

# A Book Review of Ashely C. Ford's *Somebody's Daughter: A Memoir*

Zainab Ameer Jabbar Jabbar

Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, Istanbul, Türkiye

Email: Zaynabameer96@gmail.com

**How to cite this paper:** Jabbar, Z. A. J. (2023). A Book Review of Ashely C. Ford's *Somebody's Daughter: A Memoir*. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 11, 486-499. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2023.116032>

**Received:** April 24, 2023

**Accepted:** June 26, 2023

**Published:** June 29, 2023

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## Abstract

One of the fundamental concerns of the American people is the search for identity. The most important aspect of Ashley C Ford's narrative is the transition from childhood to maturity. She grew up with her father incarcerated for the majority of her life, and she held him in high regard even though she had no idea what he had done to be there. This study examines one of the most recent identities in English literature, which has inspired readers both mentally and emotionally. The author enters the world of a poor black girl searching for her identity within her family and society. In addition, the purpose of this research is to determine the value of love in a family and the strength of vulnerability. *Somebody's Daughter* is a book that combines inventive and modern tragedy by separating past and present. The author sets out on a compelling quest to discover the connections between who she is and what she was born into, as well as the complex familial love that frequently holds them together.

## Keywords

A Black Woman, Childhood, Melodrama, Father and Daughter Relationship

## 1. Introduction

In this fascinating as well as hard-sledging memoir, the author grapples with her father's incarceration. *Somebody's Daughter* by Ashley C. Ford, released by Flairon Books on June 1, 2021, is a New York Times bestselling memoir. She has written and edited many magazines and webs. *Somebody's Daughter* is her first debut book. As a black queer writer, she often writes about personal experiences, including being sexually assaulted as a youngster, her inability to see her father and her strained connection with her mother. She tells her entire story from childhood to adulthood. She travels to the past and then back to the present reg-

ularly to show the readers how her mother, grandmother, and other key individuals failed to do their jobs and how she has dealt with them, Ford uses her child's point of view to construct fully three-dimensional pictures of them. In other words, she sets out on a tremendous journey to discover the connections between who she is and what she was born into as well as the tangled familial love that frequently unites them.

Numerous studies and essays have been published on the plight of people of color. The majority of the black population in the United States is incarcerated. Despite this, it is a fact of American life. Researchers have done an excellent job of explaining how America's punishing culture has begun and how it has evolved through time, as well as the racial disparities that have been woven into it. Mass incarceration's impact on family life has received far less attention than it deserves. It is about a family that has to deal with the weight of a missing loved one's absence in this situation. In her story, Ford, whose father spent nearly 30 years in prison, teaches us that life goes on even when a parent is absent. In the midst of this turmoil, her mother's behaviour becomes increasingly erratic, and her grandmother tries to step in to fill the vacuum left by her mother's abandonment. They make it through, but not without a lot of pain along the way. As a poor, black girl in Indiana, the novel explores the isolation and complexity of a youth in a family that has been broken apart by incarceration. After battling her body and environment, Ashley sets out on a remarkable journey to identify the connections between who she is and what she was born into. Even though Ashley no longer sees her childhood from the perspective of a child, she is brutally honest about how she felt during that time in her life in her memoir. Ashley C. Ford's readers praise her original approach to recounting their author's life events. Despite having a very different narrative, her writing has a way of putting readers in her position. It is fascinating to hear about the peaks and valleys, triumphs, and tragedies, of other people's life. The depth of Ashley's mind is revealed in her writing and reflections, especially those that focus on her formative years. In my opinion, it brings attention to issues of racism, homophobia, and classism. In spite of its absence from the memoir, the author is outwardly supportive of the LGBTQ community and feminist causes. Human rights, in Ashley's opinion, apply everywhere. But the conversation loses all meaning when we talk about human rights without identifying specific groups that are victims of violence and discrimination. We discussed classism, sexism, and LGBTQ rights all at once today. On top of that, she is a true warrior for what she went through, and her story allows readers to make comparisons to [Maya Angelou's \(1969\) \*Knowing Why the Caged Bird Sings\*](#). We can always count on the people we love and the friends we keep even if they are not flawless. As with anything, we have to pick and choose what to keep and what to discard.

