

## Maya Angelou IOG

By Ruby Schroeder

My mom has this book called Life Doesn't Frighten Me at All and I've always loved it. I later found out the author was Maya Angelou. I've always read this little information pack at the back of the book, I literally memorized it. Maya Angelou, now that I've studied her more, is incredibly interesting. She's truly amazing. The more I've read her work, the more I've realized that a fair amount of what she writes is about God, Heaven, angels and death, life and trust. I think she is important because of her inner-hero. Not just because she got awards, that doesn't make her a hero. She participated in the civil-rights movement, always had faith, courage and a peaceful mind. She was a mom by 16, and had a tragic childhood but always had trust in God and loads of faith. That is what makes her an important hero.

"You may encounter many defeats, but you may not be defeated." That is what Maya Angelou's mother and grandmother said. Maya Angelou was born on April 4<sup>th</sup> 1928. She was actually named Marguerite Johnson but her brother used to call her "mine" which sounded like "Maya" and it stuck. Ms. Angelou had a very tragic childhood and not only because of all the people who judged her unfairly. It is so awful but people used to judge her by the color of her skin. Once when she was a child she had an infected tooth and her grandmother took her to a white doctor who refused to work on a black person. Isn't that awful? Another tragic event was that her parents divorced when she was only 3 years old and her was 4. They were sent alone on a train to go live with their grandmother. Her grandmother always told her to have trust in God.

Maya Angelou has written many books. As I mentioned earlier, my favorite is Life Doesn't Frighten Me at All. It is said her writing continues to heal our hearts, energizes our bodies and liberates our minds. I agree. Education was so important to her that even though she got pregnant when she was 16, she kept it a secret for 8 months so she could finish high school and gave birth to her son, Guy, 3 weeks after she got her diploma.

Not only was Ms. Angelou a poet, memoirist, novelist, actress, producer, historian and a filmmaker, she was also a civil rights activist and worked with Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. She is a strong, talented woman who despite her very tragic childhood overcame all that and left it behind her. Ms Angelou received more than 30 honorary degrees and served on 2 presidential committees and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Arts in 2000. She also received the Lincoln Medal in 2008 and has gotten 3 Grammy awards.

I think Ms. Angelou is not only remembered as an amazing writer, but also her strong, peaceful confident attitude towards life. Another thing she is remembered for is her non-stopping hope for equality. She wrote a play with Godfrey Cambridge entitled "Cabaret for

Freedom” and participated in the civil rights movement. She was a positive contributor to society. (She is still alive today.)