

## Recovering from Pre and Post War Trauma in Toni Morrison's *Home*

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**ABSTRACT:** War has always been a terrible experience for those involved in it. Its aftermaths are traumatically devastating. The trauma becomes more complex when there are pre-war complications. Toni Morrison's *Home*(2012) uncovers, through the portrayal of Frank Money, the novel's protagonist, both pre-war and post-war trauma, providing opportunities for recovery. From the lenses of psychoanalytic theory, this essay analyzes the various techniques Morrison uses to expose and denounce pre-war and post-war trauma. Equally, it examines some redemptive measures she gives to the victims of this trauma. The paper is divided into two parts, with the first one scrutinizing the dislocated lives of psychological traumatized individuals, and the second one highlighting Morrison's remedial means for their recovery.

**KEYWORDS:** pre-war, post-war, trauma, recovering, psychology

### Résumé

La guerre a toujours été une expérience terrible pour ceux qui y participent. Ses conséquences sont dévastatrices. Le traumatisme d'après-guerre devient plus complexe lorsqu'il y avait des complications d'avant-guerre. Le roman *Home*(2012) de Toni Morrison dévoile, à travers le portrait de Frank Money, le personnage principal, le traumatisme d'avant-guerre et d'après-guerre. Il offre également des opportunités de récupération aux personnages victimes de traumatismes liés à la guerre. S'inspirant de la théorie psychanalytique, cet article analyse les techniques utilisées par Morrison pour dénoncer les traumatismes d'avant-guerre et d'après-guerre. Il examine également les mesures de reconstruction qu'elle propose pour les victimes. Subdivisé en deux parties, l'article porte, en premier lieu, sur la vie des individus souffrant de traumatismes psychologiques d'avant-guerre et d'après-guerre. Ensuite, il aborde les mécanismes de réparation de ces traumatismes.

**Mots clés:** avant-guerre, après-guerre, traumatisme, rétablissement, psychologie

### I. INTRODUCTION

Many scholars show great interest in Toni Morrison's oeuvre. An American novelist, essayist, book editor, and college professor, Morrison has earned much admiration for her versatile literary talent. For Jane Foress Bennett (1994: 66), Morrison "is an astounding writer—not simply because her use of language simultaneously rivets one to the page and explodes assumptions of what can and can't be said in words, but because she tells stories we need like water." Quoting Trudier Harris, Nancy J. Peterson (1993: 464) argues that Morrison has entered superstardom: "by any standard of literary evaluation, Toni Morrison is a phenomenon, in the classic sense of a once-in-a-lifetime rarity, the literary equivalent of Paul Robeson, Michael Jordan, Wayne Gretzky, Chris Evert, or Martina Navratilova, the superstar whose touch upon her profession makes us wonder if we shall ever see her like again." Moreover, Mary Ann Wimsatt (1931: 374) depicts Morrison as one of America's most celebrated authors, winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1988 for *Beloved*, the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993, and the National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contributions to American Literature in 1996. With all these awards under her belt, Toni Morrison has, really and by general consensus, entered superstardom.

As a towering literary genius, Morrison mostly portrays black experience in her works. *Home*, her tenth novel, captures African Americans' plights in the 1950s: "the novel reveals numerous realistic facts about a neglected historical period and describes how the African Americans were suffering during the 1950s" (Asma Sibouekaz, et al., 2018: ii). With the burning issue of racism and discrimination at its core, the novel mainly depicts trauma experienced by a black veteran in the immediate aftermath of the Korean War. It uncovers, through the portrayal of Frank Money, its protagonist, both pre-war and post-war trauma, providing opportunities for recovery.

Through the lenses of psychoanalytic theory, this essay analyzes some techniques Morrison uses to expose and denounce pre-war and post-war trauma in this novel. As Sarah Ladipo Manyika (2017:143) puts it, “she is fond of interjections, exclamations, repetition, and made-up words.” Equally, the essay examines redemptive measures she gives to victims of psychological war-related trauma. The essay is structured around two parts: it scrutinizes the protagonist’s and his sister’s pre-war and post-war psychological trauma, in the first place. Next, it probes Morrison’s remedial means for their recovery.