For the most part, she has no idea her upbringing is difficult; she has no idea why her mother is not as emotionally available as she should have been, and she has had no idea why her father was incarcerated. The writer has authored a me-

moir of her formative years. She has been struggling to make ends meet while coping with the physical and emotional changes brought on by poverty. As a child, she earns the reputation of being a girl who fights boys. As an adolescent and an adult, she thinks that her body has betrayed her by being too large and unsuitable. Her exterior personality does not match her inner emotional existence. She struggles with excruciating feelings of uncertainty and anonymity. Her dad has been her most enduring source of love throughout it all. Despite the fact that he spends the majority of his life in prison, Ford has no idea why her father is in there. Later, she gets raped by a horrible ex-boyfriend during all of this, and now she must find a way to reconcile her father's crime with the father she loves. After that, it begins to make sense why her father is incarcerated.

This work is divided into two sections: the book's appearance and contents, and the distinctive life story of a black girl.

## 2. Review of Literature

Burton (2021) claims that Ashley C. Ford's autobiography, *Somebody's Daughter*, is an elegant bildungsroman about a life characterized by pain and sadness in addition to compassion and love. It is a complex and beautiful novel that sheds light on and questions the author's youth while compelling the audience to consider their own experiences as someone else's daughter, but what is important is how those experiences affect and how they view themselves. Bridgett M. Davis notes that Ashley C. Ford presents a symbolically rich incident early in her biography. Many readers will recognize and comprehend the universality of the topics the book explores, but at its core, this is a tale about the intricacy and vulnerability of Black women's lives. Ford started working on the book's transcript in 2017, even though she actually started writing her memoir, "*Somebody's Daughter*", in 2010 with the "Brush and Floss" piece she wrote in Christman's class (Davis, 2021). Analyzing the appearance and setting is equally crucial to understanding the background and narrative of the book. The details from the book will be explained in the sections that follow:

### 2.1. What Goes into a Book's Appearance?

If she is trying to say that she is not anyone's daughter, then I may trust that she means it. Let us explore; when a father is imprisoned, what happens to his family? Concerning the title, it is ironic, as the author intends to show the reader what will happen after they read the book. She does feel as though neither her mother nor her father are her family. She spent the majority of her life trying to figure out who she was, but she eventually realized she is not anyone's kid. She does not, however, explicitly explain the concept because she wants her readers to figure out why she lives so far from her family.

### 2.2. The Impact of a Letter: From Father to a Daughter

To begin with, the writer splits the novel into thirty-two chapters. In each chap-

ter, she illustrates a certain topic by telling a story from her own life. Ashley C. Ford, the author of *Somebody's Daughter*, receives a letter from her father near the start of the book. He had been condemned to twenty years in prison for rape when he wrote the letter. The importance of the father-daughter relationship is underscored by the letter's placement on the book's first page. And we have plunged right into the middle of their relationship right away. There is a lot of tension in the book because of the longing for fatherhood. Ford has the letters from her father, the memories of her one visit, and the endless assurances of unconditional love when she feels like no one loves her. Here is a small portion of the message that has impressed the readers: "Why God in heaven gave you to me, only he knows. I do not deserve to have you as my daughter, but God gave you to me for a reason, and I am so grateful to be your father. Please! Please! Forgive me for all the pain I caused you in your life" (Ford, 2021: p. 1). In one of her interviews, Ford responds to the subject of how a daughter may forgive her father for his transgression. She first explains what forgiveness entails and then says:

I knew that I could not forgive my father for what he did to someone else that's not my place that's not my goal that's not my intent it cannot be done in reality but I knew I could forgive him for his actions had affected my life and the life of the people I know and how that indirectly affected me and affects us all now and you know my definition of forgiveness is pretty purely giving up on the idea that things could have been done (The Daily Show, 2021: p. 57).

Ford's father never completely disappears from view. To be his "favourite girl", she hopes that he will be there for her when she needs him the most. She clings to a snapshot of the family taken before he was arrested. She hears his brother Clarence talking and immediately scans the room for his brother's voice. Kenny Loggins is the first artist she turns to when she is having trouble falling asleep at night because she believes he sings to her in the same way her father would. Still, her father is the missing piece, the errant brick that could have strengthened and protected her home's foundation. Though "*Somebody's Daughter*" tackles universal issues, it is ultimately a story about the vulnerability and complexity of black women's lives, portrayed from the perspective of a black woman. At its best and most uncompromising, this is "Black Girl Magic". Ford fills a void in the body of work devoted to the experiences of African American women. Throughout the book, Ashley's father "somebody" she aspires to be, is absent from the story. The writer seems to know instinctively not to inquire about the nature of her father's transgression when it is brought up in the family. After receiving letters and phone conversations from him while incarcerated, the author creates an ideal father for herself: one who represents the unconditional love and approval she does not receive from her mother or grandma. Her future is guided by him because he serves as her guidepost. He will never let her down, like Gatsby's Daisy, because he will never be able to live up to the expectations,

she has for him.

