
Forgiveness In “Thank You, Ma’M” By Langston Hughes

“Thank You, Ma’m,” is the title of the short story written by Langston Hughes. This fictional story is about a boy named Roger who tries to steal Mrs. Luella Bates’ purse.

Instead of calling the police, Mrs. Luella Bates notices that the boy has not been cared for and therefore decides to take him home to clean him up. Mrs. Luella Bates feeds Roger dinner and she gives him the ten dollars he was trying to steal so Roger could buy the blue suede shoes that he wanted so bad. The theme of this story is forgiveness can change somebody’s life for good. In the story, forgiveness takes place when Mrs. Luella Bates takes Roger to her home so he can clean his face. She says to him, “Get over to that sink boy, and wash your face.” This shows that when she could have been mad at him for trying to steal from her, she showed kindness and forgiveness to make up for it. This act of forgiveness allows Roger to have one of his basic needs met, cleanliness.

Another way forgiveness changed Roger’s life, is when Mrs. Luella Bates feeds Roger some dinner and gives him a piece of her cake. Before she feeds him, she says to him, “I believe you’re hungry-or been hungry-to try to snatch my pocketbook!” When she invites him to eat with her, it proves that Mrs. Luella Bates has enough forgiveness to feed the boy even though originally he was trying to steal from her. This is a great act of forgiveness and generosity by Mrs. Luella Bates. In the final act of forgiveness, Mrs. Luella Bates gives Roger ten dollars for the blue suede shoes he wanted to have. When he was about to leave, she told him, “Now here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes and next time, do not make the mistake of latching onto my pocketbook nor nobody else’s...” This shows that Mrs. Luella Bates is able to forgive Roger and even share the little amount of money that she has with him. Mrs. Luella Bates has provided for Roger and changed his life in a positive way.

In conclusion, Mrs. Luella Bates takes him to wash his face, feeds him, and gives him the ten dollars that he wanted. All of these actions show that forgiveness can change someone’s life. Society would be a better place if more people were as forgiving as Ms. Luella Bates.