## II. PRE-WAR AND POST-WAR PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

### 2.1. Pre-war Psychological Trauma

Many critics have addressed the thematic of trauma in Morrison’s *Home*. This essay examines the theme of trauma by deciphering Morrison’s intention in linking it to war. The study argues that by connecting trauma to war, Morrison is advocating for war cessation. Indeed, many creative writers have shown the negativity of war in their works, with the most remembered one being Ernest Hemingway. An ambulance driver in World War I, Hemingway witnessed many atrocities inherent in war. He published *A Farewell to Arms* about his generation’s war experiences, depicting war’s bitter side, and portraying with acuity its devastating consequences with an impassioned plea for its stop. By depicting trauma, murder, poverty, destruction, and barbarity, etc. as integral part of war, Hemingway is calling for its cessation.

Through the protagonist Frank Money and his sister Cee, Morrison deeply delves into “the horrors of war, their injurious psychological effects” (Ibarrola, 2014: 110). Indeed, in the wake of Hemingway, Morrison depicts war trauma in *Home* with the propensity to issue a decree on its end worldwide. The particularity of her novel is the post-war trauma’s drive to craziness due to pre-war complications.

Mostly used in medical and psychological contexts, trauma is an emotional shock following stressful event or physical injury, which may lead to long-term neurosis. When medical doctors talk of trauma, “they mean the sudden and severe bodily wounds that result from physical injury, ranging from the minor cuts and bruises sustained after an accidental fall to the life-threatening lacerations and bone fractures resulting from a car crash” (Development Services Group, 2016: 1). Esther Giller (1999: 1) defines trauma as “responses to powerful one-time incidents like accidents, natural disasters, crimes, surgeries, deaths, and other violent events. It also includes responses to chronic or repetitive experiences such as child abuse, neglect, combat, urban violence, concentration camps, battering relationships, and enduring deprivation.” For behavioral health professionals, it results “from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being” (Development Services Group, 2016: 1). In clear, trauma affects all the compartments of man: body, soul and spirit.

The foregoing definitions clarify traumatic disorders experienced by Frank Money and his sister Cee in *Home*. Both, as Irene Visser (2016: 151) observes, “have experienced trauma as defined in trauma theory as ‘an overwhelming, unassimilable and violent wounding directly incurred as a firsthand experience.’” If Cee mainly suffers physical trauma, her elder brother Frank is driven crazy by post-war psychological trauma. Both, however, go through childhood trauma, picturing them as victims of pre-war traumatic disorders. With three highlights, this essay analyses their traumatic state before the Korean War.

First, at their early age, they witness a horrible scene, a psychologically heavy load for them to bear. Indeed, *Home* opens with Frank and Cee accidentally peeping, from a hiding, at a secret burial of a man. The sight is so terrible for them that they curve with fear and trembling, especially upon realizing that the dead body is a black person: “When she saw that black foot with its creamy pink and mud-streaked sole being whacked into the grave, her whole body began to shake. I hugged her shoulders tight and tried to pull her trembling into my own bones.”<sup>1</sup> Sharing the view that “Morrison’s text is [...] steeped in a rich African and African American cultural heritage and tradition” (Tosha K. Sampson-Choma, 2019:1), this essay argues that Frank and Cee, aged respectively nine and five, are too young to see a dead body. Indeed, in African tradition, children are not allowed to see a corpse, or to be at a burial place, for fear of traumatic disorders. This sustains Ibarrola’s (2014: 120) argument that Frank’s and Cee’s trauma dates as far back as their childhood days “when they saw the secret burial of a black man.” The dread filling these two little children upon witnessing the burial of a black man leaves heavy psychological scars on them the rest of their life. The incident reverberates throughout the novel, spotlighting Morrison’s technique of repetition to expose trauma.

Second, Frank and Cee have suffered racial trauma as early as from their childhood. This is referred to as historical trauma defined as “the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, as a result of group traumatic experiences, which is transmitted across generations within a community” (Development Services Group, 2016: 3). It is a trauma affecting entire communities and frequently associated with ethnic or racial

<sup>1</sup> Toni Morrison, *Home* (New York: Vintage International, 2012), 4; italics in the original. All subsequent quotations from this edition are parenthetically referenced in the text with page number preceded by Home.

groups. The narrator informs his readership that the corpse Cee and himself see thrown in grave is a black man: “We could not see the faces of the men doing the burying, only their trousers; but we saw the edge of a spade drive the jerking foot down to join the rest of itself. When she saw that black foot [...], her whole body began to shake” (Home, 4; Italics in the original). It remains to unveil the cause of the man’s death. Based on subsequent revelations in the novel, this essay links it to racial discrimination. Indeed, racial discrimination was real in 1950’s America and its traumatic effects on Blacks, especially black children, are devastating. At just four, Frank witnesses a terrible event where residents of fifteen houses, including his family, are ordered to relocate from their houses in twenty-four hours, lest they are killed. When Crawford, one elderly man, fails to obey the racist order, he is pitilessly killed: “Just after dawn at the twenty-fourth hour he was beaten to death with pipes and rifles butts and tied to the oldest magnolia tree in the county—the one that grew in his own yard” (Home, 10). With this occurrence and many more in their childhood, Frank and his sister curl up in a haunting trauma.