### 2.3. True Motherhood

Motherhood is the most demanding and rewarding job on the planet. It is a calling that has great highs and heartbreaking lows (Greive, 2003: p. 17). A motherhood is a gender-specific term for parenthood. Ashley's mother, on the other hand, has never treated her like her own baby. There is a complicated mother-daughter relationship, Ford's mother always cautions her to write about good experiences they have shared with her father, but she frequently includes sad memories in her correspondence. Ashley has the idea that "the badness belonged where it landed" as a young child (page 29). She did not even claim that her mother had harmed her. As she grew older, she realised how mistaken she was. Tolstoy (1878) notes at the beginning of *Anna Karenina*, "All happy families are alike, but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way" (19). Poets have always been fascinated by dysfunctional families, from the violent chaos of Agamemnon's family circle to King Lear's cruel daughters to the skin-crawling creepiness of "Daddy" (Plath, 1992). As a result, the author is forced to describe the specific brand of misery experienced by her family. The uncertainty generated by Ashley's mother's alternating bursts of protective affection and abusive wrath as a young child led Ashley to split her mother into "Mother" and "Mama" out-of-body, fugue-like wrath emanates from her mother. The inevitable slaps, kicks, and punches ensued. As much as Ford tries to anticipate the entrance of her parents' horrifying alter ego, she discovers that there is no clear border between violence and love in her family.

My mother's rage drained the light from her eyes, and she became unrecognizable to me. There was Mama, the loving mother we knew before whatever sparked her ire, and then there was Mother who showed up in her place. [...] She rose from somewhere within Mama and did the latter's dirty work (Ford, 2021: p. 12).

Ford instantly informs her readers that her father has been released from prison after introducing his confinement. After almost 30 years in prison for raping two women, Ford receives a phone call from her mother informing her that her father is coming home. She is twenty-five and utterly lost. In the next chapter, her early recollections are retold, and the story returns to the beginning. Even though she was only four years old at the time, she remembers every moment of her life. For example, she remembers her grandmother's aroma as well as her mother's pregnant tummy, sitting up late to watch the sunset in her mother's bed and the sting of a relaxer on her scalp. What a youngster notices, expressed with the grace of a lyrical-minded adult, are captured in the following chapters. For Ford, her family is crucial since she was often informed that it was all she had.

However, it is not always easy—the affection she feels for them keeps nagging

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at her at night. Her first love and best friend was her younger brother, R.C. As a result, she thought that the only thing that held them together was the belief that family requires love, and if they are going to put up with anything, it must be your blood.

#### 2.4. Grandmother or Mother?

The third and fourth chapters are mostly devoted to the writer's grandmother and her deep relationship with God. As far as concerned, she puts too much emphasis on the way her grandma communicates with the Almighty. In more than one instance, Ashley makes it clear that she was not religious at that time. Nevertheless, in order to let God know that she is thinking about him, Ford writes that she prayed for him. Because she believes there is something behind every suffering, she thinks everyone needs God and that there are times in life when people wonder why God is doing things in their lives. They go through trials and tribulations and are left wondering, "Why am I being punished?" God, on the other hand, has motives that they cannot fathom. The author takes a deep breath and relaxes, reminding us that God is in complete control. It is all part of God's magnificent plan, so there is nothing for you to be concerned about. Ashley Ford wishes she could turn to her father for optimism and encouragement in the midst of poverty, adolescence, and a strained relationship with her mother. He is in prison, and she does not know at the beginning what he did to get himself there. She does not know how to deal with the constant worries that keep her up at night, or how to handle the changes in her body that attract unwanted attention from males. Ashley establishes a relationship with a boy her mother despises in her pursuit of unconditional love. He assaults her when things go sour in the relationship. The writer is still trying to come to terms with what happened to her, which she has kept a secret from her entire family.

