

# TONI MORRISON

Her novel “Beloved”



Toni Morrison is a Nobel Prize- and Pulitzer Prize-winning American novelist. Among her best known novels are *The Bluest Eye*, *Song of Solomon* and *Beloved*.



# BIOGRAPHY

Toni Morrison was born in Lorain, Ohio. As a child, Morrison read with interest; among her favorite authors were Jane Austen and Leo Tolstoy. Morrison's father 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 Harvard University, where she received a B.A. in English in 1953. After graduation, Morrison became an English instructor at Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas (1955-57).

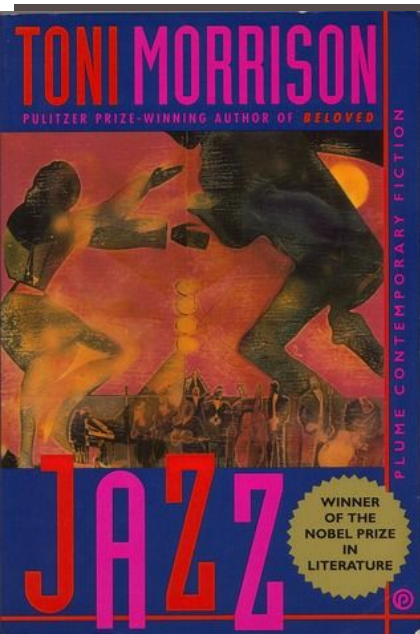
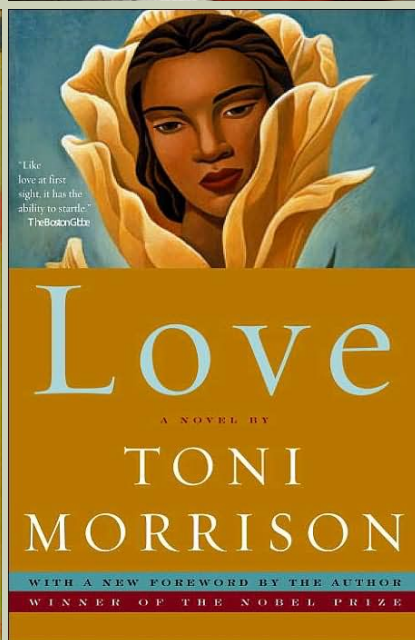
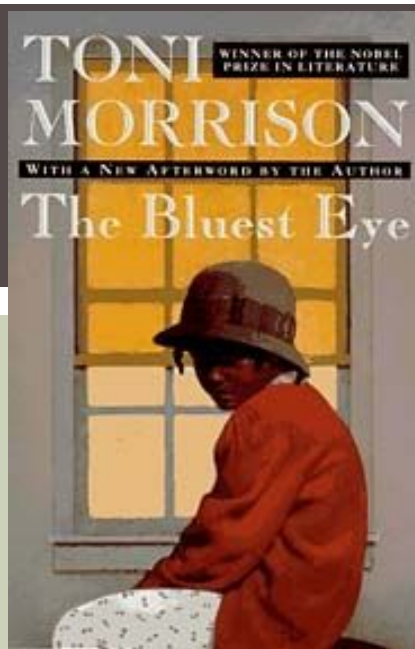
In 1958 she married Harold Morrison, a Jamaican architect and fellow faculty member at Howard University.



# WRITING CAREER

Morrison began writing fiction as part of an informal group of poets and writers at Howard who met to discuss their work. She went to one meeting with a short story about a black girl who longed to have blue eyes. She later developed the story as her first novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1970). She wrote it while raising two children and teaching at Howard. A rising literary star, Morrison was appointed to the National Council on the Arts in 1980. Her best known works are: “*Sula*” (1973), “*Song of Solomon*” (1977), “*Tar baby*” (1981), “*Jazz*” (1992) and many others.

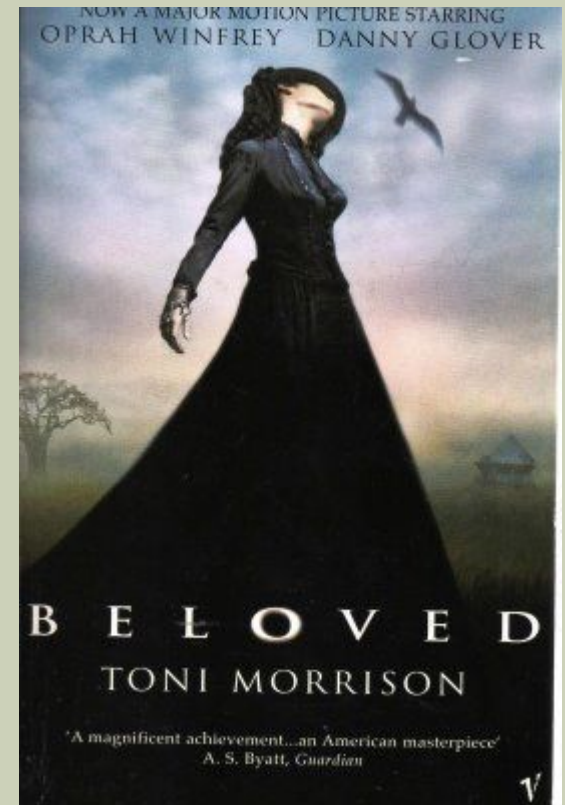
Morrison’s novels deal with the efforts of African-Americans to survive cultural, economical and social disruptions in their



# “BELOVED”

“Beloved” is a novel, which told us a story about an African-American slave, Margaret Garner, who temporarily escaped slavery during 1856 in Kentucky by fleeing to Ohio.

Beloved's main character, Sethe, kills Margaret's daughter and tries to kill her other three children when a posse arrives in Ohio to return them to Sweet Home, the Kentucky plantation from which Sethe recently fled. A woman presumed to be her daughter, called Beloved, returns years later to haunt Sethe's home.



The novel won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1988 and was a finalist for the 1987 National Book Award. It was adapted during 1998 into a movie of the same name. During 2006 a New York Times survey of writers and literary critics ranked it as the best work of American fiction of the past 25 years.

The book's epigraph reads "Sixty Million and more," dedicated to the Africans and their descendants who died as a result of the Atlantic slave trade.