With confusion, anger and weeping, the black community walks for miles and miles out of their residence leaving behind many of their possessions. Frank, the four-year kid, equally endures all these hardships. His desire to invite readers into gauging his suffering pushes him to insist on the extreme hunger and fatigue during the walk, as he puts in telegraphic mode: “Talk about tired. Talk about hungry” (Home, 40; italics in the original). Moreover, he adds: “The sole of my shoe flapped until Pap tied it with his own shoelace” (Home, 40; italics in the original). Sad enough, the crossing from their first domicile to the next one is not a pleasant one when talking about heat: “You don’t know what heat is until you cross the border from Texas to Louisiana in the summer. You can’t come up with words that catch it” (Home, 41; italics in the original). All these help readers fathom the trauma the little Frank undergoes at his early age. Worse, it is in these difficult conditions that his sister, Cee, is born.

In fact, Cee’s birth on the road reads a bad omen for her. She is stigmatized as a street child or gutter child, a sign to her worthless life (Home, 45). Being even unwelcomed by her own family because she is born in bad moment, Cee has to endure effects of racial discrimination as early as her babyhood. Clearly, she suffers racial trauma as well as her brother and many other Blacks. It is a solid argument that most black people in the U.S. are victims of racial trauma, which Morrison evidences throughout her oeuvre: “for forty relentless years, Morrison has written with exacting, searing, and poetic perception about the particularity of American terror that shakes and shatters the lives of black folk” (Verdelle, 2012: 12). The story in *Home* confirms this American terror exerted on Blacks.

The third traumatic condition Frank and his little sister endure stems from their own grandmother (Home, 43): “A mean grandmother is one of the worst things a girl could have.” As little children, Frank and Cee are put under the care of their grandmother, Lenore, because their parents leave home very early at dawn for work and come back late in night. Given Lenore hates the little baby Cee due to her circumstances in which she was born – on road – she makes life difficult for her and her brother in their parents’ absence. She abuses the kids’ diet in her own fashion. The narrator reveals this wickedness in crude terms (Home, 43-44): “Because Mama and Pap worked from before sunrise until dark, they never knew that Miss Lenore poured water instead of milk over the shredded wheat Cee and her brother ate for breakfast.” The parents are never aware of this because Lenore forbids Frank and his sister to reveal the truth. Moreover, the narrator informs that “when they had stripes and welts on their legs they were cautioned to lie, to say they got them by playing out by the stream where brambles and huckleberry thorns grew” (Home, 44). Frank and Cee are threatened to keep silent on all this. No doubt, the traumatic effects are devastating on them.

In sum, Frank and Cee are victims of childhood trauma with a lasting effect on their lives. Manuela LópezRamírez (2016:136-137) explains: “Childhood trauma can be devastating and it can actually interfere with the construction of a healthy sense of self, affecting adversely the foundation of the personality.” As black children, Frank and Cee suffer racial trauma from accumulated and recurrent effects of slavery, racial segregation, Ku Klux Klan and many other white supremacist groups in the U.S. Besides, they have been traumatized by witnessing a clandestine burial of a black man. Moreover, they suffer child abuse from their own grandmother. Indeed, Lenore’s abusive treatment of her grandchildren heavily affects the latter with traumatic disorders. With these pre-war traumatic complications, the post-war trauma worsens their lives, to the extent of driving Frank crazy.

