

"Thank You, Ma'am"

"Thank You, Ma'am" was a meaningful story written by Langston Hughes. It demonstrates how a woman named Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones changes a trouble bound boy named Roger. Mrs. Jones is very firm with Roger, but as the story progresses, she becomes more understanding and generous toward him. In the beginning of the story, Mrs. Jones is bravely walking home from work. She is a very large, strong woman with a purse just like her. Suddenly, a poor, filthy boy named Roger tries unsuccessfully to steal her stubborn purse.

Since he does not intimidate Mrs. Jones, she firmly grips Roger and demands he give back her purse. As Roger struggles to break loose of Mrs. Jones' strong grip, he becomes embarrassed as she questions him about his dirty face. Roger is uncertain about his future with Mrs. Jones as she continues to drag him to her apartment. He certainly regrets ever coming across Mrs. Jones since she is very controlling. Upon arrival at her apartment, Roger becomes worried. Would the unpredictable woman send him to jail? Before Roger had a chance to ask questions, Mrs. Jones sent him to her bathroom to wash his face.

There was great trust in Roger shown when she left the bathroom door wide open. Roger could have run away, but he decided against betraying Mrs. Jones' trust. She is compassionate as Roger tells her his story. He told Mrs. Jones that he was sorry for trying to take her purse and that he needed to buy blue suede shoes. Mrs. Jones told Roger that she understood what it was like to not have things you want; she had a troubled youth just as Roger. As their conversation goes on, Roger begins to trust himself more and starts to care about Mrs. Jones. After their heart to heart conversation, Mrs. Jones begins to make a meal for them to share. While she is preparing the dinner, Roger has the opportunity to run again. He doesn't, however.

After dinner, Mrs. Jones generously gives Roger ten dollars for the shoes he wanted. Then she wishes him well, telling him so stay out of trouble. Roger is very grateful to her, but only has time to muster a quick "Thank You", before she shuts the door on him. Mrs. Jones has given Roger kindness and confidence that will most likely stay with him throughout his life. To conclude, Mrs. Jones had many positive character traits that will alter Roger's life forever. Roger could have become a rotten, purse stealing punk with no future. It was by fate that he came across a firm, understanding, and generous lady named Luella Bates Washington Jones who helped him become a better person.