wrote was that he wanted to meet his wife, Beck, in heaven at midnight. But they kept on wandering who the Daisy was. It may be that Uncle Felix is very old and he wanted to write Beck, but wrote Daisy. Then it cannot be taken for sure because ‘D’ was very clear. Thereafter, they saw the photographer running out of house, all packed and in unusual hurry. They laughed together sharing the idea that it seems he has been kissed by Aunt Ann Fry. They proceeded back
in their car and reached courthouse. Dicey thought of her sweetheart and wondered that he might be writing to her.

The main theme of the story is the manners of people and relationships among kins. This is brought out by the author very clearly at more than one occasion. For example, talking of exchange of flowers among neighbours in Courthouse town it is said: “Everybody grew some of the best of everybody else’s flowers; by the way, if you thank a friend for flowers, it will not grow for you.”\textsuperscript{45} This depicts the informality in the manner of residents. Again the author observes that people in court house live in such a way as if nobody exists around them. Dicey says, ‘Aunt Ethel, Kate and everybody I knew here, lived as if they had never heard of anywhere else, even Jackson.’

Manners of Ann Fry are entirely out of sync with the other kins and, therefore, she is discussed among them as eccentric. Her way of inviting photographer and then posing for various poses before him such as in pensive, eager, wounded, sad and business like mood are the evidence of it. Again, when the photographer ran in a huff while leaving the house and talk

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid, p.539
between Kate and Dicey that Ann Fry might have kissed him reflect abnormal manners of Ann Fry.

Talking about relationships, it is noteworthy to see that uncle Felix lives only to unite with his better half in heaven at midnight. He scribbles on a page of the hymn book and gives the paper to Dicey. Dicey is lost in another relationship of her when she thinks of her sweetheart on the journey back from Mingo. Above all, the joy of meeting of two childhood friends, Kate and Dicey, is also dealt with extensively in the story. Kate is fond of talking and Dicey loves traveling. They get immense joy and relaxation in each other’s company and share their view on any topic under the Sun. The story remains a comedy and stops short of being pathetic as uncle Felix is depicted as an old man no longer much interested in day to day life. He is thinking of his beloved and that of meeting her in heaven. However, he does not die.

**Going to Naples**

'Going to Naples' is a story of a young girl of eighteen, Gabriella Serto, who travels along with her mother, Mrs C. Serto and father in a boat by the name Pomona from New York to Naples via Palermo. There were altogether six young men. Among
the girls, in addition to Gabriella, there was Maria Pia and among the boys were Aldo Scampo, Joy Monteoliveto and Pldy. The girls were accompanied with their mothers. Also, there was La Zingara, the popular passenger said to be an actress. On a bench were sited two black men. The black men never said a word or smiled. They set on a journey so that some girls came on the way and get married to them.

As the boat started to sail, Gabriella gave a scream which invited the attention of other passengers she didn't like the journey and protested to her mother that she was alright. There in Buffalo with her parents and uncle and aunt.

As the land was out of sight, pairing started among these boys and girls. Maria Pia and Joy were the first to pair. With this expression of Maria was entirely changed. Gabriella went to Aldo and they exchanged few touches and kiss each other. There was a big party one evening. Gabriella danced to her full that time. However, Aldo felt tired. Joy and Gabriella danced for once and then parted at one point, Aldo buried his face in Gabriella's blouse and she looked out over his head, and smiled. She realized the weakness and mystery of flesh. At other point Gabriella and Aldo paired at the deck and Aldo patted the lower leg of Gabriella
which she liked. But soon Aldo slept there by himself. A kind of natural attraction and love was developing between them.

Gabriella’s mother was proud of marrying off her five daughters all when they attained the age of eighteen and desired that the same might happen to Gabriella.

When the boat reached Palermo some passengers got down there. Joy also got down. Maria and Joy wished goodbye and Maria started weeping, into a silky handkerchief.

Thereafter, the boat reached Naples where other passengers got down. Here Aldo and Gabriella also got down. Both did not want to depart. However, after sometime Aldo took leave from Gabriella and her mother. Her mother wished that they might meet again soon.