## 2. 2. Post-war Psychological Trauma

This section mainly focuses on Frank as a victim of post-war psychological trauma in Morrison’s *Home*. However, as said earlier, his sister equally gets caught in trauma—physical trauma—which desperately affects her psychology. Arguing on the topic of post-war psychological trauma in *Home*, Ibarrola (2014: 119) pinpoints both Frank and Cee as examples, since “their brutal experiences away from home have left profound scars on their psyches.” Indeed, Frank and Cee have had very bad experiences in their life. Besides their childhood trauma, they belong to a poor family, as Frank confesses (Home, 40): “The crazy part is our last name. Money. Of which we had none.” To be sure, Frank and Cee’s parents have no money. The family lives below the substance level. Cee, finding her greatest protection in her brother, feels forlorn when the latter enlists for

the Korean War. It is not easy for Frank to abandon his little sister. However, he goes above and beyond above to convince her that enlisting for the army is the only choice left for him (Home, 35): "He tried to tell her the army was the only solution." Compared with the suffering in Lotus, going to war is the lesser evil for Frank. Thus, he deserts his sister.

It is worth mentioning that Frank's departure for the war starts new traumatic episodes in Cee's life. She goes from increased psychological trauma to physical one. Her being left in the hand of her grandmother, Lenore, is not without psychological abuse (Home, 53): "Lenore was the wicked witch." With no hope, Cee gets married at fourteen, a complete disaster for her, coupled with her parents' death, one of lung disease and the other of stroke (Home, 34). Indeed, Cee could find consolation and protection from her husband, after her brother's departure. However, their marriage has not even lasted for a month before Prince, her husband, abandons her. Verdelle (2012: 12) describes this as immediate consequence of her being left alone by her brother: "Set adrift without education or guidance, Cee makes mistakes of discernment. She ventures forward, woefully ill-informed about men, about danger, about life without Frank. Her first mistake is to marry the wrong person." Obviously, this crashes Cee with heavy psychological pain. The narrator informs (Home, 54): "she was broken. Not broken up but broken down, down into her separate parts." The foregoing underlines the unmeasurable extent of Cee's resentment following her husband's betrayal. Added to all that she has gone through, she is psychologically broken. In other words, she has reached the peak of psychological trauma. Her post-war trauma might cause less emotion if her suffering were limited to psychological pain. However, she has to undergo another type of pain: physical trauma.

Physical trauma is the most brutal post-war trauma Cee experiences in *Home*. Deserted by her husband, she finds contentment in a job she has found, of which she gladly informs her brother in a letter (Home, 53): "hello brother how are you I am fine. I just got me a ok job in a restaurant but looking for a better one." Morrison grants her a better job, but only to break her down, physically speaking. So she finds work helping a doctor in his office, which Verdelle (2012:12) calls her second mistake. She meets new people: Dr. Beauregard Scott, her employer; Mrs. Scott, her employer's wife; and Sarah Williams, their cook-housekeeper. These people's kindness towards Cee makes her feel very much at home. There is room to believe that the conditions around her in Dr. Scott's house help her find relief from her haunting past. Sarah has become like everything good for her (Home, 65): "Sarah had become her family, her friend, and her confidante. They shared every meal and sometimes the cooking. When it was too hot in the kitchen, they ate in the backyard under a canopy, smelling the last of the lilacs and watching tiny lizards flick across the walkway." In a word, Cee finds a safe place in Dr. Scott's house. However, on one occasion, when she and Sarah are playing in the kitchen, Sarah heavily wounds her (Home, 66): "Sarah slid a long, sharp knife from a drawer and, with intense anticipation of the pleasure to come, cut the girl in two." Further revelations show that Cee is used for medical experimentation by Dr. Scott (Home, 119): "Her boss [...] had done something [...] to her body and she was fighting a fever that wouldn't go down." Ironically, Cee's office has turned out to be a medical laboratory wherein she serves as experiment.

Arguably, in the 50s, white doctors in the U.S. used to do experiments with African Americans, people they considered as inferior to them (Beatriz González Reyes, 2015: 23). This medical experiment nearly kills Cee with trauma and bleeding. After many months in coma with serious treatment, she recovers to remember almost nothing of what has happened to her. The narrator describes the little thing she remembers in these terms (Home, 122): "how pleasant she felt upon awakening after Dr. Beau had stuck her with a needle to put her to sleep; how passionate he was about the value of the examinations; how she believed the blood and pain that followed was a menstrual problem." From this seemingly menstrual problem, Cee finally has her womb totally damaged (Home, 128): "Your womb can't never bear fruit." Along-lasting effect of Dr. Scott's medical experimentation on Cee, the foregoing information strikes her with another series of psychological trauma. Understandably, Cee has undergone both post-war physical and psychological traumas in *Home*.

