

(whites) with yeses, undermine 'em with grins, agree 'em to death and destruction." In the next paragraph the Invisible Man tells us that the old man's words caused a great deal of anxiety in the family. His advice contradicted the exemplary conduct the Invisible Man always tried to put forth in his dealings with the white community. When the Invisible Man was getting along in life, and becoming a success, through being an agreeable person, he was acting in effect contrary to the way white people wanted him to act, i.e. "mean and sulky." His grandfather's words presented him with a paradox and a "curse," but they were a source of inspiration to him and the basis of a successful speech he presented on graduation day.

His speech was so well accepted that he was asked to present it to some white people in a hotel. The evening of his presentation entailed more than the reading, however, and he and some other young black men are engaged primarily to put on a "Battle Royal." A large mass of white "reality instructors" are assembled to watch the goings on, yelling gibes and taunts to the young black combatants. White supremacy is shown at its ugliest in this scene, and the Invisible Man harshly comes to the realization that white society considers him less than human, but more as an entertainment that is useful for releasing crowd hostility in a vicarious manner. After the humiliation in the ring, and less than whole-hearted acceptance of his speech to the bloodthirsty white audience, he receives a briefcase with a diploma to a black college. The man who presents him with his prize hopes someday it will be "...filled with important papers that will shape the destiny of your people." The invisible man is taught an important "reality" of our society in this sequence of events. Whites seem to be benefactors to the blacks while they keep their superior position over blacks. The