Katniss Everdeen

Miss Bergman

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**Gone but not Forgotten**

In Kathryn Stockett’s *The Help*, three separate women narrate the story of Southern white women and their black maids in the 1960s. Maids Aibileen and Minny tell their separate and intertwined stories of dealing with racial and class prejudice in Jackson, Mississippi. Skeeter narrates her return to Jackson from college and her discomfort with finding the town mostly unchanged. However, one influential character has no narrative voice. Skeeter’s childhood maid Constantine has mysteriously disappeared while Skeeter was away at college, and the reader never hears Constantine’s story or thoughts. However, in spite of her silence and absence, Constantine is still a well-developed character, due to Stockett’s’ use of indirect characterization methods.

We are first introduced to Constantine through Skeeter’s description of her bedroom at the top of the house, reached by a flight of narrow stairs. Skeeter tells us, “Our previous maid, Constantine, used to stare those forward-sloping stairs down every day, like it was a battle between them. That was the only part I didn’t like about having the top floor of the house, that it separated me from my Constantine” (Stockett 68). Through Skeeter’s comments on Constantine, we see that though she prefers to be isolated and separated from her parents, Skeeter preferred the physical closeness and companionship of her childhood maid. In addition, we also hear a description of what Constantine used to do: stare down the stairs each day as though “it was a battle between them” (68). This reveals Constantine’s determination or even stubbornness; rather than concede the challenge of the stairs, she faced them stubbornly each day.

Stockett reveals some of Constantine’s back story when Skeeter tells us about visiting the neighborhood known as Hotstack (71). …..