However, evidences of post-war psychological trauma are most pronounced in Frank's life. As said earlier, he is a veteran, having fought in the Korean War and experienced many inhumanities inherent in it. Tosha K. Sampson-Choma (2019:3) acknowledges: "In Korea he has a number of traumatic experiences." The most traumatic ones of these experiences which frequently haunt him are the death of his friends, Mike and Stuff, and his shooting to death a Korean little girl. The haunting impact of these experiences informs Ibarrola's (2014: 112) insight into the novel as a trauma story: "the most evident sign that *Home* is a 'trauma story' is the recurrent visits that the protagonist receives of ghosts from his past." To be sure, Frank is driven crazy by these flashbacks as the story unravels.

Early in the novel, the reader is informed of Frank's insanity due to his war trauma (Home, 14-15): "if he wasn't in a fight was he peeping on the sidewalk? Hollering curses at some passerby, some schoolchildren? Was he banging his head on a wall or hiding behind bushes in somebody's backyard?" He is so embarrassing that he is kept in a mental hospital for psychiatric treatment. However, he furtively escapes from the hospital in order to regain Lotus, his native town. As his journey home unfolds most of his war memories and insane behaviors, the reader gets to grip with the high extent of his post-war trauma. A closer study of his character

unveils many of his traumatic war experiences, the most recurrent ones being recollections of his two best friends, Mike's and Stuff's death and his merciless killing of a Korean girl.

No sooner has he headed to Lotus than Frank faces the haunting troubles of Mike's and Stuff's death, as he wonders what to tell their parents. The narrator reports (Home, 15): "he didn't want to go home without his 'homeboys.' He was far too alive to stand before Mike's folks or Stuff's. His easy breath and unscathed self would be an insult to them. And whatever lie he cooked up about how bravely they died, he could not blame their resentment." Not only does he psychologically see images of his friends and others, but he finds himself on a trial for murder as well. In stream of consciousness, accusing pictures of his traumatic memories blow his brain with questions (Home, 21-22):

why didn't you hurry? If you had gotten there sooner you could have saved him. You could have pulled him behind the hill the way you did for Mike. And all of that killing you did afterward? Women running, dragging children along. And that old one-legged man on a crutch hobbling at the edge of the road so as not to slow down the other, swifter ones? You blew a hole in his head because you believed it would make up for the frosted urine on Mike's pants and avenge the lips calling mama. Did it? Did it work? And the girl. What did she ever do to deserve what happened to her? All unasked questions multiplying like mold in the shadows of the photographs he saw.

The above haunting troubles drive Frank crazy throughout his journey to Lotus, Georgia. On one occasion, when he is eating in a church convention, he suddenly and savagely runs through the crowd upon seeing a little girl approaching him with a smile. This incident leaves everyone in dread (Home, 76-77): "when she gave him a broad smile of thanks, he dropped his food and ran through the crowd. People, those he bumped into and others, parted before him—some with frowns, others simply agape." Based on psychoanalytical theory which studies the psyche of an individual, this essay argues that Frank sees through this little girl the Korean girl he killed in Korea.

It is worth mentioning that even dreams have not made life easy for Frank. Many a time, he has jolted from sleep, shouting as if someone is pursuing him. At times, in somniloquy, he strongly argues with someone who is not really with him (Home, 33-34): "Hey! Who the hell are you? What you want?" Frank rose from the bed and moved toward the figure. After three steps the zoot-suited man disappeared. Frank went back to bed, thinking that particular living dream was not all bad compared to others he'd had." With these hallucinations, Morrison is showing how war can affect someone with psychological trauma.

In the aggregate, the Korean War has heavily taken its toll on Frank's mental wellbeing. Besides memories of all his battlefield killings, he can hardly bear the death of his two friends, Mike and Stuff (Home, 99): "if he heard a joke Mike would love, he would turn his head to tell it to him—then a nanosecond of embarrassment before realizing he wasn't there [...]. Sometimes, long after he'd been discharged, he would see Stuff's profile in a car stopped in traffic until the heart jump of sorrow announced his mistake." Combined with his pre-war complications, the post-war trauma drives him crazy. As one more evidence of his craziness, he almost beats up an innocent man to death (Home, 101): "Frank leaped on the prone body and began to punch his face, eager to ram that toothpick into his throat. The thrill that came with each blow was wonderfully familiar. Unable to stop and unwilling to, Frank kept going even though the big man was unconscious." Thus, one comes to grip with Morrison's advocacy against war, as its aftermaths are disastrous to everyone. In *Home*, Frank epitomizes all those veterans who fall victims of post-traumatic stress disorder after the Korean War.