The main theme of the story is the nascent love which develops among young hearts momentarily. At the same time the expectations from young women are also depicted. Gabriella's mother quotes her own mother. While she instructs Gabriella "Little daughter: girls do well to be strong. Also, be delicate. You wait! She’ll tell you the same" 46.

---

46 Ibid., p. 568
While narrating one incident of Aldo burying his face into the blouse of Gabriella, the recollection of feeling of infatuation among those who watched them is best described by the author in the words, "They felt something of an old, pure loneliness come back to them - like a bird sent out over the waters long ago, when thy were young, perhaps from their same company. Only the long of memory, the brave and experienced of heart, could bear such a stirring, an awakening - first to have listen to that screaming, and in a flesh to remember what it was."47 Once when Aldo and Gabriella were on the deck and lay a little apart, Aldo moved his finger and began to thump the calf of Gabriella's leg while she lay as before with her back to him. After a while when she looked at Aldo's shoe, his hand was far away and he slept besides her. At this point the author describes the condition of Gabriella as: "Gabriella stayed as she was caught in an element as languorous as it was strange, like a mermaid who has been netted into a fisherman's boat, only to find hat the fisherman is dreaming."48 This was a situation where love could have achieved its height. At another occasion like obsessiveness of a family man Aldo was drumming a soft fist into Gabriella's plump young back. Another

---

47 Welty, Eudora, The Collected Stories, op. cit., p. 574
48 Ibid., p. 578
occasion Gabriella wailed at Aldo saying, "I am a big girl now and I want my nourishment."\textsuperscript{49} This shows very clearly the naturalness and forthrightness of Gabriella about her feelings of love.

The author has also dwelt on the theme of universal aspect of human life with a comment such as, "The most intimate crowd, when the moment came, could tear itself apart, hurry to vanish."\textsuperscript{50} Further Gabriella thinks: "May be the surest people are also the most forgetful of what comes next"\textsuperscript{51} Gabriella's mother says to her mother, Nonna: "He was passionately running after our Gabriella. It was necessary to keep an eye on her every minute."\textsuperscript{52} "Her fatefulness is inherited from you, Crocefissa, my child"\textsuperscript{53}, said Nonna. It is again an example of human nature in its particular stage. Observing the kind of attention, her father got Gabriella observed, "He walked, with nothing to carry, away into the widening sunlight as if he had blinders on. He's only come hence to die. All the way over, he might have been the oldest and the poorest one Mama pretended not to see him go. Her curiosity about Papa had long been satisfied; he had nobody:

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p. 592
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., p. 594
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p. 597
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p. 597
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., p. 597
she knew it. It was the punishment for marrying twice.\textsuperscript{54} This shows the kind of respect for second marriage in the society of that place and time.

**Where Is the Voice Coming From?**

‘Where is The Voice Coming From’ is a short story in which author has narrated an incident of murder of civil rights local leader, Roland, by a person from nearby locality in Thermopylae in Mississippi. The story is told in first person and had a close resemblance to a real life murder which took place on the same night. The murderer is upset over the equal rights demanded by the blacks. He goes around four O’ Clock in the morning near the house of civil rights leader, Roland. Roland reaches his house at that hour and as he gets down the car and starts moving towards his house, the killer shoots him. Roland dies on the spot. The killer says that he can’t be caught as nobody will suspect him. One of the views given for this murder was that this might have been executed by a faction of civil rights group to create trouble for whites.

One Mr. Goat Dykeman who was in Mississippi jail had sent a letter to the Governor that he will shoot that Niger. The killer

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p. 596
says that he is not a Goat Dykeman, the notorious ruffian; he is not going to ask Governor. He will do it for his pure satisfaction. He draws a lot of satisfaction by silencing the leader of civil rights movement who were asking for equal rights for all, equal time for working etc. This shows a total intolerance for equality of blacks in USA in those days.

