

Episode: #13

Southern Renaissance

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Time Code	Audio
01.00.00.00	A/CPB ANNOUNCER:
01.00.21.08	NARRATOR: AFTER WORLD WAR I, WRITERS EMERGED IN A SEGREGATED SOUTH TO TELL NEW STORIES.
01.00.58.06	HURSTON READER: <i>"I remember the very day I became colored.... It seemed I had suffered a sea of change."</i>
01.00.38.13	NARRATOR: LEARNING, TOLERANCE, AND PROGRESS BECAME SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN THE SOUTH... AND WRITERS FOUND WAYS TO SPEAK THEIR TRUTH.
01.00.45.24	FAULKNER READER: <i>The past is never dead; it's not even past.</i>
01.00.52.02	NARRATOR: CONTINUING A TRADITION WHILE CHALLENGING THE PAST, WRITERS LIKE WILLIAM FAULKNER AND ZORA NEALE HURSTON USHERED IN A RENAISSANCE OF SOUTHERN LITERATURE.
01.01.28.14	DON DOYLE: When the United States was formed, the South was not the South. It was just the southern part of the 13 colonies. At some point, the South came to be seen as something that was different from the North, from the rest of America, and it began with anti-slavery forces condemning slavery. And in making the case against slavery, they began to build a critique of the South in general.
01.01.57.23	NARRATOR: THE CIVIL WAR ENDED SLAVERY, BUT A HALF CENTURY LATER, THE SOUTH STILL GRAPPLED WITH ITS LEGACY OF RACISM, MADE WORSE BY ENFORCED SEGREGATION LAWS KNOWN AS JIM CROWE.

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01.02.12.15	<p>DON DOYLE:</p> <p>There is great ambivalence among White southerners. On the one hand, they cannot live without Black labor. It is absolutely essential to the economy. And on the other hand, from the period after Reconstruction or really ever Since Emancipation, Blacks are being treated terribly within in the South.</p>
01.02.31.10	<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>BETWEEN WORLD WAR I AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT... A NEW GROUP OF WRITERS, WHICH INCLUDED FLANNERY O'CONNOR, TENNESSEE WILLIAMS, WILLIAM FAULKNER, AND ZORA NEALE HURSTON, USED THEIR INNOVATIVE STYLES TO REVISE SOUTHERN MYTHS IN A REGION DEEPLY DIVIDED BY RACE AND CLASS.</p>
01.02.52.00	<p>CARLA KAPLAN:</p> <p>It is almost impossible to talk about these writers and not talk about the importance of time and place. These writers are so grounded both in a historical moment and in a particular place.</p>
01.03.07.19	<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>ONE OF THE LEADING WRITERS OF THIS MOVEMENT WAS WILLIAM FAULKNER. HIS DESCRIPTION OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE PRE-CIVIL WAR SOUTH EXPOSED RACIST SOUTHERN WHITE MYTHS ABOUT BLACK INFERIORITY.</p>
01.03.22.00	<p>FAULKNER READER:</p> <p><i>Those who had come in the carriages and buggies to see a Roman holiday, driving out to Sutpen's hundred to call and (the men) to hunt his game and eat his food again and on occasion gathering at night in his stable while he matched two of his wild Negroes against one another as men match gamecocks.</i></p>
01.03.45.08	<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>FAULKNER CAPTURED THE COMPLICATED, OFTEN TANGLED LAYERS OF HISTORY IN COUNTLESS NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES. HE BUILT UPON THE WORK OF A GROUP OF WRITERS KNOWN AS THE SOUTHERN AGRARIANS THAT EMERGED IN THE LATE 1920s. THE SOUTHERN AGRARIANS DEFENDED THE SOUTH'S RURAL WAY OF LIFE... WHILE THE WORLD AROUND THEM WAS CHANGING.</p>
01.04.05.07	<p>CARLA KAPLAN:</p> <p>They wanted to get away from magnolias and banjos and happy plantation songs and the sort of tradition we associate with <i>Gone With the Wind</i>. At the same time, they wanted to counter the northern urban industrial tradition. They're interested in the notion of the way in which a farming community might root the nation in a different model, something other than the new Machine Age and the new Industrial Age.</p>