Since Frank becomes a threat to everyone, psychiatrists face the challenge of healing him. Unfortunately, 1950s American medical doctors use helpless people for experiment, a sign of their hatred for these people. Eventually, Morrison promotes love and compassion, through simple characters, to heal victims of trauma. The next part elaborates on this.

### III. Healing and Recovery from Trauma

*Home* is not only a story of war and trauma, but a narrative of healing and recovery as well. The novel's key message is hope to all the trauma victims, as Irene Visser (2020: 161) recognizes: "hope is a strong element of *Home*, inscribed in the curative and restorative forces of community and family." By the time human beings are going above and beyond to restore peace and avoid war trauma, the whole world is stricken by an invisible war enemy—Coronavirus—with all its traumatic effects. Understandably, as long as the world exists, naturally-caused or human-caused trauma will affect human beings. Thus, *Home* is relevant in every epoch and place, calling for societies to seek remedy for war and its traumatic effects. In *Home*, Morrison promises recovery for every victim of trauma, on the one hand. On the other hand, she is calling every social member to contribute to the healing of trauma victims. Having understood hatred and indifference as obstacles to trauma individuals' recovery, she creates characters whose love and compassion for Frank and Cee help the latter heal from their suffering.

The narrative reveals that Frank escapes from the mental hospital which might be from Morrison's own volition, given racism sustains white doctors' use of black veterans for experiment. Manuela López Ramírez (2016: 133) clarifies: "mentally ill African American veterans did not receive the appropriate medical care they

needed when they returned from the war. Nor were they treated the same as their white counterparts when they were hospitalized." Metaphorically, Morrison sheds light on their treatment as follows (Home, 18): "You all go fight, come back, they treat you like dogs. Change that. They treat dogs better." These words are from Reverend Locke to Frank.

Indeed, Reverend John Locke is the man who ushers Frank in his house when the latter flees from the mental hospital. The love and compassion he and his wife have shown to Frank soothes the latter's suffering. After comfortably seating him, the wife, Jean Locke, advises Frank to put his feet into a basin of water as a means of relief (Home, 14): "Jean Locke returned with a basin of cold water. 'Put your feet here, son. It's cold but you don't want them to heat up too fast.' Frank sank his feet into the water, sighing. 'Thanks'." No doubt, her calling Frank "son" underscores her compassion for him. Reverend Locke and his wife treat Frank as their own child, an attitude worth emulating toward vulnerable people. The wife's next action shows their endeavor to heal Frank (Home, 16): "Jean came back with a cup and a plate of soda crackers. 'It's just hot water with lots of salt in it,' she said. 'Drink it up, but slowly. I'll get you a blanket.' Frank sipped twice and then gulped down the rest. When Jean brought more, she said, 'son, dip the crackers in the liquid. They'll go down better.'" Clearly, Reverend Locke and his wife provide Frank with the love and care he lacks from white mental hospital.

Morrison's strategic line between the couple Locke and Scott regarding their love toward helpless people is worth highlighting. Indeed, Reverend Locke and his wife represent to Frank what Doctor Scott and his wife represent to Cee. Like the Locke family toward Frank, Doctor Scott and his wife surround Cee with all the possible love and kindness when the latter comes to stay with them. However, their love and kindness falls fake and hypocritical, as they end up using Cee for medical experiment. Their love contradicts the Lockes' genuine love, a means for Morrison to denounce fake love in favor of true one. Indeed, Reverend Locke and his wife's authentic love toward Frank makes him feel at home. Knowing that sleep is a good medicine, the Reverend advises him to get some (Home, 16): "'Get some sleep, brother. You got a rocky journey ahead.'" Frank feels better and very grateful after a long and deep sleep. He feels more grateful at his departure, as the couple surrounds him with more love and kindness. The narrative reveals that the Reverend hands him some money before instructing him to get in touch with Jessie Maynard, another Reverend at Portland. Equally, Mrs. Locke provides him with more gifts, wishing him a safe journey (Home, 18): "Locke handed Frank a flap torn from an envelope with Maynard's address and told him that Maynard had a big congregation and could offer more help than his own small flock. Jean had packed six sandwiches, some cheese, some bologna, and three oranges into a grocery bag. She handed it to him along with a watch cap." Thus, Frank departs for Lotus, very satisfied. The Reverend takes him in his own car to the nearest bus stop.

