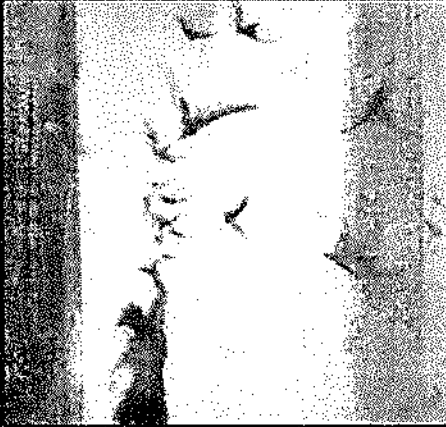




# Hard-Won Liberty

# Hard-Won Liberty



“There is no easy walk to freedom  
anywhere.”

—Nelson Mandela

**SPEECH**

Speech at the  
March on Washington

**Josephine Baker**

**SHORT STORY**

Bile

**Christine Lee Zilka**

**Background** Josephine Baker (1906–1975) was an African American dancer and singer who became an international musical and political icon. After dropping out of high school, Baker joined a vaudeville troupe as a dancer and headed to New York City. In the 1920s, she moved to France, where she became an overnight sensation, dancing and singing in cabarets. In the 1950s and 1960s, she joined the fight for civil rights, refusing to perform for segregated audiences and eventually adopting 12 multiethnic children. In 1963, Baker was asked to speak at the March on Washington, along with Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders.



# Speech at the March on Washington

Speech by Josephine Baker

CLOSE READ  
Notes

1. **READ** ▶ As you read lines 1–13, begin to collect and cite text evidence.
  - Underline the statement Baker gives to introduce herself.
  - In the margin, explain Baker’s reasons for speaking out.
  - Circle the difference between Josephine Baker and other African Americans.

Friends and family . . . you know I have lived a long time and I have come a long way. And you must know now that what I did, I did originally for myself. Then later, as these things began happening to me, I wondered if they were happening to you, and then I knew they must be. And I knew that you had no way to defend yourselves, as I had.

And as I continued to do the things I did, and to say the things I said, they began to beat me. Not beat me, mind you, with a club—but you know, I have seen that done too—but they beat me with their pens, with their writings. And friends, that is much worse.

- 10 When I was a child and they burned me out of my home, I was frightened and I ran away. Eventually I ran far away. It was to a place called France. Many of you have been there, and many have not. But I must tell you, ladies and gentlemen, in that country I never feared.

But I must tell you, when I was young in Paris, strange things happened to me. And these things had never happened to me before. When I left St. Louis a long time ago, the conductor directed me to the last car. And you all know what that means.

But when I ran away, yes, when I ran away to another country, I didn't have to do that. I could go into any restaurant I wanted to, and I could  
20 drink water anyplace I wanted to, and I didn't have to go to a colored toilet either, and I have to tell you it was nice, and I got used to it, and I liked it, and I wasn't afraid anymore that someone would shout at me and say, "Go to the end of the line."

So over there, far away, I was happy, and because I was happy I had some success, and you know that too.

Then, after a long time, I came to America to be in a great show for Mr. Ziegfeld,<sup>1</sup> and you know Josephine was happy. You know that. Because I wanted to tell everyone in my country about myself. I wanted to let  
30 everyone know that I made good, and you know too that that is only natural.

But on that great big beautiful ship, I had a bad experience. A very important star was to sit with me for dinner, and at the last moment I discovered she didn't want to eat with a colored woman. I can tell you it was some blow.

And I won't bother to mention her name, because it is not important, and anyway, now she is dead.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ziegfeld: Florenz Ziegfeld (1867–1932) was an American theater producer known for his series of theatrical revues called the Ziegfeld Follies.

2. **◀ REREAD** Reread lines 6–13. What are the most important points Baker makes in these lines?

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3. **▶ READ** As you read lines 14–41, continue to cite textual evidence.
- Underline examples of segregation in America.
  - In the margin, explain why Baker was happier in France (lines 18–30).

And when I got to New York way back then, I had other blows—when they would not let me check into the good hotels because I was colored, or eat in certain restaurants. And then I went to Atlanta, and it was a horror to  
 40 me. And I said to myself, I am Josephine, and if they do this to me, what do they do to the other people in America?