#### 2.5. Self-Discovery

One of the most important themes in *Somebody's Daughter* is self-discovery, it is maybe as painful and heartbreaking as it is exhilarating and enlightening. If only readers could shield Ashley from the cruel world, reassure her that she is lovely and special, and protect her from the horrible experiences of physical and sexual violence that she encounters. At an early age, she lets people know that Santa Claus is not real, allowing her to be a child who does not believe in magic. Despite her suffering, she never gives up the fight. As Ford's grandmother stated in chapter ten, "I never lost a fight in my life because I never stopped fighting until I won" (Ford, 2021: p. 69). In the end, the same holds true for Ford. As a child, she earns the reputation of being a girl who fights boys. As a teenager and an adult, she thinks that her body has betrayed her by being big and inappropriate. Her exterior personality does not match her inner emotional existence. She struggles with excruciating feelings of uncertainty, self-doubt, and anonymity. After 13 years, Ford finally realises her long-held desire of reuniting with her

father. Ford, the story's narrator, has picked her memories with care. Recollections at first appear to depict a friendly and welcoming Black family as well as the wider community. Ford's story, on the other hand, becomes darker when her ex-boyfriend sexually assaults her in her backyard as his friend looks on. In contrast, Ashley's Grandma Billie was by far her closest adult companion. Whenever she was in her vicinity of her, she felt a certain way.

### 3. Sexual Harassment and Its Effects

The use of an explicit or implicit sexual overtone is sexual harassment. Black women continue to face systematic oppression based on their race and gender, which is what we refer to as intersectionality, making them just like other women vulnerable to sexual abuse. In the middle, bizarre moments and occasional passages become a touch dull, and the suspense slows down. These occurrences were, however, quite infrequent, and I was always intrigued as to why she had done what she did. Ashley C. Ford, as a black girl, learned early on not to trust males, however, she felt safe in her grandmother's presence. Some aspects of this book have stuck with me as a reader, and I really cannot put them down. For the point when she describes how people stared at and commented on her growing physique. Specifically, it was very eye-opening for me to see the way in which young, black female bodies are sexualized by society through her eyes. Readers can sense the humiliation she suffered because of her genuine and vulnerable writing. Every character in Ashley C. Ford's *Somebody's Daughter* exhibits a keen sense of self-awareness. It is because of her honesty and the way she sees her own experiences that this book shines. As a form of self-protection, her mother began to inculcate fear in her. And her grandfather attempted to instill the same principle in her. Many painful scenes in most black people's lives cannot be erased. Ashley and her family are among those who are imprisoned in the memory. For instance, the concept of sexual violence was present in their lives. Ashley lived her childhood as an adult. She blossomed and flourished both physically and psychologically despite her challenging surroundings at home and in society. She did exceptionally well in school. Many readers will recognize and comprehend the universality of the themes in "*Somebody's Daughter*", but at its foundation, this is a narrative about the complexity and vulnerability of Black women's lives, recounted by a Black woman.

In addition, the author's second-grade cousin is sexually assaulted by a member of her family. With her mother becoming more and more concerned about sexual violence as she gets older and into adolescence, Ashley's mother demands that she never lie to her about being touched by a man; Ashley feels that her mother doesn't trust her with the truth, and she is afraid of her own body as she grows older. When Ashley reaches a certain age, she begins to realise that males are becoming more interested in her body, and this makes her uncomfortable and terrified. On New Year's Eve, she is approached by an adult man who kisses her, but she is scared to tell her mother for fear that she would be blamed. Ford

recounts in one of her interviews as she never notified her mother that she was raped:

My mother told me from the time I was very young that if anybody touched me or hurt me, especially in that way, that she would kill them, and I believed her. I absolutely believed that she would kill him. And I wasn't so concerned with his life at the time that I thought, oh, I don't want him to die. It was more so that I don't want to lose my mom. If I tell her this and she finds and kills this boy for what he's done to me, I'll have two parents in prison (Gross, 2021: p. 20).

