

## STUDENT: DON KEY

---

Character is often shown by our choice and how we triumph or fall in the face of conflict. Our ability to rise up from devastation often demonstrates our resilience as people. A great example of this is in the character of Meena from “The Book of Negroes” by Lawrence Hill. In this excerpt, we learn that Meena had been sold into slavery, and escaped to the black community of Birchmount, Nova Scotia. Here she has lost her husband and children, but most recently her last child, May. After having entrusted her to a white family the Witherspoons during a riot, the family stole her last child back into America. With the use of imagery, dialogue and setting, the author illustrates Meena’s struggle against a world set against her.

Meena’s despair is frequently reinforced with the imagery used by Hill. An example of the imagery used being “My children were like phantom limbs, lost but still attached to me, gone but still painful.” In this, it shows Meena’s internal battle, debating her will to survive despite the loss of her last child. This image reinforces the idea that she has lost yet another piece of herself, that she has no hope of it ever being return.