You know, friends, that I do not lie to you when I tell you I have walked into the palaces of kings and queens and into the houses of presidents. And much more. But I could not walk into a hotel in America and get a cup of coffee, and that made me mad. And when I get mad, you know that I open my big mouth. And then look out, 'cause when Josephine opens her mouth, they hear it all over the world.

So I did open my mouth, and you know I did scream, and when I demanded what I was supposed to have and what I was entitled to, they still  
 50 would not give it to me.

So then they thought they could smear me, and the best way to do that was to call me a communist. And you know, too, what that meant. Those were dreaded words in those days, and I want to tell you also that I was hounded by the government agencies in America, and there was never one ounce of proof that I was a communist. But they were mad. They were mad because I told the truth. And the truth was that all I wanted was a cup of coffee. But I wanted that cup of coffee where I wanted to drink it, and I had the money to pay for it, so why shouldn't I have it where I wanted it?

4. **REREAD** Reread lines 37–41. Explain Josephine Baker's thinking in these lines. Why is she concerned with "the other people in America"?

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5. **READ** As you read lines 42–58, continue to cite textual evidence.

- In the margin, explain why Josephine Baker "opens her mouth."
- Underline text that explains what happened as a result of Baker's protests.

60 Friends and brothers and sisters, that is how it went. And when I screamed loud enough, they started to open that door just a little bit, and we all started to be able to squeeze through it.

Now, I am not going to stand in front of all of you today and take credit for what is happening now. I cannot do that. But I want to take credit for telling you how to do the same thing, and when you scream, friends, I know you will be heard. And you will be heard now.

70 But you young people must do one thing, and I know you have heard this story a thousand times from your mothers and fathers, like I did from my mama. I didn't take her advice. But I accomplished the same in another fashion. You must get an education. You must go to school, and you must learn to protect yourself. And you must learn to protect yourself with the pen, and not the gun. Then you can answer them, and I can tell you—and I don't want to sound corny—but friends, the pen really is mightier than the sword.

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6. **◀ REREAD** Reread lines 42–58. How does Baker's claim of the rights afforded to her in other countries strengthen her argument? Support your answer with explicit textual evidence.

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7. **▶ READ** As you read lines 59–78, continue to cite textual evidence.
- Underline text describing the results of Baker's "screaming."
  - In the margin, explain Baker's advice for young people.
  - Circle text describing the benefits of protecting oneself with a pen.

I want you to have a chance at what I had. But I do not want you to have to run away to get it.

I am not a young woman now, friends. My life is behind me. There is not too much fire burning inside me. And before it goes out, I want you to use what is left to light that fire in you. So that you can carry on, and so that you can do those things that I have done. Then, when my fires have burned out, and I go where we all go someday, I can be happy.

80 You know, I have always taken the rocky path. I never took the easy one, but as I grew older, and as I knew I had the power and the strength, I took that rocky path, and I tried to smooth it out a little. I wanted to make it easier for you. I want you to have a chance at what I had. But I do not want you to have to run away to get it. And mothers and fathers, if it is too late for you, think of your children. Make it safe here so they do not have to run away, for I want for you and your children what I had.

8. **◀ REREAD** Reread lines 59–73. What does Josephine Baker give herself credit for in the civil rights movement? How does this reasoning appeal to the shared beliefs of her audience? Support your answer with explicit textual evidence.

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9. **▶ READ** As you read lines 79–96, continue to cite textual evidence.
- Underline text describing what Baker has done for African Americans.
  - Circle text explaining what Josephine Baker asks the audience to do for future generations.





**Background** In June 1950, Communist North Korea invaded South Korea and U.S. President Truman authorized the use of American ground forces to stop the advance. He felt it was necessary to intervene in order to take a stand against Communist aggression. After some early back-and-forth, the fighting stalled and casualties mounted. American officials worked anxiously with North Koreans to end the war. An agreement was finally reached in July 1953. In all, some 2.5 million soldiers and civilians lost their lives during the war. Christine Lee Zilka explores the repercussions the Korean War has on one American family in the following short story.



