

# Toni Morrison

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FANZINE

A BLACK VOICE  
THAT CHANGED  
LITERATURE.

When a Black woman  
writes, the world is  
compelled to listen.

First black woman to win  
the Nobel Prize.

By Ana Julia Melo, Jessica Santos,  
Luisa Mikie and Thaissa Messias

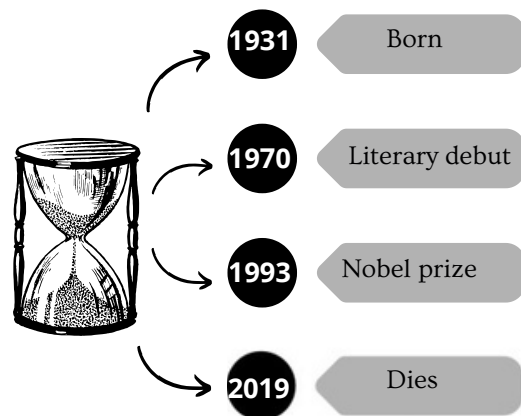


# The woman behind the words

By Ana Julia Melo, Jessica Santos, Luisa Mikie and Thaissa Messias



Black woman. Giant writer. A voice that disturbs those who never wanted to hear it. Toni Morrison transformed literature and showed that our stories not only exist—they matter. She won the Nobel Prize, but her impact goes far beyond awards.



- 1 • Nationality: USA
- 2 • Award: Nobel Prize (1993)
- 3 • Main themes: Black identity, racism, ancestry
- 4 • Main works: The Bluest Eye, Beloved, Song of Solomon

# Her stories speak the truths the world tried to silence.



Toni Morrison explored the core of Black experience.

Her works dive into identity, racism, ancestry, and the emotional wounds carried across generations.

She wrote about childhood as the place where the world first shapes us, and she confronted the beauty standards built around whiteness. Motherhood appears as strength, pain, and resistance – showing how Black women protect, create, and heal.

The main focuses of her writing include:

**Racism and Slavery:** Morrison's works explore the historical and psychological scars of racism and slavery, going back in time to show how these systems are intertwined with the very formation of the American nation.

**The Condition of Black Women:** Her narratives frequently place Black women in central roles, with striking life stories, exploring their struggles, strength, and complexity in an oppressive society.

**Identity and Beauty:** Books like "The Bluest Eye" address dissatisfaction with one's own image and the internalization of white beauty standards by the Black community, showing the devastating impact of prejudice on self-esteem. being, as in "Homecoming".

**Ancestry and Memory:** Collective and individual memory, ancestry, and folk tales of the Black community are recurring elements, often with traces of magical realism, connecting the past and present of her characters. **The Concept of Home and Community:** She also wrote about what it means to have a home and how community (or the lack thereof) shapes or tears apart the human

In summary, Toni Morrison used her literature to give voice and visibility to the reality and traumas of the Black population, transforming pain into art and wisdom, and expanding the canon of American literature with her powerful and poetic narratives.

# THE BLUEST EYE

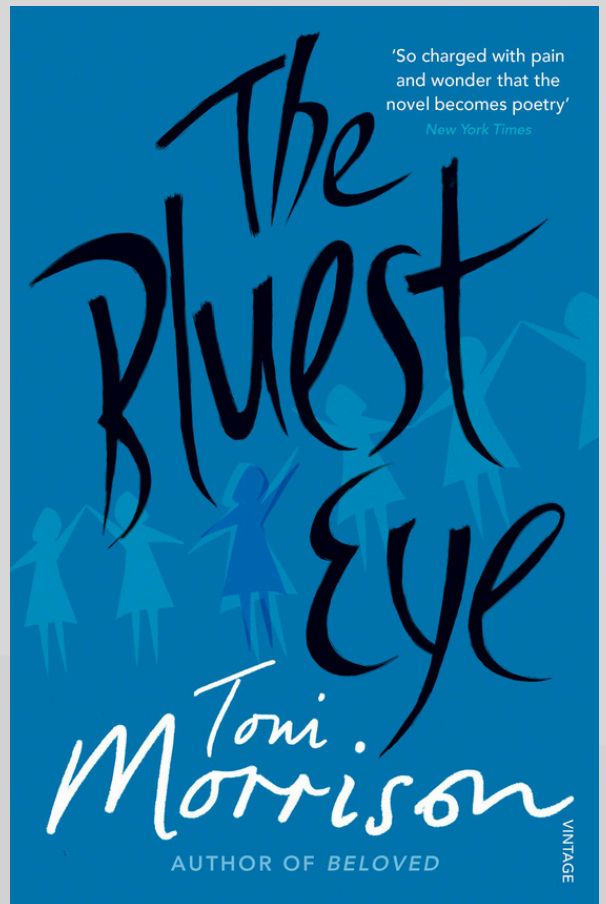
WHERE BEAUTY BECOMES A CURSE  
AND INNOCENCE IS SHATTERED.

By Toni Morrison

THE BLUEST EYE TELLS THE STORY OF PECOLA BREEDLOVE, A LONELY BLACK GIRL WHO GROWS UP BELIEVING SHE IS "UGLY" BECAUSE EVERYONE AROUND HER TREATS HER LIKE SHE DOESN'T MATTER.

AS SHE FACES A HARSH FAMILY LIFE AND A COMMUNITY THAT CONSTANTLY OVERLOOKS HER, PECOLA BECOMES OBSESSED WITH ONE WISH: HAVING BLUE EYES — SOMETHING SHE THINKS WILL FINALLY MAKE PEOPLE NOTICE HER, LOVE HER, AND SEE HER AS BEAUTIFUL. THE BOOK FOLLOWS HER THROUGH A YEAR FILLED WITH QUIET HEARTBREAKS, SMALL HOPES, AND THE SEARCH FOR A PLACE WHERE SHE BELONGS.

IT'S A TENDER, PAINFUL, AND UNFORGETTABLE PORTRAIT OF A GIRL TRYING TO SURVIVE IN A WORLD THAT REFUSES TO SEE HER.



## SOCIAL CRITIQUE & READER IMPACT — THE BLUEST EYE

IN THE BOOK, TONI MORRISON EXPOSES HOW RACISM OPERATES NOT ONLY IN LAWS OR PUBLIC SPACES, BUT INSIDE THE MIND. SHE REVEALS HOW BEAUTY STANDARDS BUILT AROUND WHITENESS SHAPE THE WAY CHILDREN LEARN TO VALUE THEMSELVES — OR FAIL TO. BY SHOWING THE WORLD THROUGH THE EYES OF A YOUNG BLACK GIRL, MORRISON CRITICIZES A SOCIETY THAT TEACHES ITS MOST VULNERABLE MEMBERS TO BELIEVE THEY ARE UNWORTHY.

THE NOVEL FORCES READERS TO CONFRONT UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTHS: HOW CRUELTY CAN FEEL NORMAL, HOW COMMUNITIES ABSORB PREJUDICE, AND HOW SILENCE CAN BE AS HARMFUL AS VIOLENCE. MORRISON'S WRITING DOESN'T POINT FINGERS; IT HOLDS UP A MIRROR.

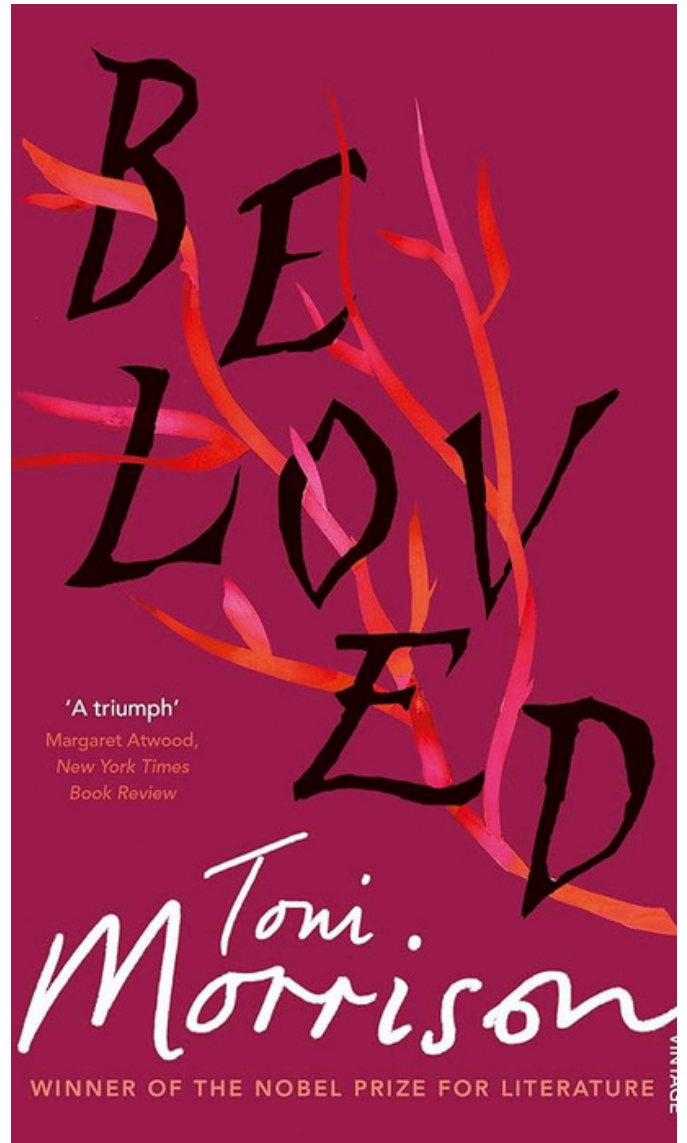


# Beloved

“Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership of that freed self was another.” By Toni morrison

Beloved, by Toni Morrison, follows Sethe, a former slave who tries to rebuild her life with her daughter Denver after escaping from the Sweet Home farm. Even free, she lives surrounded by painful memories and the presence of a ghost that represents her dead daughter. The arrival of Paul D and the mysterious young woman Beloved causes the past to return intensely, forcing Sethe to face memories she tried to hide.

The book shows how the trauma of slavery remains alive, even after freedom. Sethe and other characters bear deep marks of violence, family separation and loss of identity, showing that the suffering imposed by slavery does not disappear over time. Morrison highlights that the past continues to influence emotions, choices and relationships, revealing that true liberation involves facing and understanding these traumas.



In Beloved, motherhood is shown as something intense and marked by pain. Sethe loves her children deeply, but this love is born in a context of slavery, where mothers could be separated from their children at any time. Therefore, their way of caring is always accompanied by fear and extreme protection.

Sethe's choices reflect the impact of this cruel system. She does everything she can to prevent her children from suffering the same violence she experienced, even if it leads her to make difficult decisions. Thus, motherhood in the book is not simple: it is built on losses, sacrifices and the constant attempt to preserve the family.

The “ghosts” present in the story symbolize precisely the memories and traumas that Sethe cannot leave behind. Beloved, the returning figure, represents the past that still hurts and demands attention. These ghosts show that, even after freedom, the marks of slavery remain alive, haunting those who survived it.

# MEMORABLE PHRASES

By toni Morrison

**“YOU ARE YOUR BEST THING.”**

***“IF YOU  
SURRENDERED  
TO THE AIR,  
YOU COULD  
RIDE IT.”***

**“THE PAST DOESN'T REST; IT COMES AND  
KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.”**

**“DEFINITIONS BELONG TO THE DEFINERS,  
NOT THE DEFINED.”**

**“FREEING  
YOURSELF WAS  
ONE THING;  
CLAIMING  
OWNERSHIP OF  
THAT FREED  
SELF WAS  
ANOTHER.”**

**“LOVE  
IS OR IT  
AIN'T.  
THIN  
LOVE  
AIN'T  
LOVE AT  
ALL.”**

# Literature that *represents*



## How she put black characters at the books

Toni Morrison placed Black characters at the center of her narratives; she portrayed their stories, feelings, and experiences through a complex lens. She refused to bring stereotypes into her Black characters, presenting genuine emotion and true representation.

In this way, she felt free, free because she was writing within an environment she herself created inside her books, which were a representation of the Black community without the supervision of the white gaze.



Check the interview at: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=WoTELoC8Q0M>

In a powerful interview she gave on the program “Uncensored,” hosted by Jana Wendt and produced by ABC, she speaks beautifully about her literature.

She explains that she is always at a disadvantage as an African-American writer, drawing an analogy to a Russian writer who writes about Russia, in Russian, for Russians. This Russian writer would never be forced to write for the French. She uses this analogy after the host insists on asking why she wouldn’t consider writing about white people in the same way she writes about Black characters.

In this same interview, she talks about how she occupied a significant place in literature, especially after receiving the Nobel Prize. She held a place within African-American literature and stood firmly there; from that position, she reached a vast audience that granted her credibility and an even stronger voice.

After receiving her Nobel Prize, a prize so highly valued worldwide, she gives a powerful account of how she felt.

“ I FELT AMERICAN, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE. I FELT LIKE A REPRESENTATION OF ALL THE AFRO-AMERICANS. I FELT LIKE A WOMAN. ”



# Her legacy for the *world*

Morrison proved that it is possible to combine literary beauty with social critique, art with memory, emotion with analysis. This combination turned her work into a reference for researchers, artists, and readers around the world.

Today, her influence can be seen in new writers who feel empowered to narrate their own experiences without asking for permission.

Morrison showed that telling stories is a political and liberating act. For this reason, her works continue to be read, studied, and reinterpreted, creating bridges between past, present, and future.

And her impact will endure for generations to come: every young reader who finds in her pages a mirror, an answer, or a new question carries her flame forward. Every Black woman writer who publishes her book because she saw a possibility in Morrison expands this legacy. Toni Morrison did not simply write novels, she opened doors and created spaces. And these spaces continue to grow, inspiring and transforming world literature.

## A QUOTE THAT WILL MARK THE WORLD



"The very serious function of racism ... is distraction. It keeps you from doing your work. It keeps you explaining, over and over again, your reason for being. Somebody says you have no language and so you spend 20 years proving that you do. Somebody says your head isn't shaped properly so you have scientists working on the fact that it is. Somebody says that you have no art so you dredge that up. Somebody says that you have no kingdoms and so you dredge that up. None of that is necessary."





# Unforgettable Toni Morrison

"THE FUNCTION,  
THE VERY  
SERIOUS  
FUNCTION OF  
RACISM IS  
DISTRACTION."