Perhaps her hesitation stems from the fact that she has witnessed her mother's violent propensities. Most black girls can identify with Ford's depiction of the tumultuous mix of meanness, frustration, and obsession that characterizes their mother's behavior. In a world where black women and girls are undervalued and underrepresented, Ford's mother is always on the lookout for her daughter, her mother, on the other hand, has a short fuse and hits or kicks her if she does anything wrong, real or imagined. Ford says her mother is merely a mother, one who never gives the apologies her daughter so badly seeks, in these moments of parental wrath. In addition, Ford discusses her mother's boyfriend, who comes to visit them from Florida, in the following chapters. She is unable to accept this relationship. However, she is also aware of the increasing difficulties of her mother, who is a working poor single mother raising three children on her alone, and who is sad after the stillbirth of her third baby. After years of being alone, her mother's only option is to get involved with guys who verbally or physically attack her to assist her to pay the expenses. Things take a turn for the worse in the seventh chapter when Ashley reveals that her mother did want her to be with her lover. Her boyfriend wished to spend time with both. This is just too much for a little kid who is still trying to figure out her place in the world. The author dares to confess what she has been holding back. When she was a child, her grandmother dug a hole in their Missouri backyard, revealing several garden snakes slithering around, interlinked. What they're doing is the first question Ford asked of her grandmother, and she replied: "They're loving each other, baby" (48), A match and lighter fluid were then thrown into the hole by Ashley's grandmother; she watched as the snakes squeezed closer to each other and burnt to death. "These things catch fire without letting each other go", "We don't give up on our people. We don't stop loving them...Not even when we're burning alive" (48-9). It is, in my opinion, the most horrific sequence in *Somebody's Daughter*. The grandmother demonstrates a love lesson that is somewhat unpleasant. She is burning animals to teach the young girl some moral lessons. This is inappropriate, and Ashley should have taken her criticism of the situation seriously. However, there is a fact that the grandmother is determined to reach the point where Ford and her family have been burning alive for the majority of her life, joined together by the unbreakable bond of blood. The author gradually realises that the person she is and the life she desires may exist outside of the fire. Ford

was imprisoned in a household where she suffered the brunt of her mother's rage for much of her adolescence, even as she pined for a father who had been in prison since she could remember. Their relationship is a tough, yet ultimately loving relationship.

The author then spent most of her adult life at her grandparents' house. She was a well-educated woman in those days. She heard her grandmother's guidance until she was a teenager and was able to apply it to her own life. It turns out that she heeded her grandmother's counsel and did not give up on her parents, nor did she stop loving them. In the end, though, she comes to realize that it's vital to love oneself, even when it means putting boundaries in place with her family. Many of you may get bored with the length of the chapters, this is not a boring story, but the storyline tension was not what kept readers turning the pages of Ford's novel. Because the how she portrayed herself and how desperate she sounded and because of her unwavering want to be loved and nice, even when her mother had put her through hell. The detailed analysis of *Somebody's Daughter* reveals that Ashley C. Ford pulls heavily from her literary foremother Zora Neale Hurston in *Somebody's Daughter*, especially in her use of Hurston's juxtaposition of happiness and familiarity with the sun. One of the most striking parts of this book is the extraordinary amount of detail Ford provides, particularly about her early upbringing and the growth of a child's curiosity. Recalling her kindergarten teacher reading a graphic book about sunrise to her students, the repeated word "sunrise", one of Ford's greatest talents is the ability to construct such dense and sonorous words. They appear around seemingly insignificant things like a word and a pink sky, as well as unpleasant and perplexing events like sexual assault. While her relationship with her father serves as the book's main arc, it is far from the only one in which Ford expertly examines forgiveness and love. It's also worth mentioning that in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston makes use of juxtaposition to subtly invite the reader to make comparisons between two scenes, such as Janie's reactions to events, her perspective on a dream versus someone else's, or how she is treated by her spouse. The death of Janie's second husband is juxtaposed with the death of Janie's ultimate spouse Hurston in her novel (Hurston, 1937). Ford's first novel is a well-written one. Ford's penmanship is smooth and refined. Ford's firstborn, like Baldwin's (1974) novel *If Beale Street Could Talk* and Abdurraqib's essays, has the ability to pinpoint crucial times in her self-discovery journey and find respectable methods to perform without drowning in her anguish, which is the beating heart of her performance.

### **A Black Woman and Her Fearless Outcome**

It is in the ninth to seventeenth chapters that the writer shows her womanly tenacity. Because she was a black girl, she had to contend with a society that did not recognize her achievement. Among her colleagues, Ashley was the most popular student. Her teachers adored her because she was a brilliant student. She

wanted to stand out as a black girl in her community by being fearless. About femininity, she was always mocked by her mother.