# Bile

Short Story by Christine Lee Zilka

1. **READ** ▶ As you read lines 1–33, begin to collect and cite text evidence.
  - Underline text that references the war.
  - Circle text describing the family’s background.
  - In the margin, explain what the narrator learns about her father in lines 19–22.

CLOSE READ  
Notes

When the Korean War ended in 1953, my father became restless. Korea lay in ruins, but there were no more enemy soldiers and no more bombs to flee. My father had become addicted to war. Without battles, he had no sense of urgency, no sense of drama. He had already survived, and like the rest of the country, he tried to pick up his life where he had left off. But he was not used to peace. He could make no sense of math equations as an engineering student; it all seemed **trivial**.

trivial:

10 He made journeys into the countryside where he had grown up, hoping to reconnect himself. On one of his outings, he found a trapper gutting a bear. An idea came to him. He asked the hunter for the gall bladder of the bear.

My father put his tongue to the gall bladder. It tasted like the war. He smiled grimly. He could not fail. He could not turn back, because behind him were the Japanese army, the North Korean army, poverty, and abuse.

bile:

He could not rest. This bile would be his medicine. He wrapped up the gall bladder and froze it. Whenever he felt he was getting too content, sleeping an hour too much, smiling a second too long, he would hunger for the taste of it, bitter, and clinging to his tongue.

As children, we learned that Daddy would have died if he had not had the bile: the bile reminded him of the misery and bitterness of suffering.

What I now realize is that the bitterness stayed inside him and traveled from his tongue, down into his belly, where it now churns.

Tradition runs strong in our family. We are Korean Americans, a strong line of warriors, descended from the Mongols. We are modern Genghis Khans,<sup>1</sup> quick tempered but passionate, with chronicles of suffering living in our veins. We are nomadic, settling in a country that severed our mother country in half, with a tourniquet of barbed wire, swathed in khaki green.

Suffering is so much a part of the Korean psyche that we have given it a word, *Han*. It is a particular suffering, a sense of helplessness against overwhelming odds, a feeling of total abandonment. This word is part of what we call ourselves and our mother country, *Hankook sahrahm*, *Hankook nahrah*; Korean people, Korean land. This Han is silent and noble. It is our code and **mantra**.

mantra:

<sup>1</sup> **Genghis Khan:** (1162?–1227) Mongol conqueror who united the Mongol tribes and forged an empire from China to Persia.

2. **◀ REREAD** Reread lines 1–33. In your own words, summarize what you have learned about the narrator’s father. Support your answer with explicit textual evidence.

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3. **▶ READ** As you read lines 34–85, continue to cite text evidence.
- Underline text that characterizes Eugene or describes his actions.
  - In the margin, explain what happens in lines 34–42.
  - Circle text that characterizes the other three family members.

I had hard life, nothing  
to look forward to, just  
running away.

On our Sunday hikes, my father brings up the rear. My brother Eugene, the Boy Scout, bounds up the hill on light bunny feet. Safe on the hiking trails of the San Gabriel Mountains, I try to enjoy the views beyond the silt of smog, but Father barks at us, that there is an army behind us. We quicken our pace. There are sharp-toothed men who want to kill us. They have shotguns, horsehair hats. They ride bareback, puff on long pipes, smoke  
40 opium, stab each other in the back.

Eugene runs up the hill out of earshot. Father, Mother, and I drip with effort, and we push ourselves to each crest out of this ancestral fear.

“Eugene! Wait for us!” I shout. I don’t see him anymore, and he doesn’t answer. The path bends mercilessly in the chaparral<sup>2</sup> heat.

“Forget about him. He never wait. Stupid boy, never cares about us,” says Father.

Mother hits Father on the arm. “Leave him alone. You are bossy, maybe he’s running away from you.”

Father glares. Mother doubles her pace so that her shoes kick dust back  
50 at us over the switchback.

Up ahead, I imagine Eugene’s already arrived at the destination, a shady plateau of pine trees. He’s taking a long sip of water from the water fountain up there, and drinking in the views of Pasadena. He may even see us, a short and irritated snake making its way.

plateau:

We gather in the kitchen to eat an early lunch. Our bodies, sweaty with the recent Sunday excursion, stick to the vinyl kitchen seats. Father looks straight at Eugene, points his finger and bellows, “You never wait for us!”