Understandably, the next person to assist Frank is Reverend Jessie Maynard. Unfortunately, Maynard is not the right person Frank needs for his recovery. Morrison might probably use him to emphasize love as the sine qua non condition to heal people who are victim of trauma. The narrator makes it clear in these terms (Home, 22): "There was no love from Jessie Maynard in Portland. Help, yes." Indeed, Morrison might have got inspiration from Apostle Paul's sermon on love in the *Holy Bible* while writing this about Jessie Maynard (I Corinthians 13.3): "I may give away everything I have, and even give up my body to be burned—but if I have no love, this does me no good." As Reverend himself, Jessie Maynard ignores this biblical instruction. He is unworthy to be emulated when it comes to helping trauma individuals. The narrator further puts (Home, 22): "still hostile as he was, Reverend Maynard gave him [Frank] helpful information for his journey." To help is good, but help with love is best.

The next character in *Home* who enters into Frank's life with a compassionate love is Lily. In this respect, Ibarrola (2014: 113) straightforwardly puts: "Frank enjoys a short respite while living with Lillian Florence Jones—or Lily—, who, by means of love and care, almost succeeds in 'changing everything' and making him feel at home." Indeed, Lillian Florence Jones is a seamstress Frank meets at a cleaner's in Kentucky. From their friendly discussions and companionship, they end up staying together for weeks and months. Frank's stay with Lily causes the latter much trouble and anxiety. For instance, at times, when she comes home from work, she will see Frank sitting in the sofa staring at the floor with one sock on and the other one in his hand after messing up everything in the kitchen. Indignantly, Lily will clean up all the mess he has left (Home, 75). At other times, she will find Frank's clothes scattered on the floor, food-encrusted dishes in the sink, ketchup bottles left open, beard hair in the drain, waterlogged towels bunched on bathroom tiles (Home, 78). With many other evidences from the novel, the reader comes to grip that Frank is of no use while living with Lily: he is, to say, an untamed nuisance. However, as the narrator emphasizes, Lily does not blame him (Home, 75). Instead, she surrounds him with love and care, and the result is what Tosha K. Sampson-Choma (2019:6) underlines in the following:

Frank becomes the person he longs to be when he is with Lily. Her calming presence and kindness cause him to be at peace and reawaken a desire to be a strong, good man [...]. She demonstrates a love in which a Black woman nurtures her partner and provides him stability—emotional, physical, and mental. Her love abates his dependence on alcohol, his nightmares, and attraction to other women. In contrast to his brokenness and inertness, Lily brings vitality and life.

From the above, Lily has brought Frank to life. Certainly, he is dead, albeit alive. Tosha K. Sampson-Choma(2019:5) goes the extra mile to argue: “she [Lily] represents life where before there was impending death. In her purity and innocence, Lily provides Frank with an emotional anchor that keeps him from drifting on the tides of war. It is her first time being intimate with a man, but Lily has a significant effect on Frank.” Her life-giving effect on Frank is through love, care and patience. Getting conscious of the positive change in his life, Frank himself recognizes Lily’s incommensurable role(Home, 107-8): “He was now convinced his attachment to her was medicinal, like swallowing aspirin. Effectively, whether she knew it or not, Lily displaced his disorder, his rage, and his shame. The displacements had convinced him the emotional wreckage no longer existed.” Definitely, apart from Reverend Locke and his wife, Lily has contributed to Frank’s psychological recovery a great deal.

Besides Frank, Morrison demonstrates through the recovery of Cee, Frank’s own sister, that only love and compassion can render good service to people who are victim of trauma. Cee, to be sure, is the most miserable character in *Home*. Since her childhood, she has been going from trauma to trauma. The worst is the physical trauma she endures from Dr. Scott’s medical experimentation on her. She almost dies of pain and bleeding. However, Morrison reconstructs her through love and care from her siblings: Frank and others.