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01.04.34.25	<p>NARRATOR: LIKE THE AGRARIANS, FAULKNER DEFENDED THE SOUTH... BUT HE WASN'T AFRAID TO TAKE ON ITS DEMONS.</p>
01.04.42.28	<p>DON DOYLE: The history of the South, of the Civil War, of Reconstruction in particular, is a history that haunts all of us just as Faulkner saw it haunting Yoknapatawpha County.</p>
01.05.02.17	<p>NARRATOR: PLACE WAS VITAL TO WILLIAM FAULKNER'S STORIES. HE SET EACH ONE IN HIS FICTITIOUS "YOKNAPATAWPHA COUNTY," BASED ON THE REGION SURROUNDING HIS HOMETOWN OF OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI.</p>
01.05.19.04	<p>DON DOYLE: He was a young boy in 1902, and Oxford would have been a town of maybe 1,000 people. The County had 15,000-20,000. About 40% of them were African-Americans. The overwhelming economy of the county was cotton but most of them were sharecroppers living out in the country, farming on shares, renting the land for a share of the crop.</p>
01.05.48.02	<p>NARRATOR: FAULKNER'S INTEREST IN SOUTHERN FAMILIES BEGAN WITH HIS OWN... HIS GREAT-GRANDFATHER WAS A LOCAL LEGEND... A COLONEL IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY, A WRITER AND AN ENTREPRENEUR. FAULKNER HIMSELF WAS A HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT AND A WORLD WAR I VETERAN WHO NEVER SAW COMBAT. HE DRIFTED FROM JOB TO JOB UNTIL WRITER SHERWOOD ANDERSON CONVINCED HIM TO DEVELOP HIS OWN STYLE AND WRITE ABOUT THE SOUTH AND ITS PAST.</p>
01.16.15.24	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: Not only does he create an entire county down to the sewer lines to give himself a deep sense of the place from which he is writing, but everything revolves around certain moments in history.</p>
01.06.30.07	<p>NARRATOR: IN HIS NOVEL, AS I LAY DYING, FAULKNER USED THE RHYTHMS OF FOLK SPEECH TO INTRODUCE THE CHARACTER CORA, WHO STRUGGLES TO MAKE ENDS MEET BY SAVING EGGS TO MAKE CAKES SHE SELLS TO THE RICH LADIES IN TOWN.</p>

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01.06.44.17	<p>FAULKNER READER: <i>So I saved out the eggs and baked yesterday. The cakes turned out right well. We depend a lot on our chickens. They are good layers, what few we have left after the possums and such. Snakes too, in the summer. A snake will break up a hen-house quicker than anything.</i></p>
01.07.03.06	<p>NARRATOR: AFTER ALL HER HARD WORK... CORA FINDS OUT ONE OF THE RICH LADIES DOESN'T WANT HER CAKES, AND REFUSES TO BUY THEM. CORA COMISERATES WITH HER NEIGHBOR KATE ABOUT THE FUTILITY OF POVERTY.</p>
01.07.17.13	<p>FAULKNER READER: <i>"She ought to taken those cakes anyway," Kate says. " Well," I say, "I reckon she never had no use for them now." " She ought to taken them," Kate says. "But those rich town ladies can change their minds. Poor folks cant."</i></p>
01.07.37.04	<p>NARRATOR: FAULKNER'S PORTRAITS OF SOUTHERN PEOPLE, AND THEIR CLASS DIVISIONS, ARE STILL PAINFULLY REAL FOR MANY READERS...</p>
01.07.43.29	<p>DOROTHY ALLISON: The South is held in contempt.</p>
01.07.45.18	<p>NARRATOR: INCLUDING WRITER DOROTHY ALLISON... WHO GREW-UP POOR IN RURAL SOUTH CAROLINA.</p>
01.07.51.23	<p>DOROTHY ALLISON: Reading Faulkner, it's like reading the men who hired my stepfather and hired my mother...these were men that I had a great deal of anger and resentment towards. But you read Faulkner and he's inside these heads and it's a trick he does. He actually does show you that they have wide streaks of evil. He sooths them off. He pours whiskey down 'em and makes 'em smooth and kind of interesting, um, and they're mean. They use other people. That whole lower middle...upper middle class, lower upper class echelon that he writes about. God. God. You can't grow up working behind a lunch counter in the South and not know who these people are and not care for them. And it's hard to read Faulkner.</p>
01.08.38.17	<p>NARRATOR: WILLIAM FAULKNER WAS INFLUENCED BY THINKERS LIKE THE EXPERIMENTAL WRITER JAMES JOYCE AND PSYCHOANALYST SIGMUND FREUD. STYLISTICALLY, FAULKNER WAS A EXTREME MODERNIST. HE REBELLED AGAINST LINEAR STORY-TELLING AND HIS STORIES OFTEN JUMPED BACKWARD AND FORWARD IN TIME... FROM</p>