Eugene rolls his eyes and says, “Dad, you never give us a break.”

Father takes a breath and continues. “I am going to tell you about  
60 myself, your father. I had hard life, nothing to look forward to, just running away. Eugene, you run to something, like nothing pushing. We go hiking, you go away. You don’t wait for your own family? We have to enjoy together!”

Eugene replied, “You were just slow, and I waited for you at the top. What’s the big deal?” My brother kicks me in the leg.

I chime in. “Dad, please don’t worry so much. It’s not so complicated. Eugene just is in better shape. Don’t take it so seriously. We get it!” (Please, please do not tell the story again.)

<sup>2</sup> chaparral: a dense growth of tangled thorny shrubs.

synopsis:

“I gave up my dreams long ago and decided to have children instead.  
70 You don’t know your father, what I do for you! You know, I have to teach  
you good lesson, so you will never forget.” This sends my father into a  
**synopsis** of his life. We have it memorized.

“I don’t even know if my brother is alive. He fought against the  
Japanese, and they took everything, burned our house. I was five years old.  
But our family was a hero family, so our village supported us,” says Father.  
“Then the Korean War came, and my brother, he joined the Communists.  
Everyone hated us then. We had to burn his pictures. Still, we survived.”

So it was with my mother as well. “Your mommy, her family had to  
leave North Korea. They took only what they could carry. They put the  
80 money and gold and jewelry inside their clothes, inside the silk linings. Rich  
people became poor in one night!”

Then Mother adds, “But we were smart. Instead of eating only one bowl  
of rice a day, we mixed it with barley, so we ate a little more often. We  
always ate, even though sometimes we had to sell our clothes. Your  
grandma’s wedding dress, someone else owns it now.”

“Eugene, you are going to learn,” says Father. He nods at my mother,  
points at the refrigerator. My mother takes out a recycled plastic Safeway

4. **◀ REREAD** Reread lines 34–85. Explain how Eugene acts differently  
from the rest of the family. Why is his father so upset? Support your  
answer with explicit textual evidence.

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5. **▶ READ** As you read lines 86–156, prepare to cite text evidence.
- Underline text that explains what the gall bladder and its bile represent to the parents.
  - Circle text that shows the children’s reactions to the gall bladder in lines 86–115.
  - In the margin, explain what the father tells Eugene about the gall bladder in lines 94–100.

It does not send an alarm, but Eugene raises an eyebrow and I lean forward.

bag. We reuse plastic bags often, and it could contain anything, a box of ice cream or a package of dried seaweed. It does not send an alarm, but Eugene  
90 raises an eyebrow and I lean forward.

“We have something for you. It will help you like it helped your father.”

Eugene nods, distracted. “Enough with the story. I get it! I have heard it all before. You had a lousy childhood . . .”

“Don’t say that! I don’t think you understand. I took the gall bladder of a bear and drank the bile! It reminded me of what I was working away from. I was working so I would have a better future. So I would have a better future than my past. My past is bile! You have to learn about your father. Who you are, you know?”

“You have to be tough, too,” comments Mother.

100 “You will learn, too,” says Father.

Mother hands the plastic bag to me, and goes to get a plate from the cupboard. The bag hisses open. Inside is a Ziploc bag, and inside it is a piece of flesh. It looks slimy like the innards of Foster Farm chickens. But this is larger than any chicken liver I’ve ever seen. It is pear-shaped and bruised in tones of blue and gray and brown. It is dying, deflating, defecating on itself. I fully expect it to pulse, but it lies still. It smells like a goat has parked itself in our kitchen.

Father gestures to me. “Open it! Take it out! Put it on the plate!” I take out the Ziploc bag and place it gingerly on the plate. Is this some kind of  
110 sick sushi?

“Open it!” snaps Mother.

I recoil. Mother and Father are on some screwed-up Old World kick, and I duck out of view.

“I won’t make you drink it like I did. You’re not like me. You will taste it, that’s all you need to do. But you will learn.”

I can only tell you the before and the after, because I did not watch them feed Eugene the bile.

I leave the room. I hear my mother unwrap the gall bladder and snag it with chopsticks. I hear Eugene's footsteps, my father's commands, the rush  
120 of water from the faucet. I imagine the bile as it fills Eugene's body with poison and drains his face of all the pink flesh, leaving it pinched and brittle.

