

## APPENDICES

### Summary of Their Eyes Were Watching God

The story is about the quest of a mulatto woman for her identity. The central character, Janie Crawford, returns to her hometown of Eatonville, Florida, after nearly two years of absence. Her neighbours are curious to know where she has been and what has happened to her. They wonder why she is returning in dirty overalls when she left in bridal satin.

Janie tells her story to her friend Pheoby Watson and after the story is over, the novelist returns to Janie's back steps. Thus, the story, which actually turns nearly forty years of Janie's life, is "framed" by an evening visit between two friends.

The story that Janie tells is about love; how Janie seeks love in four relationships. First, she looks for love from the grandmother who raises her. Next, she seeks love from Logan Killicks, her first husband, a stodgy old potato farmer, whom Nanny believes to be Janie's protector. Her third relationship is with Jody Starks. Their union lasted nearly twenty years and brings her economic security

and an enviable position as the mayor's wife. Janie endures this marriage in the shadow of charismatic, ambitious Jody, a man who knows how to handle people, money, and power, but who has no perception of Janie's simple wish to be respected and loved.

Janie's final relationship is with a migrant worker named Tea Cake, who gives the love that she has always wanted. With him, Janie is able to experience true love and happiness for the first time in her life. This marriage and Janie's happiness last for eighteen months, until Tea Cake is bitten by a rabid dog while saving Janie from drowning. He catches the disease himself. He ultimately tries to shoot Janie with his pistol, but she shoots him with a rifle in self-defense. She is charged with murder. At the trial, Tea Cake's black, male friends show up to oppose her, while a group of local white women are there to support her. Tea Cake's friends forgive her, and they want her to remain in the Everglades. However, she decides to return to Eatonville, only to find the residents gossiping about her.

## **Summary of Beloved**

The story is about an African American mother, Sethe, who tries to rebuild their lives with her fourth child Denver after having escaped from slavery. One day, it comes a day when a young lady shows up at their house, saying that her name is "Beloved." This makes Sethe believe that the girl is her first daughter, whom Sethe murdered by slitting her throat with a handsaw when she was only two years old to save her from a life of slavery, and whose tombstone is written as "Beloved." Beloved's return makes Sethe suffer to the point where she neglects her other daughter at home and even her own needs, while Beloved becomes more and more demanding.

Not only does the narrative lead this novel, it also confronts the more painful and taboo aspects of slavery, such as sexual abuse and violence. The author feels these issues are avoided in the traditional slave narratives. In the novel, she explores the effects on the characters, Sethe, of trying to repress - and then come to terms with - the painful memories of her past which becomes unbearable guilt.

## **Biography of Zora Neale Hurston**

Zora Neale Hurston was an American folklorist and author during the time of the Harlem Renaissance, best known for the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Hurston was born and raised in Eatonville, Florida, with a birth date in 1901. It seems that Eatonville inspired her imagination which is taken to be the setting of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Hurston spent her last 10 years as a freelance writer for magazines and newspapers. She worked in a library at Cape Canaveral and as a substitute teacher in Fort Pierce, Florida where she died of a stroke and was buried in an unmarked grave. It seems the world had somehow lost sight of her significance and her works were set afire. African-American novelist Alice Walker and literary scholar Charlotte Hunt found and marked a grave as hers in 1973, sparking a Hurston renaissance. Hurston's house in Fort Pierce is a National Historic Landmark.

## **Biography of Toni Morrison**

Toni Morrison is one of the most prominent authors in world literature; she won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993 for her collected works. Most of her novels have taken their place in the canon of American literature, including *The Bluest Eye*, *Beloved* (winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction), and *Song of Solomon*. Morrison's writings are notable for their epic themes, vivid dialogue, and richly detailed African American characters. In recent years, Morrison has published a number of children's books with her son, Slade Morrison. Since she

was a child, she has constantly read works of American literature (among her favourite authors are Jane Austen and Leo Tolstoy). Morrison's father, George Wofford, a welder by trade, told her numerous folktales of the black community (a method of storytelling that would later work its way into Morrison's writings). In 1949 Morrison entered Howard University to study humanities. Morrison received a B.A. in English from Howard in 1953, and then earned a Master of Arts degree from Cornell University in 1955. Oxford University awarded her an honorary Doctor of Letters degree in June 2005. Though based in the Creative Writing Program, Morrison does not regularly offer writing workshops to students, a fact that has earned her some criticism. Rather, she has conceived and developed the prestigious *Princeton Atelier*, a program that brings together talented students with critically acclaimed, world-famous artists.

## EVALUATION SHEET

1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> evaluation

This draft is declared

fit / unfit\* for the thesis defence examination

Points to elaborate/reconsider:

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\*circle as appropriate

## **EXAMINER'S NOTE FOR REVISION**

Student must go to supervisor I / II (circle as appropriate)

Points to elaborate/reconsider: