
How Rape, Its Impact And Forgiveness Is Portrayed And Remission In Jennifer Thompson-Canino's, Ronald Cotton And Erin Torneo Memoir Picking Cotton

It seems to me, that stories of rape, or kidnapping, or anything else that may involve someone being hurt were quite interesting. I would say that "Picking Cotton" was the same. One of my greatest fears involves me getting kidnapped, or held against my will and forced to do something I ordinarily would not. In "Picking Cotton" I was not expecting the main character, Jennifer to not have been hurt, first off; and second to be a college student. When I found out that Jennifer, not only was woken up to a strange man, and raped; but she was a college student, I was not all that excited to be living out on my own. It's not the best thing to read about when it's just about to be your first year away from home. Welcome to College everyone, this sort of stuff does happen! It was a big wake up call, for me, to be more aware of dangers of being away from a sheltered life, back at home.

Jennifer Thompson wrote "Picking Cotton" in a different sort of way. She first told the story, in the eyes on Jennifer. How things looked on her point of view, exactly how things happened on the night of her rape. The next chapter was told in the view of Ronald Cotton, the suspect. Writing this book in this pattern gave each character a turn to show their side of the story. I enjoyed being able to see both how Jennifer went through the rape and questioning; and being able to see what actually happened with Cotton. This gave both, Jennifer and Cotton, a turn to tell their story. That way we couldn't view our opinions strictly to one or the other. Jennifer and Ron were able to tell their individual point of view of the story. They were able to share each of their stories differently, yet completely together.

This story was quite descriptive when it came to what actually happened, both during the rape and what happened after the rape. I believe Jennifer wanted to give us a strong sense of what exactly happened to her. Knowing what had happened in such a detailed point of view gave the reader an opportunity to truly understand how Jennifer felt during the frightful event. How dirty, scared, and helpless she felt; and gave us the opportunity to feel what the way she did. Even though Jennifer felt scared, and feared her perpetrator; she remained strong and fairly calm while trying to get the rapist on her good side. Seeing how her distracting of him kept her safe and alive is quite inspiring. In that position I know it would be very difficult to remain calm and not scream my head off while kicking or trying to "fight" my attacker. Jennifer has given me a better example on how I could better handle a situation like hers.

In "Picking Cotton" Ronald Cotton; after 11 years in prison, came to forgive Jennifer after that

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one police line-up that forever would change his life. This story's ability to show one man's complete forgiveness is quite inspiring. It would be hard for me to completely understand how after 11 years of your life taken from you, you can simply let go so easily. I am a big grudge holder, and I know it would take some time to forgive someone, who had taken a huge chunk of my life away from me; especially if I did not deserve the punishment. Overall, this story was suspenseful, emotional, and very inspiring. It is a story I could really take a lesson on, although you may never forget, forgiveness is the better road to take. You could build more friendships, and live a happier life if you simply forgave others for mistakes made. Ronald Cotton forgave, and gained a life long friend. It's up to you to decide if you want to live a life full of anger and grudges, or learn to let go and live without that burden, you decide.

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