



STUTT GART BOOK CLUB READING GUIDE

his ghost in the killing arms of his brother. For now he knew what Shalimar knew: If you surrendered to the air, you could ride it." Does Milkman die in this final scene? Why does Morrison leave it ambiguous?

10. Milkman's journey south is an odyssey worthy of Homer: he is challenged physically and spiritually, faces death, and emerges a changed and happier man. Discuss this odyssey in terms of its symbolism and what Milkman learns about himself and his past. Why are these lessons so important? How does this journey help tie together the stories of Pilate, her brother, and her father?

Author Biography

The volume of critical and popular acclaim that has arisen around the work of Toni Morrison is virtually unparalleled in modern letters. Her six major novels *The Bluest Eye*, *Song of Solomon*, *Sula*, *Tar Baby*, *Beloved*, and *Jazz* have collected nearly every major literary prize. Ms. Morrison received the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1977 for *Song of Solomon*. In 1987, *Beloved* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. Her body of work was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993. Other major awards include: the 1996 National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, the Pearl Buck Award (1994), the title of Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters (Paris, 1994), and 1978 Distinguished Writer Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Ms. Morrison was appointed Robert F. Goheen Professor of the Council of the Humanities at Princeton University in the spring of 1989. Before coming to Princeton, she held teaching posts at Yale University, Bard College, and Rutgers University. In 1990 she delivered the Clark lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge, and the Massey Lectures at Harvard University. Ms. Morrison was also a senior editor at Random House for twenty years. She has degrees from Howard and Cornell Universities.

A host of colleges and universities have given honorary degrees to Ms. Morrison. Among them are Harvard, the University of Pennsylvania, Sarah Lawrence College, Dartmouth, Yale, Georgetown, Columbia University and Brown University. Ms. Morrison was commissioned by Carnegie Hall in 1992 to write lyrics "Honey and Me", an original piece of music by Andre Previn. The lyrics were sung in performance by Kathleen Battle. In 1997, she wrote the lyrics for "Sweet Talk," which was written by Richard Danielpour and performed in concert by Jessye Norman.

Toni Morrison has earned a reputation as a gifted storyteller whose troubled characters seek to find themselves and their cultural riches in a society that warps or impedes such essential growth. Ms. Morrison's latest novel, *Paradise*, was published by Knopf on January 15, 1998. In it, Ms. Morrison tells the story of Ruby, OK, a fictional town populated exclusively by African-Americans. It is her most ambitious work to date, executing changes of time and place with consummate skill. Ms. Morrison lives in Princeton, New Jersey and upstate New York.

Book Info from the Oprah website