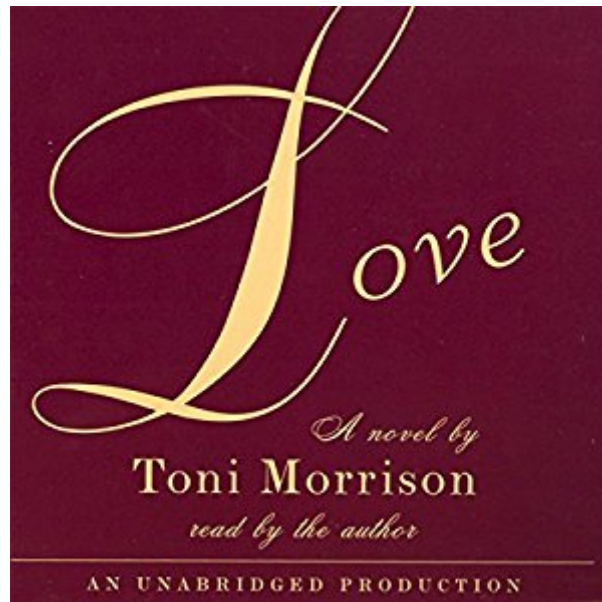


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Love



Synopsis

May, Christine, Heed, Junior, Vida— even L: all women obsessed with Bill Cosey. The wealthy owner of the famous Cosey’s Hotel and Resort, he shapes their yearnings for father, husband, lover, guardian, and friend, yearnings that dominate the lives of these women long after his death. Yet while he is either the void in, or the center of, their stories, he himself is driven by secret forces— a troubled past and a spellbinding woman named Celestial. This audacious exploration into the nature of love— its appetite, its sublime possession, its dread— is rich in characters, striking scenes, and a profound understanding of how alive the past can be. A major addition to the canon of one of the world’s literary masters. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

No living author with the possible exception of Gabriel Garcia Marquez has better opening lines than Toni Morrison. For dead writers, she ranks with Melville, Camus and Tolstoy for that honor. LOVE begins with these words: "The women’s legs are spread wide open, so I hum. Men grow irritable, but they know it’s all for them. They relax. Standing by, unable to do anything but watch, is a trial, but I don’t say a word." When Morrison finishes her story about 200 pages later, we have met a host of unforgettable characters, mostly women-- Heed, Christine, May, Junior, Vida, L, all who are obsessed with one Bill Cosey. I always marvel at the strength of Morrison’s characters. Although they often face untold hardships, they seldom whine and often prevail. As usual, Morrison’s plot is not linear but goes back and forth in time from the Civil Rights era to before and after that time. We

get the story little by little and ultimately get the whole story, and what a story it is. The book obviously is about love. Although there are other kinds of love here-- erotic love, lust masquerading as love-- the central love is that between two children, a love that was ruined by grownups. Years later as adults Heed and Christine finally get around to talking about their lost opportunities: "We could have been living our lives hand in hand instead of looking for Big Daddy everywhere." There are memorable lines throughout the novel. Christine opines that "her last good chance for happiness [is] wrecked by the second oldest enemy in the world: another woman." Cosey says that "you can live with anything if you have what you can't live without."

Toni Morrison's new opus, *Love* is simultaneously a subtle meditation on the machinations of love and a poignant reflection about the epistemological reality of emotions and desires that informs humanity. Though the theme found its effective expression in *Sula*, it is with *Love* that Morrison reaches into new emotional depths and seriousness that establish her again as a mature artist. Like *Paradise*, *Love* is peopled "by scheming, bitter women and selfish, predatory men: women engaged in cartoon-violent catfights; men catting around and going to cathouses" as Michiko Kakutani observes in *The New York Times*. But, in spite of such a demoralizing circumambience *Love* at its core is a creative exercise to comprehend what "friendship and love" would mean as Morrison says, "when there's a cataclysm and conflict in belief." Set in Atlantic coast, *Love* centers around the "commanding, beautiful" (36) but enigmatic Bill Cosey and the six women obstinately obsessed with him. Cosey, when alive was a legendary figure and the owner of deluxe hotel and resort where "people debated death in the cities, murder in Mississippi, and what they planned to do about it other than grieve and stare at their children" (35). As the novel begins in 1990's, Cosey (and his resort) is already dead but looms large controlling his granddaughter, Christine as well as his wife, Heed who live in a hate-fueled house to claim the property of Cosey. Amidst such a claustrophobic world comes Junior as a secretary to Heed to help her write the family history of Coseys. In fact, it is through Junior, an 18 years old girl from Correctional, that half of the mysterious life of Cosey is revealed.

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