

The Ground On Which Stand: A Powerful and Moving Novel about Race, Identity, and Belonging



The Ground on Which I Stand by August Wilson

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 2847 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Print length : 146 pages



The Ground On Which Stand is a powerful and moving novel that explores the themes of race, identity, and belonging. Set in the American South during the Jim Crow era, the novel follows the story of two black men who are wrongfully accused of a crime and must fight for their freedom.

The novel begins with the arrest of Nat Turner and his followers after their failed slave rebellion in 1831. Turner is a charismatic and intelligent leader who believes that God has chosen him to lead his people to freedom. However, his rebellion is brutally suppressed by the white authorities, and he and his followers are executed.

The novel then shifts to the present day, where two black men, John and Jake, are wrongfully accused of raping a white woman. They are arrested and thrown into jail, where they are subjected to beatings and other forms

of abuse. Despite the lack of evidence against them, they are convicted and sentenced to death.

As John and Jake await their execution, they are visited by a white lawyer named Henry. Henry is a compassionate and idealistic man who believes that the two men are innocent. He takes on their case and fights for their freedom. However, the odds are stacked against them, and it seems unlikely that they will be able to escape their fate.

The Ground On Which Stand is a powerful and moving novel that explores the themes of race, identity, and belonging. The novel is a reminder of the horrors of slavery and the Jim Crow era, and it is a testament to the resilience and strength of the human spirit.

Characters

- **Nat Turner:** A charismatic and intelligent leader who believes that God has chosen him to lead his people to freedom.
- **John:** A black man who is wrongfully accused of raping a white woman.
- **Jake:** A black man who is wrongfully accused of raping a white woman.
- **Henry:** A white lawyer who believes that John and Jake are innocent and fights for their freedom.

Themes

The Ground On Which Stand explores a number of themes, including:

- **Race:** The novel explores the role that race plays in American society, and how it can be used to justify discrimination and violence.
- **Identity:** The novel explores the question of identity, and how it is shaped by our experiences and the society in which we live.
- **Belonging:** The novel explores the theme of belonging, and how it can be difficult to find a place where you feel like you belong.

Setting

The Ground On Which Stand is set in the American South during the Jim Crow era. The Jim Crow era was a period of racial segregation and discrimination that lasted from the end of the Civil War until the Civil Rights Act of 1964. During this time, black people were denied basic rights and opportunities, and they were often subjected to violence and discrimination.

Historical Context

The Ground On Which Stand is set against the backdrop of the Nat Turner Rebellion. The Nat Turner Rebellion was a slave rebellion that took place in Southampton County, Virginia, in 1831. The rebellion was led by Nat Turner, a charismatic and intelligent black man who believed that God had chosen him to lead his people to freedom. The rebellion was brutally suppressed by the white authorities, and Turner and his followers were executed.

The Nat Turner Rebellion was a significant event in American history. It was one of the largest slave rebellions in the United States, and it helped to increase the fear of slave insurrections among white Southerners. The

rebellion also led to the passage of more restrictive slave laws, which made it even more difficult for enslaved people to gain their freedom.

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