It did not take her long to make new acquaintances and get along with them. Ashley Ford is a woman who is not afraid to express what she sees, which she does with admirable realism, wit, and, most importantly, compassion. She describes her story as “something was true and something that was real” (Ashley C. Ford on her book “*Somebody’s Daughter*”). What’s more, Ford’s writing style is not just illuminating but also potent and complex. She has the capacity to hold the reader’s attention—even in a memoir! She is impressed and she focuses intently on the people she depicts, preventing them from becoming symbols or motifs by retaining their humanity and individuality.

If you ask me which part of the book has had the most impact on you, I will pick the scene in chapter twenty-first. It is the moment when Ashley got a letter of congratulations from Ball State University. Ashley is finally happy. She is getting ready to leave for Ball University. She comes to bid her mother farewell. It is difficult for a girl who adores her family. She has no choice but to depart; that is her future. She does not grumble about not having a computer during her academic years. However, after a few years, her grandfather died, leaving everything to her. She grows into a self-sufficient woman. As a reviewer, I can vouch for the author’s writing talent. She can recall her childhood in detail. But reading the whole book in one go could be tedious. It would be better to condense some parts. Regardless of the pages’ length, *Somebody’s Daughter* left readers gasping for air, holding back the tears that kept coming. Reading Ashley C. Ford’s first memoir makes one want to hug her. When she starts gasping for air, cradle her and lovingly remind her how to breathe. In *Somebody’s Daughter*, we see how few members of her extended family are able to tell her the truth about her confinement. No one but her grandma can tell her the truth about her father’s imprisonment, despite the fact that they provide her with love, friendship, encouragement, and laughs. Throughout Ashley’s youth, her focus is mostly on her family’s dynamic connections and how their love for one another serves to keep her grounded during the most trying periods with her mother. Friends and teachers also come through to help her move out into the bigger world and attend college, but that comes with its own hardships. There is always a shadow of trouble hanging over Ashley’s every positive encounter. I am saddened to discover that Ashley does not receive any psychological support for the difficulties in her life. Even if the family can be divided, it’s remarkable to observe how it still prevails and serves as a form of discipline as well as an incentive. Her writing has the conversational feel of a conversation, and this makes it easy for readers to get sucked into her story. In these trying times, it is compelling to read this book in one sitting—and then again—because it is filled with messages of love, hope, and self-care that everyone can need.

As a result, a black woman now has the opportunity to establish a relationship with her father. She pens, “there was a new road to pave together, and I wanted

to do the work beside him just as I am” (page 318). Those difficult times have motivated her to pursue her goal of creating a loving family where all members get along well with one another. However, she has missed out on many happy years, and she still buries her memoir in *Somebody's Daughter* and in her heart.

#### 4. Conclusion

Black women and feminism are two topics that can be explored in this memoir. Ford hopes to bring attention to how black women feel about feminism because there have been so few national surveys with large enough samples of black women to draw conclusions. The results indicate that black women, particularly younger, well-educated women, embrace feminism strongly. Zelma W. Henriques argues that the African American woman's existence in the United States was formed and defined in the framework of slavery, thus any attempt to understand her must start there. Slave society viewed black women primarily as reproducers, objects of white men's gratification, and laborers. Their lives, both during slavery and afterwards, were moulded by sexual exploitation. Drug misuse, premature mortality from violence, and a rising incarceration rate among black men are all contributing factors to the current shortage of available black male mates. It appears that black women are forced to stay in violent marriages longer than necessary because of the scarcity of available black men and the legacy of their forefathers' own abuse. Nonetheless, black women place a premium on their male companionship (Henriques, 1996: 67-80).