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	<p>CHARACTER TO CHARACTER... PRESENTING THEIR MEMORIES AND DREAMS IN A WAY THAT SEEMED RANDOM. THESE INNOVATIONS HAVE BEEN SO INFLUENTIAL THAT SOME CRITICS HAVE CALLED FAULKNER AN EARLY POSTMODERNIST.</p>
01.09.10.28	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: If you've read any William Faulkner, you could hear a William Faulkner sentence and you would know immediately who you are hearing, because the classic William Faulkner sentence starts on page 179 and ends on page 194, and is decipherable. Sometimes we have an interior monologue. Sometimes we have stream of consciousness. That can shift between some of the different characters in the novel.</p>
01.09.36.18	<p>NARRATOR: FAULKNER USED STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN AS I LAY DYING. IN THE STORY, WE HEAR HOW ADDIE BUNDREN'S DEATH AFFECTS HER NEIGHBORS AND FAMILY.</p>
01.09.47.16	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: In <i>As I Lay Dying</i>, the plot is almost ludicrous. It is a family trying to get the mother's body to Jefferson, Mississippi, so it can be properly buried.</p>
01.09.53.28	<p>NARRATOR: FAULKNER SHOWS US ADDIE'S COFFIN THROUGH THE EYES OF ADDIE'S YOUNGEST SON VARDAMAN. HE MASTERFULLY CAPTURES THE FANTASTICAL INTERIOR WORLD OF A CHILD AS THE FAMILY TRANSPORTS THE COFFIN ACROSS A RIVER.</p>
01.10.13.15	<p>FAULKNER READER: <i>Cash is my brother, But Jewel's mother is a horse. My mother is a fish. Darl say that when we come to the water again I might see her and Dewey Dell said, She's in the box, how could she have got out? She got out through the holes I bored, into the water I said, and when we come to the water again I am going to see her. My mother is not in the box. My mother does not smell like that. My mother is a fish.</i></p>
01.10.39.27	<p>RAMON SALDÍVAR: Crazy things happen. The body floats away down the flooded stream. The mules that are driving the wagon drown. So in other words, what begins as a project of great high seriousness, the burial of the matriarch of the family, keeps falling into these just absurd situations.</p>
01.11.00.20	<p>NARRATOR: IN THE AFTERMATH OF WORLD WAR I, PEOPLE ALL OVER THE COUNTRY EXPERIENCED NEWFOUND MOBILITY WITH THE AUTOMOBILE AND NEW HIGHWAY SYSTEMS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE RADIO CREATED A SHARED</p>

