

A Woman Freed of the Mule's Load:

Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God

by Karen Lewis

"So de white man throw down de load and tell de nigger man tuh pick it up. He pick it up because he have to, but he don't tote it. He hand it to his womenfolks. De nigger woman is de mule uh de world so fur as Ah can see. Ah been prayin' fuh it tuh be defferent wid you. Lawd, Lawd, Lawd!"

With these mournful words from her grandmother, a former slave, young Janie's womanhood begins. She realizes that the world does not adore her, the way her grandmother does, nor will it nurture and care for her. She is, as a black woman, destined to be the mule of the world.

Janie tells us that she was six years old before she realized she was black; she is even older when she realizes the additional handicap of being a woman. Her sheltered childhood has not prepared her for the men who seek either to control her or to idolize her. She expects to take her place beside her mate, to enjoy the same pleasures he does, to participate in his life. Her dream is a woman's dream, nearly impossible to reach at that time.

In an attempt to secure Janie's future, her grandmother marries her to Logan Killicks, a black man with a sixty-acre farm. But Janie, young and romantic, doesn't like the older man's plodding, retiring nature or his threats to make her work the farm if she doesn't become more affectionate toward him. She runs away with the dandy Joe Starks, a man with vision and ambition, because he is exciting and promises to make her somebody special. He becomes mayor of the all-black town where they settle, and she becomes his wife: forced by her husband to live above the other townspeople yet always beneath him in private, Janie is still unhappy. Her early visions of passion, love and equality remain unfulfilled. It is not until Joe dies, leaving her a substantial inheritance, that Janie is free to decide her own destiny: she elopes with a penniless, delightful younger man called Tea Cake, who, unlike her first two husbands, treats Janie with affection and dignity; he makes her his equal.

Janie's search for equality is one with which most women can sympathize, and her awareness of this desire emphasizes the intelligence and deliberation with which she leads her life. Janie recognizes her right to be happy and is willing to strike out, to be different, to take a chance to find it.

The most unusual element of this novel is the attention which Zora Neale Hurston has paid to dialect. Her accurate portrayal of the vernacular of her people has won this book critical acclaim. It is almost a novel best read aloud; the reader begins, after a few chapters, to *hear* the lilting, joyous tones of the Southern Black dialect of that era and to truly appreciate Ms. Hurston's skill.

Their Eyes Were Watching God was originally published in 1937 and is available through the University of Illinois Press, among others. Other books by the author include Dust Tracks on a Road: An Autobiography and Moses: Man of the Mountains.



Driving Miss Daisy

by Julie Meyer and Heather Lewisohn

The mesmerizing performances of Jessica Tandy and Morgan Freeman make *Driving Miss Daisy* a film you will not want to miss. The movie follows the developing relationship between Miss Daisy and her chauffeur, Hoke. Miss Daisy and Hoke's relationship brings about both laughter and tears as the characters overcome strong wills and the turbulent events in Atlanta during the 1960's.

Driving Miss Daisy is an extremely enjoyable and thought provoking film which will arouse a variety of emotions.

Dining at "The Garden"

by Sally Pierce

In the mood for a change of pace, atmosphere and cuisine? Grab a couple of our Salem sisters and cruise over to Spring Garden.

Originally named First Bar and Grill due to its location on the corner of First Street and Hawthorne Road, Spring Garden Bar and Grill is a great place to get together with a few friends for some fun and a hot and juicy Drive-In-Burger with nacho chips, and a giant drink of your choice, or my favorite Spring Garden's Chicken Grill with Buffalo Chips.

If you are a salad lover, you are in luck. Try Spring Garden's very own Spring Garden Salad with the house dressing which is a creamy vinaigrette. This crisp salad of lettuce, raw vegetables, meats and cheeses of your choice is served in its own flaky shell with a side order of nacho corn chips.

Should you happen to be a happy hour bar hopper and you are of the golden age of "21," you should absolutely hop by "The Garden" for imported or domestic beer and mixed drink specials. Happy hour at Spring Garden also features free North Carolina peanuts, nachos and salsa, and twenty-five cents hot chicken wings that will make your tongue flap your brains out!

Spring Garden's decor, dark and cozy atmosphere, and high bar stools provide a perfect escape to a great bar and grill. Try Spring Garden off First and Hawthorne, you just might like it.

Billy Joel Proves He's Still On Top

by Karen Lewis

Billy Joel proved to a cheering crowd in Charlotte that, come rain, fire, or Pressure, he's still the Piano Man fans have admired for years.

Joel performed for a near-capacity crowd at the new Charlotte Coliseum on a rainy Friday night, March 2. Energetic and enthusiastic, his show proved that there's still room at the top for good old-fashioned talent. Joel is a powerful performer, combining just enough showmanship and colored lights with pure jazz, rock, and a voice that is much more resonant than recorded performances reveal. Band members provided more than adequate support for Joel's piano antics; in fact, his spirited back-up singer, in near-blinding yellow pants, almost stole the show as she played saxophone and danced feverishly up and down the over-sized stage.

Beginning with the title track from his latest album, *Storm Front*, Joel moved through the best of the old and the most promising of the new: slower, more reflective songs such as "Leningrad," "Good Night, Saigon," and "Downeaster Alexa" shared the stage with such rollicking hits as "Scenes from an

Italian Restaurant," "Pressure," and "Big Shot." The most powerful moments of the two-and-a-half hour show were his performances of "We Didn't Start the Fire," his hit look at controversial issues of the twentieth century, and, later, "Piano Man," his finale - which moved the crowd to sing the chorus solo.

Joel began the show by complimenting North Carolina on its "new venue," expressing his past dissatisfaction with the old coliseum. His sound system made the most of the larger arena; more importantly, he made sure that everyone who bought a ticket got to see, not just hear, him: swing-around keyboards at each back corner of the stage allowed him to play close-up to the fans in seats which normally provide only a view of the drummer's back. His attention to detail and his concern for every member of the audience testifies to his commitment to the music-making, as opposed to the money-making, business.

Billy Joel has entered a new phase in his career with the more politically-oriented *Storm Front*, but still holds true to the values which made him a star: quality music and pure soul.