In the hallway outside the kitchen, I am surrounded by childhood awards and family pictures: Father smokes thin white cigarettes, leaning against a white tree trunk with dark gray leaves. He is wearing black pants and a white undershirt. He is lean and tanned. His shoulders are held back at attention, and his skin is taut, his eyes open wide. His gaze rests on something soft and gentle. He is at the point of remembering . . .

taut:

There's a picture of me at Disneyland, holding an ice cream cone. My  
130 father has no pictures of himself as a child, and maybe that furthers the distance between us, because we have no proof that he was ever a child. He was born a jaw-clenching, wide-eyed man who drank bile.

Eugene brushes past me in the hall. "Move," he says.

I move. "Hey."

He looks up and past me.

"Never mind," I say. There are no words of healing.

In this way, we inherit suffering. But the bile does not strengthen Eugene. It flows within him, as it did within my father, but it does not give him strength and resolve. Only resentment.

140 Long after the gallbladder has become a solid rock of ice next to the ice cream, Father asks me, "Should you taste the bile, too?"

I want to shout, "No!" but I don't. I want to tell him that I think this is sick and perverted, but I don't. I know what I have to say. Like my father, I know how to survive.

I know the answer to this. My father coached me a million times.

"I'm a Hankook sahrahm. I understand why I need this bile, because I already have this bile."

Father nods. He walks out of the kitchen, his feet squeaking against the linoleum.

150 He leaves a wake of anger in his path, and my mother and I sponge it up. We don't want him to return and refuel; it's easier when he does not see what he does to us, even though I think he should. I sit on the stool and stare out the windows into the cul de sac.

Mother scurries around, washing dishes. "You know your father, he really lives just for you. He really loves you, but it comes out all wrong," she apologizes. I stare at her Han figure.

I walk into the backyard and stare at the wall, covered in honeysuckle. The scent is sweet, and the drunken bees lumber slowly through the vines. The sun beats against me, and my plastic sandals mold against my feet and stick slightly to the concrete path as they make “smuck-smuck” sounds on the patio pavers.

I’ve walked into a fireplace and I just want a little relief. I wonder what would happen if I could disappear. I wonder how mad my father would be. The neighbors’ wall looms just ahead.

I drag one of the backyard benches over to the wall, and I sit in its shade. I cannot stay sitting for long. I stand on the bench to look over the wall into the neighbors’ backyard. The Andersons are away on vacation, and we are on neighborhood watch.

Inside the house, I hear my father yelling at Eugene. Doors slam. My mother makes kitchen noises, the clattering of dishes on countertop tile and porcelain sink. All this, amidst the bees and heat. I can either go inside the cool, poisonous house or melt outside.

My legs twitch. I’ve been standing still, stretched over the wall, and I ache. I have also been holding my breath. I let out a desperate exhalation. The Andersons’ lot is on a higher elevation than ours; it would not be a long

6. **◀ REREAD** Reread lines 116–156. Summarize the narrator’s response to her father’s anger and his behavior. Support your answer with explicit textual evidence.

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7. **▶ READ** As you read lines 157–184, continue to cite text evidence.

- In the margin, explain the narrator’s conflict in lines 162–172.
- Underline text describing the narrator’s desires.
- Circle text that describes a change in the narrator in lines 179–184.

fall from the wall. I climb the wall slowly, so as not to anger the venomous bees, but I'm stung before I swing my leg over the top and fall into the Andersons' yard.

cathartic:

180 I limp to one of the lounge chairs and sit down. There's a welt on my leg with a stinger pulsating in the middle of it. I pull it out, but the pain is still there. A dark part of me wells up and receives that pain. Out of my numbness arises the **cathartic** pain of a bee sting. It loosens the knot in my belly. I can breathe a little now. If I focus on the pain enough, the knot travels a little up my throat.

8. **REREAD** Reread lines 157–161. What do you think the honeysuckle and the bees represent? Support your answer with explicit textual evidence.

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## SHORT RESPONSE

**Cite Text Evidence** How do parallels between the characterizations of the narrator and the father point to a theme of the story? Review your reading notes, and **cite text evidence** in your response.

Please use RACE

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