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	<p>CONSCIOUSNESS BY SPREADING MUSIC AND INFORMATION. THESE CHANGES ALSO BROUGHT UNCERTANTIES, WHICH HIT THE SOUTH'S RIGID SOCIAL ORDER PARTICULARLY HARD. SOUTHERNERS FOUND THEMSELVES IN UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY... ONE OF DIVERSITY AND CHANGE.</p>
01.11.32.10	<p>RAMON SALDÍVAR: Faulkner is immensely interesting because I think he does have countless questions and they are the questions that really, in so many ways, continue to be the questions that we at the end of the 20th Century pose, and that is maybe on the most fundamental level: What is America? And he is asking it in ways that are profoundly difficult to answer and they are very daring.</p>
01.11.56.08	<p>NARRATOR: IN 1936, MARGARET MITCHELL PUBLISHED <i>GONE WITH THE WIND</i>; IT WAS AN INSTANT BESTSELLER, WHICH HOLLYWOOD MADE INTO AN EPIC MOTION PICTURE. IT PERPETUATED THE POPULAR ROMANTIC VIEW OF THE SOUTH. THAT SAME YEAR WILLIAM FAULKNER RELEASED <i>ABSALOM! ABSALOM!</i> A SOUL-SEARCHING INDICTMENT OF SOUTHERN SOCIETY...</p>
01.12.18.25	<p>DON DOYLE: Faulkner, I think, told a less romantic story about the South than Margaret Mitchell but he felt that he was telling a truer story about the South that he knew from this informal study of its past.</p>
01.12.34.13	<p>NARRATOR: THROUGH THE STORY OF THE SUTPEN FAMILY, FAULKNER SHOWED HOW SOME POOR WHITES TRIED TO ELEVATE THEMSELVES THROUGH RACISM, AS A REACTION AGAINST THEIR OWN OPPRESSION.</p>
01.12.45.05	<p>DOROTHY ALLISON: You come to a place in which you see the racism and you, the reader, have contempt for it, and that's a really great writer that can take you there. I think, in fact, Faulkner did contribute to a change that's taken place in this country around race and issues of class, but a lot of people can read him and never see it. They glory in those men that he really holds up to a really sharp light.</p>
01.13.09.20	<p>NARRATOR: <i>ABSALOM, ABSALOM!</i> IS FAULKNER'S MASTERPIECE. IT'S A TEMPEST OF CONFLICTS DEALING WITH SEX, THE FAMILY AND RACE. IN THE NOVEL, HENRY SUTPEN'S FATHER TELLS HIM THAT HIS BEST FRIEND CHARLES BON, THE MAN WHO HAS BEEN COURTING HENRY'S SISTER JUDITH, IS NOT WHAT HE SEEMS.</p>

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01.13.29.06	<p>FAULKNER READER: <i>He must not marry her, Henry. His mother's father told me that her mother had been a Spanish woman I believed him; it was not until after he had been born that I found out that his mother was part Negro.</i></p>
01.13.44.00	<p>NARRATOR: HENRY IS FACED WITH HIS WORST NIGHTMARE. HIS SISTER'S FIANCE IS ALSO THEIR BROTHER; TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, HE'S PART AFRICAN AMERICAN. INCEST AND MISCEGENATION UNMASK THE MYTH OF A PURE WHITE SOUTH FOR THE LIE IT REALLY IS. THE RACE AND CLASS ISSUES FAULKNER DEALT WITH IN HIS WRITING STILL RESONATE WITH SOUTHERN WRITERS.</p>
01.14.07.03	<p>DOROTHY ALLISON: I grew up in a family in which every other word was nigger this and nigger that. People that I loved were hateful. My mama, who I adored and worshipped, said things to me that I cannot to this day repeat to you. They were so evil. Racist. You don't know the core of racist to see someone you love say this stuff you know is a violent lie. Walk away with that. You've got a need to tell a story, you've got a need to make sense of it. You have to piece it out. You make a story that works against it.</p>
01.14.45.21	<p>NARRATOR: IN 1950, WILLIAM FAULKNER RECEIVED THE NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE. IN HIS ACCEPTANCE SPEECH, HE SAID, "THE ONLY THING WORTH WRITING ABOUT WAS THE HUMAN HEART IN CONFLICT WITH ITSELF."</p>
01.15.02.13	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: So much of what Faulkner is writing about in writing about the past, and thinking about memory, and thinking about narration, is if there is any way to get outside of the past. If in a certain sense we as individuals, and we as a society, and we as the South are always going to be burdened by the sort of horrors of the Southern history, or whether it's possible to get beyond that, whether it's possible to make up for it, step aside of it, outlive it, outrun it. And there is always the possibility, I think, in Faulkner that you can't.</p>
01.15.50.14	<p>NARRATOR: WHILE FAULKNER EXPLORED MYTHS ABOUT WHITE SOUTHERNS ... ZORA NEALE HURSTON TURNED TO AFRICAN AMERICAN FOLK TRADITIONS TO PRESENT A POSITIVE VIEW OF BLACK SOUTHERN LIFE. IN HER OWN LIFE, HURSTON FOLLOWED THE EXAMPLE OF MANY SOUTHERN BLACKS, WHO WERE LEAVING THE SOUTH IN RECORD NUMBERS.</p>

