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September 30, 2014

English 1101-D403

1. Why was life so hard in America for Danticat's parents at first?

Life was so hard in America for Danticat's parents at first because they came to America as immigrants. Throughout this time not many opportunities were offered to immigrants. Immigrants could only do labor work. On top of that the United States immigration red tape made Danticat's parents seperated from his children for eight straight years which was extremely difficult to bear with.

2. Explain the "Faustian bargain" offered to the children. Do you think it was a fair offer?

The Faustian bargain offered to the children was either for the parents to go to America and work and the children would stay behind or the parents could stay behind and suffer. I think it was a fair offer because in the long run they would be together and have a better future than in the regimes of Francois and Jean-Claude Duvalier. However, at the same time it was not fair because it was wrong for the children and the parents to be seperated from each other.

3.  How did Uncle Joseph and the children differ in their views of America? What contributes to their respective points of view?

Uncle Joseph thought that children should be grateful that their parents went to New York because the future was not always given to people like himself because he was poor. Being poor contributed to his respective point of view. Whereas, the children's view was that America was like an imaginary haven of their lives. Having the image that America was the place they were meant to be contributed to the children's respective point of view.

4. What is the first lesson that Danticat learns about life in New York? Do you think this lesson is commonly shared by immigrants? Is it fair?

When Danticat came to the first time in New York at the age of twelve, he learned that if you're poor you're more likely to work harder than anyone to be more successful. This included working more hours than anybody for less money and with few if any benefits. I do think this lesson is commonly shared by immigrants. Since they are migrating to another country, making a living is a struggle. It is not fair because they leave someone they love behind thinking they are going to have a better future not knowing the disadvantages behind.

5. Discuss the quote "it is a burden of each generation to embrace or reject the dreams set out by those who came before." What do children owe their parents when many sacrifices have been made?

Children have to owe whatever their parents did for them. Just like how Danticat's parents tried to get a better future going to New York for their children for their children they should get a future career that would help support their parents when they are elderly.

6.  What is the difference between an immigrant and a "transnational"? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Which label do Danticat's parents ultimately choose? Why?

An immigrant is a person who migrates to another country and does not have many benefits to choose from because they can only stay in one country and only work in that country whereas a transnational is a person with human rights and can live in two different countries and work in those two different countries. Danticat's parents ended up choosing to label themselves as transnational because they ended up settling in the country and supporting themselves even with the circumstances.

7. How does Danticat's father's American experience worsen after 9/11? Why do you think this treatment of him occured?

Danticat's father's American experience worsened after 9/11 because he feared for terrorism. He feared being blamed for it and becoming a victim of it. However, he was not the only one who feared for it because during this time people did not know who to trust or who to believe.

8. What is the connection of Uncle Joseph's death to the beginning of the essay?

The connection of Uncle Joseph's death to the beginning of the essay was that he raised Danticat and Andre to who they became when they entered New York. Without Uncle Joseph, who knows how Danticat and Andre would end up being.

9. Why do you think the past tense is used in the title of the essay?

I think the past tense is used in the title of the essay because before coming to New York they had a different picture. They thought New York was an imaginary haven of their lives. However, when they got to really know how New York was when they arrived, there image changed which is why the title is called "New York City was our City on the Hill".