

tray, a set of gilt-edged cups, a pair of silver candlesticks, a cast-iron menorah, a chest for cash, and an attic filled with hides. However, even these emblems of prosperity are not enough for him to win Tsaytl, who goes, instead, to Motl the tailor.

—Keith Garebian

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Author: Zora Neale Hurston (1891–1960)

First published: 1937

Type of work: Novel

Type of plot: Bildungsroman

Time of plot: Around 1900

The three different geographic settings of this novel, though confined to the state of Florida, correspond to the stages of protagonist Janie Crawford's heightened search for self-actualization and self-fulfillment.

West Florida. Region in which Janie Crawford spends the early years of her life. The initial part of the novel is set in her maternal grandmother's house and charts Janie's coming into womanhood. Janie has been raised by her maternal grandmother Nanny who fled slavery with her infant daughter and later migrated to West Florida with her employers, the Washburn family. With the Washburns' assistance, Nanny purchases her own home so that she can properly raise and protect Janie from derision following the tragic rape and subsequent disappearance of her mother Leafy. On a particular spring afternoon, Janie experiences her budding sexuality beneath a blooming pear tree as a bee enters the inner sanctum of a pear blossom in the act of pollination.

When Nanny spies Janie kissing the shiftless Johnny Taylor, she immediately arranges for young Janie to marry Logan Killicks, a much older man who owns a house and some property, so that Janie will be protected from men whom Nanny fears will take advantage of her granddaughter. While Janie objects to this marriage, she nevertheless tries to make the best of it for awhile, until it becomes quite clear that she will never be able to live for herself in these circumstances. Thus West Florida becomes associated with her grandmother's dream and Logan Killicks's dream but not her own dream. When Janie meets Joe Starks, a traveler from Georgia, she walks out of her marriage with Killicks and casts her lot with Joe to pursue the far horizon.

***Eatonville.** All-black town in central Florida just north of Orlando near Maitland. Janie comes here with her new husband Joe in pursuit of the horizon. When they arrive in

Eatonville, Joe is disappointed with the place. Through Joe's energy and foresight Eatonville is soon transformed into a thriving town, but as the years pass Janie discovers once again that this is not the place of her dreams, but of Joe's. She becomes alienated from the townspeople and forbidden to participate in any of the community's rituals. In addition, as a woman in a male-dominated world Janie is oppressed, as evidenced by her being forced to wear her hair tied up and by the brutal way that Joe verbally humiliates her in the presence of the men of the town. When Joe dies of a lingering illness, Janie is liberated. Soon she meets a considerably younger man, Vergible "Tea Cake" Woods. Finally deciding that widowhood and life in Eatonville are too confining, she follows Tea Cake to Jacksonville where they marry.

De muck. Name for the portion of the Florida Everglades south of Lake Okeechobee near Clewiston and Belle Glade. The name is derived from the rich black soil that grew lush vegetation. It represents a certain earthiness, a certain *carpe diem* spirit, as Janie and Tea Cake quit Jacksonville to live and work among the hordes of migrant workers. Like the weeds and vegetables, Janie flourishes in this locale among the folk with a man who loves her for who she is. Thus de muck represents the horizon for Janie, a place where she can finally realize the fullness of life and live out her dreams. Unfortunately this bliss is short-lived, for in the aftermath of a devastating hurricane, Janie is tried and acquitted for killing Tea Cake in a tragic act of self-defense. After she buries him in a lavish ceremony, Janie returns to her home in Eatonville where she intends to grow old.

—Warren J. Carson

Thérèse

Author: François Mauriac (1885–1970)

First published: *Thérèse Desqueyroux*, 1927 (English translation, 1928)

Type of work: Novel

Type of plot: Psychological realism

Time of plot: Twentieth century

François Mauriac was interested in the dark side of human nature and liked to depict life in a world bereft of religion and thus of God's grace. This novel's protagonist, Thérèse, is shown to be a product of such a world, a woman who tries to poison her husband and goes free merely because of false testimony, only to live a life of loneliness, guilt, and self-hatred. The novel is set in southeastern France near Mauriac's home in Bordeaux, and later in Paris, where Thérèse barely survives in a kind of exile.

**Asterisk denotes entries on real places.*

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