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01.15.11.03	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: Well, it's not just negative things pushing people out of the South. It's the perception of more positive things in the North or in cities that also pulling people out.</p>
01.16.20.23	<p>NARRATOR: HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS LEFT THE SOUTH DURING WORLD WAR ONE, AND WELL OVER A MILLION FOLLOWED IN THE DECADE AFTER THE WAR. THEY LEFT BEHIND A FAILING ECONOMY, AND FOLLOWED THE BEACON OF THE INDUSTRIAL NORTH. THE GREAT MIGRATION WAS ON.</p>
01.16.39.28	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: It created the urban Black centers through which the flowering of Black literature and arts came into being. So it created the Chicago Renaissance and the Philadelphia Renaissance and the D.C. Renaissance and the Harlem Renaissance, because very quickly you had concentrated pockets of a Black population who had just arrived into what amounted to a completely different world.</p>
01.17.10.09	<p>NARRATOR: IN FLORIDA, SHE WAS CLAIMED AS ONE OF THEIR OWN. IN HARLEM SHE WAS KNOWN AS A STORYTELLER. IN ACADEMIC CIRCLES SHE WAS REGARDED AS A RESPECTED ANTHROPOLOGIST. ZORA NEALE HURSTON WAS A PRODUCT OF THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE, BUT TOLD STORIES OF HER NATIVE SOUTH, THE STORIES SHE REMEMBERED HER NEIGHBORS TELL ON THE FRONT PORCH SWING.</p>
01.17.35.14	<p>HURSTON READER: <i>Mama exhorted her children at every opportunity to "jump at de sun." We might not land on the sun, but at least we would get off the ground.</i></p>
01.17.46.06	<p>NARRATOR: ZORA NEALE HURSTON WAS BORN IN 1891. SHE WAS THE MAYOR'S DAUGHTER IN THE ALL-BLACK TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA. SHE WROTE THAT SHE DIDN'T EVEN "KNOW SHE WAS BLACK" UNTIL SHE WAS ELEVEN YEARS OLD.</p>
01.17.59.17	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: Yes, of course, she knew she was Black. She could look in the mirror and see that she had beautiful brown skin and... looked the way she did but it didn't impact upon her that she was the category Black, the Black category that's supposed to be inferior until she was older.</p>
01.16.15.28	<p>NARRATOR: DESPITE NOT ATTENDING HIGH SCHOOL, HURSTON ENTERED AND COMPLETED COLLEGE. AFTER SOME EARLY</p>