**The Demonstrators**

‘The Demonstrators’ is a short story of discordant married life of one Dr. Richard Strickland and his wife Irene Roberts on the one hand and that of Ruby Gaddy and Dove Collins on the other in a place called Holden, Mississippi. Dr. Richard Strickland is a young doctor and his wife Irene Roberts is the most beautiful woman in Holden. One day one Mr. Philip comes to Dr. Richard with introduction. He invites him for dinner at his house. He finds that his wife leaves him for Mr. Philip without a divorce. He thought that he has been patient but this patience made him a tired man; sick and bitter. In the end he is a broken man.

On the other hand, Dr. Richard is invited by a girl child to come with her urgently. He goes with her and finds that a Negro woman of twelve years old, Ruby Gaddy, is lying on her bed in her house amidst a lot of people from her neighbourhood. She was
injured in the breast. Doctor gives an injection for internal injury and leaves for his house. Nearby his house he finds that Dove Collins, a Negro young man, was lying injured. Dove later succumbs to his injuries. Ruby Gaddy also succumbs to her injuries. It was reported in the newspaper that while Ruby came out of the church, Dove who was waiting outside stabbed her with ice pick. In the scuffle Ruby snatched the ice pick and hit Dove near the eye or ear damaging his brain. Thereafter, both died of injuries. County Sherif Vince Lasseter said: “That’s one they can’t pin the blame on us for. That’s how they treat their own kind. Please take note our conscience is clear”\textsuperscript{55}. This statement of county sherif is a clear pointer of the relationship between coloured and white people in that place and time.

The main theme in the short story is that of tragedy and pathos in the family and community life. It depicts that society is polarized on racial lines and the family life is torn apart in both the communities by disharmony and violence.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid, p. 621
The Shoe Bird

‘The Shoe Bird’ is a story which Eudora Welty wrote for children. In a humorous style, the children are educated about the positive values of successful living.

The protagonist in the story is a parrot by the name Arturo who is a pet of one Mr. Friendly. Mr. Friendly owns a shoe store. Arturo helps Mr. Friendly in different chores relating to shoe selling. Arturo has motto which is ‘if you hear it, tell it.’ He hits an idea that ‘shoes are for the birds’. He shares it with Gloria, the goose, who is another pet in Arturo’s neighborhood. Goose shares the idea with a park pigeon. The park pigeon and Gloria decides that there should be an ‘Open Party’ in the ‘Friendly Shoe Store’ of Arturo where all kinds of birds of the world should reach and have their gifts. The gifts would be the shoes of their sizes. Park pigeon tells his cousin, carrier pigeon, who sands the message of invitation to all kinds of birds which includes owls, sparrows, orioles, crows, hens, swallows, ostrich, terns, plovers, penguins, phoenix, etc.

All these birds gather at ‘Friendly Shoe Store’ in the night. Arturo gets the initiation last of all and is, therefore, surprised.
Birds start testing shoes of their liking and size. When all of them enjoying the selection of shoes, a black cat by the name Freddy arrives. All the birds start screaming as they cannot fly because of the weight of shoes. The bird discusses the way to escape being eaten by the cat. Some of them blame Arturo for their situation. Arturo climbs the wall and reaches the window. From there he calls out: “Free the birds! Free the birds! To whom it may concern-help!”  

Phoenix appears at that moment and tell the birds, “You are all on the wrong track”. He tells the cat to retire. The cat obeys and all birds sing the praise of Phoenix giving him the epithet of grandfather. The Phoenix tells all the birds that their freedom lies in their wings, further adding that they should not act foolishly by thinking of wearing shoes. The birds forego their shoes and Arturo revisits his motto and revises it to “If you hear it, think about it”.

The main theme of the story is the humour. Humour as a medium of message through which education is imparted. It is also about the damage which an unconfirmed hearsay can cause if spread on the basis of the motto: if you hear it, tell it.” The necessity of transformation of this motto to another: “If you hear

---

57 Ibid., p. 64.
it, think about it’’ has been demonstrated by the author through an interesting humourous story. An apt medium has been used for the targeted readers. The value of use of words in each work has been stressed meaningfully. Moreover, the story confirms the dictum of Shakespeare that ‘brevity is the soul of wit’.