Indeed, Frank has not fully recovered from his own trauma when he learns, from an urgent message, her sister’s trouble (Home, 10): “Come fast. She be dead if you tarry.” With no delay, he endeavors by all means to reach Cee in Dr. Scott’s house and takes her lifeless to Lotus. The care with which he brings Cee to the bus stop is worth underlining(Home, 113): “Frank raised Cee to her feet, draped her right arm around his neck. Her head on his shoulder, her feet not even mimicking steps, she was feather-light. Frank got to the bus stop and waited for what seemed like an eternity.” The reader realizes, from the foregoing, Frank’s patience in waiting for the bus to carry her sister, an attitude Morrison expects from anyone involved in healing of a trauma person. If love is patient, then Frank really loves his sister Cee. In normal circumstances, he has to take the lady to a hospital. However, he, surprisingly, brings her to community women who have not gone to any medical school. This shows Morrison’s distrust of hospitals for doctors’ hatred and indifference toward patients. Thus, she makes Frank take Cee to loving and caring community women in their own hometown, Lotus.

The community women of Lotus must be hailed for their extensive love and care for Cee. Arguing in favor of these women, Irene Visser(2016: 158) puts: “the help extended by the community of women in Lotus is another major factor in the siblings’ process of recovery from trauma.” Sometimes, family is not only one’s father or mother, but all the good people around, as is in African tradition. As a reminder, both Cee’s father and mother are dead. Lenore, her grandmother, is paralyzed. Thus, there is no one, technically speaking, to care for Cee. In her desire for people to love and care for one another, especially people who are victim of trauma, Morrison invites women of Lotus to take Cee as their own daughter. When Frank reaches Lotus with his sick sister, he brings her straight to Miss Ethel Fordham who, with a great pity and compassion, whispers (Home, 116): “‘Have mercy’[...] ‘She’s on fire.’ I got work to do.” For sure, Miss Ethel, as well as all the women in the neighborhood, has humane task to perform.

As the woman presiding Lotus community women in saving Cee’s life, Miss Ethel’s devotion for her is noted by critics. For instance, Maxine L. Montgomery (2012: 331) puts: “Miss Ethel, who leads the way in providing the security that Cee lacks, becomes the mother that Cee no longer has. Cee, in turn, becomes a child again.” Becoming one family, all the women surround Cee with great love and compassionate care (Home, 119): “the women took turns nursing Cee and each had a different recipe for her cure.” For two months, these women have committed their energy, time and their medical knowledge to the healing of Cee. They stand together as one individual to combat the sickness they consider as an enemy (Home, 121): “two months surrounded by country women have changed her. The women handled sickness as though it were affront, an illegal, invading braggart who needed whipping. They didn’t waste their time and the patient’s with sympathy.” In the process, Cee completely recovers from her trauma, and compliments to the community women for their togetherness, love, care, and zeal remain a testimony (Home, 123):

although each of her nurses was markedly different from the others in looks, dress, and manner of speech, food and medical preferences, their similarities were glaring. There was no excess in their gardens because they shared everything. There was no trash or garbage in their homes because they had a use for everything. They took responsibility for their lives and for whatever, whoever else needed them. The absence of common sense irritated but did not surprise them. Laziness was more than intolerable to them; it was inhuman. Whether you were in the field, the house, your own backyard, you had to be busy. Sleep was not for dreaming; it was for gathering strength for the coming day. Conversation was accompanied by tasks: ironing, peeling, shucking, sorting, sewing, mending, washing, or nursing.

The above brings this part to a close. The community women’s devotion in caring for Cee is commendable. With no hatred or discrimination, they stand as one body against her trauma. Their success in saving Cee’s life clarifies Morrison’s double message: hope of recovery for people victims of trauma, and love and compassion from others toward these people.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Morrison's *Home* addresses a thematic unanimously recognized by critics as crucial: war trauma. Many acts and events lead to human-caused trauma, including war. Based on the hypothesis that Morrison links trauma to war in order to denounce it in the world, this study has explored the psychological effects of war on individuals, in general, and on veterans, in particular. The study has shown how Frank Money, the protagonist and a veteran, suffers post-traumatic stress disorder after the Korean War. His attitudes and behaviors after the war reveal that he is psychologically dislocated. Equally, the study has investigated trauma in Cee, Frank's younger sister, who feels alone and disorientated when his brother leaves for war. The study has shown how her disorientation leads her to become an assistant to a doctor who ends up using her for medical experimentation and causes her serious physical trauma. Importantly, the essay has argued that their trauma is complicated by their childhood trauma which continually haunts them. Lastly, this essay has explored some redemptive measures Morrison provides for Frank and Cee, giving hope to all the trauma individuals for their recovery. Morrison has created characters whose love and compassionate care have helped heal Frank and Cee from their trauma. Thus, she promotes love and compassion as healing forces against trauma.

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