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	SUCCESS WRITING SHORT STORIES, SHE MOVED TO HARLEM TO PURSUE A LITERARY CAREER.
01.18.27.20	CARLA KAPLAN: She arrives in 1925 and from the moment she...walks into Harlem she becomes an instant celebrity. There are so many stories of the way in which she was as famous for being flamboyant and being outrageous as for her extraordinary writing.
01.18.46.25	NARRATOR: HURSTON WORKED AS A NOVELIST'S SECRETARY WHILE ATTENDING BARNARD COLLEGE WHERE SHE STUDIED ANTHROPOLOGY. HER INTEREST IN BLACK FOLK TRADITIONS LED HER BACK TO THE SOUTH.
01.18.58.10	CARLA KAPLAN: She decided she'd go back into the rural South and she'd collect the folklore and the stories that nobody else had ever collected. She did that by going into areas that were dangerous for any woman. So she strapped a revolver to her hip, bought herself a car, and traveled alone through the turpentine camps and into the sawmills and took absolutely no guff from anybody.
01.19.21.28	RECORDING OF HURSTON: <i>This song is called "Shove it Over," and it's a lining rhythm that's pretty generally distributed all over Florida. It was sung to me by Charlie Jones on a railroad construction camp near Lakeland, Florida [SINGS:] When I get in ta Illinois, I'm going to spread the news about the Florida boys...shove it over.</i>
01.19.45.23	ALICE WALKER: I think that she upset a lot of people just by her flamboyance, and by her style, and by her refusal to be daunted.
01.19.57.05	NARRATOR: WRITER ALICE WALKER IS CREDITED WITH REDISCOVERING HURSTON'S WORK. WALKER RECOGNIZED THAT HURSTON'S PORTRAITS OF EVERYDAY AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE IN THE SOUTH PRESENTED A DIFFERENT VIEW THAN WAS FOUND IN FAULKNER'S FICTION.
01.20.11.22	ALICE WALKER: He's coming from the other side. He's got all this heavy weight of having inherited everything that he possessed from slave owners he's dealing with this whole history of having been on the side of the evil-doers, and Zora is coming from the point of view of someone who has refused to be oppressed.
01.20.33.22	NARRATOR: IN HER ESSAY, "HOW IT FEELS TO BE COLORED ME," HURSTON OBSERVED THAT RACE IS CREATED, NOT GIVEN.

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	<p>AS A FOLKLORIST AND AUTHOR, SHE CAPTURED A VISION OF THE SOUTH THAT WAS DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WAS USUALLY RECORDED.</p>
01.20.49.20	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: She says, <i>I am not tragically colored. There is no great sorrow dammed up in my soul nor lurking behind my eyes. I do not mind at all. I do not belong to the sobbing school of "Negrohood" who hold that nature somehow has given them a lowdown dirty deal and whose feelings are all hurt about it.</i></p> <p>Um. She... In some ways, she is speaking to the notion of the Negro problem, that Negroes are a problem. That's something that Du Bois says in <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>... you know that people may not come right out and say it but they are asking: How does it feel to be a problem? Um, and Hurston is saying, well, this is not necessarily a problem, or if it is a problem, it's not my problem. It's your problem.</p>
01.21.36.19	<p>NARRATOR: LIKE FAULKNER'S MISSISSIPPI, HURSTON'S FLORIDA TURNED UP IN HER STORIES AGAIN AND AGAIN, SHAPING HER CHARACTERS AND THE WAY THEY LIVED.</p>
01.21.46.12	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: But the Eatonville she describes is an Eatonville in which she says there was one store, and the store was the social center of the town, and everybody gathered on Joe Clark's porch and they traded stories. And you actually see the store porch in <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>.</p>
01.22.02.09	<p>NARRATOR: THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD IS A WOMAN'S STORY, AND A CRITIQUE OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN AMERICAN FOLK SOCIETY. HURSTON TELLS THE STORY BY LETTING READERS EAVESDROP ON CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE NOVELS MAIN CHARACTER, JANIE AND HER BEST FRIEND PHOEBE.</p>
01.22.19.26	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: It's all about Black people, about Black people in a little town and it's funny and it's racy and it's, um, beautiful. And it's about that, front and center.</p>
01.22.34.15	<p>NARRATOR: IN THIS SCENE, AN EX-SLAVE TELLS HER GRANDDAUGHTER ABOUT HER DREAMS OF WHAT A WOMAN OUGHT TO BE.</p>
01.22.43.28	<p>HURSTON READER: <i>Ah wanted to preach a great sermon about colored women sittin' on high, but they wasn't no pulpit for me. Freedom found me wid a baby daughter in mah arms, so Ah said Ah'd take a broom and a cook-pot</i></p>