Through her writing, Ashley C. Ford gives the reader the sense that they are truly being heard and understood. The stories are all excellent, both in terms of writing and reading. In every case, readers experience a genuine emotional response to the narrative. Her memoir covers decades, from her early beginnings to her present-day maturity, without feeling bloated or rushed. She describes some aspects of existence that are both revolting and terrifying. Occasionally, you share her glee at the absurdity of life or her contentment with her present circumstances. Ashley has written an honest account that covers topics including love, family, forgiveness, anger, homelessness, prison, mental illness, abuse, and more. Using her earliest recollections as a prism, she thinks back on her tumultuous connection with her mother and other loved ones. Ashley courageously faces puberty and the loss of her innocence, despite the painful memories of that time that she does not wish to retain. She has a mother who is both cruel and emotionally distant. Because he is currently serving time in prison, her father cannot be reached. Her father is unable to physically display his affection for her, therefore he must rely on his writings to do so. Ashley is a remarkably resilient character who proves this throughout the novel. Because she was unafraid to be herself, she was able to save a family relationship. Many of us invest a great deal of energy in holding grudges and refusing to forgive, which serves merely to fuel the fire. Regrets only devour us in sad situations or after we have passed away. However, most of us have a hard time forgiving other

The author narrates the end of her story from the twenty-eighth to the end when she visits her father in prison and how they reunited again after so many years. When a family is strong, it's characterised by these qualities: warmth and care, good communication and predictability, and strong bonds with others who are not immediate family members. Being responsible for one's own well-being plays a crucial role in building a cohesive family, but these ties are never felt or seen in Ford's family. No one knows how the war ended in Ashley's life when she sees her father at the end of the story. For the first time, Ashley has learned how to create healthy boundaries and take control of her own story after surviving years of abuse and blame. As a matter of fact, her grandma is the one who makes her feel powerful. As the author's grandmother teaches her, never give up on your loved ones, no matter how difficult they may be.

A heartbreakingly honest story of a troubled upbringing in the 1970s. It is a portrayal of someone committed to loving profoundly, honouring the person they have always been, and sharing their narrative in the service of a greater truth, even in the face of heartbreak and sadness. The end of the book sheds light on the rejoin. Ashley finally met her father, cuddling him as if nothing had happened. She was the one who struggled and made sacrifices for her family. Finally, she stated unequivocally that she was not and is not anyone's daughter. A gap in the literature on African American women's lives has been filled by Ford's work. In James Joyce's (1920: p. 319) famous words, "love loves to love love", Ashley Ford's *Somebody's Daughter* may be able to convey this message to us all. The story of her climb to fame as a self-sufficient author is a glorious one. As a result of Ford's openness in sharing her views and insights, her book stands out. With great candour, humour, and heart, she is a lady who is not afraid to look in the mirror and tell the truth about who she is. Ford's memoir is filled with compassion, despite the hardships, she has endured. Anger and rage from her mother reveal to her that she has been subjected to both physical and emotional abuse throughout her family's history. It's hard for Ford because she loves her father and knows he did something terrible, and it's hard because she feels guilty about having to leave her family behind to pursue her dreams. Only sincere answers exist; there are no easy ones. That is what makes this heartfelt and insightful memoir sparkle. It is a cop-out to call Ashley C. Ford's childhood "complex", but that is the only way to describe it. Ford's memoir, filled with vivid, terrible details of those years, is laced with love and beauty and rife with hurt and bewilderment. Self-awareness is evident in Ford's writing, which includes paragraphs about her being given "permission" to tell the truth. It is impressive how she addresses her family's pain while still leaving her parents with confused thoughts (the same mixed feelings that she feels about her parents, and herself).

As a final remark, when it came to her family, Ford has always been able to convey both positive and negative aspects of each connection in a way that probed into each one. In the end, the author is able to follow the instructions of her grandmother and never give up on her parents or stop loving them. It is also

crucial for her to love herself, even if that means creating boundaries with her family. She eventually comes to realise this. The conclusion is that family bonds are stronger than any other sort of relationship because blood is thicker than water. In addition, the book's ending is ambiguous; the majority of readers and I came up with the impression that while it is advertised as being about Ford's connection with her father, it is actually about her relationship with her irritable and emotionally distant mother. Ford considers her memories of a mother who was ferociously overprotective, strict, emotionally distant, and frequently aggressive. She claims that her mother would frequently assume the identity of "The Mother" Every time she assumed the role of the strict mother that young Ford and her younger brother would not recognize. When Ford discovers her own voice, she realizes she is more than just the daughter of a family: she is a person in her own right. Overall, it is a successful debut for the author as she begins to pursue a new career.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to sincerely thank Associate Professor Sultan Komut Bakinc, who oversaw my master's thesis, for encouraging and helping me to publish articles.

I am also appreciative of my family and friends, who have always stood by me.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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