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	<p><i>and throw up a highway through de wilderness for her. She would expound what Ah felt. But somehow she got lost offa de highway and next thing Ah knowed here you was in de world. So whilst Ah was tendin' you of nights Ah said Ah'd save de text for you. Ah been waitin' a long time, Janie, but nothin' Ah-been through ain't too much if you just take a stand on high ground lak Ah dreamed.</i></p>
01.23.28.18	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: The story is a quest romance in which a young woman goes off, very much following the standard format of a fairy tale, she needs to be fulfilled. She has not had a happy life and she is going off in search of fulfillment. And like the standard fairy tale story, she goes through three failed attempts before she finds what will fulfill her.</p>
01.23.48.12	<p>ALICE WALKER: <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> is perfect. It's uh, you know, it's perfect in the way that, uh, that fruit is perfect, you know that sunshine is perfect, I mean it captures beautifully the speech of the people, the period in which it was written, her deep affection for their ways and her deep and true appreciation of her own culture.</p>
1.24.17.00	<p>NARRATOR: WHEN <i>THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD</i>, WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1937, SOME CRITICIZED THE WAY HURSTON PORTRAYED BLACK LIFE.</p>
01.24.27.01	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: A number of her Black contemporaries felt she should be writing problem novels, novels that would deal with issues of racism. It's very rare in her novels that there are conflicts between Blacks and Whites. She wasn't interested in talking about White society. She wanted to talk about Black life in its own terms, in its own standards without reference to White culture.</p>
01.24.47.23	<p>NARRATOR: HURSTON'S FINAL WORK WAS HER AUTOBIOGRAPHY, <i>DUST TRACKS ON A ROAD</i>. UNILKE HER FICTION, IN HER AUTOBIOGRAPHY SHE WAS CRITICAL OF WHITE SOCIETY. BEFORE IT WAS RELEASED, HER PUBLISHERS REMOVED ALL OF HER ANTI-WHITE REFERENCES. BY THE 1950'S, HURSTON SLIPPED INTO OBSCURITY.</p>
01.25.09.22	<p>CARLA KAPLAN: There were many novels that we know Hurston tried to publish in the '50s. They've all vanished. None of them were accepted by publishers... They were all rejected. It's hard for Black writers to get published. So by the time she gets to 1960 she's a writer who has not been able to get her work published, she's living in poverty, she dies in poverty in 1960, she's buried in an unmarked grave.</p>

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01.25.31.27	<p>NARRATOR: IN 1973 ALICE WALKER FOUND THE FIELD WHERE ZORA NEALE HURSTON WAS BURIED. SHE PLACED A MARKER THERE THAT READS: "ZORA NEALE HURSTON, A GENIUS OF THE SOUTH."</p>
01.25.45.22	<p>ALICE WALKER: She had been so denigrated, criticized, and harassed when she was alive. Her work had been out of print for 30 years, and so she needed a special kind of effort to really bring her back.</p>
01.26.08.11	<p>NARRATOR: HURSTON IS NOW HONORED FOR HER TALENT, AND SEEN AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN WRITING BEFORE WORLD WAR TWO.</p>
01.26.16.20	<p>DOROTHY ALLISON: The Women's Movement created a tradition of writing that honored women's writing, so not only did we go back and find books by Zora Neale Hurston and enormous numbers of other writers. We began to write in their tradition instead of trying to write like Faulkner. It's much easier for me to write in Zora Neale Hurston's tradition than Faulkner.</p>
01.26.36.15	<p>NARRATOR: ZORA NEALE HURSTON AND WILLIAM FAULKNER MOVED SOUTHERN LITERATURE TO A PLACE THAT IS RICH AND COMPLEX. THEY JOINED THEIR VOICES WITH OTHER WRITERS OF THE SOUTH TO REVISE SOUTHERN MYTHS AND THEY BROKE THROUGH REGIONAL BARRIERS... TO SPEAK TO THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND TO THE UNIVERSAL HUMAN CONDITION.</p>
01.27.00.00	Credits
01.27.50.00 01.27.55.00 01.28.10.00 01.28.25.00	OPB A/CPB 800 TAG END