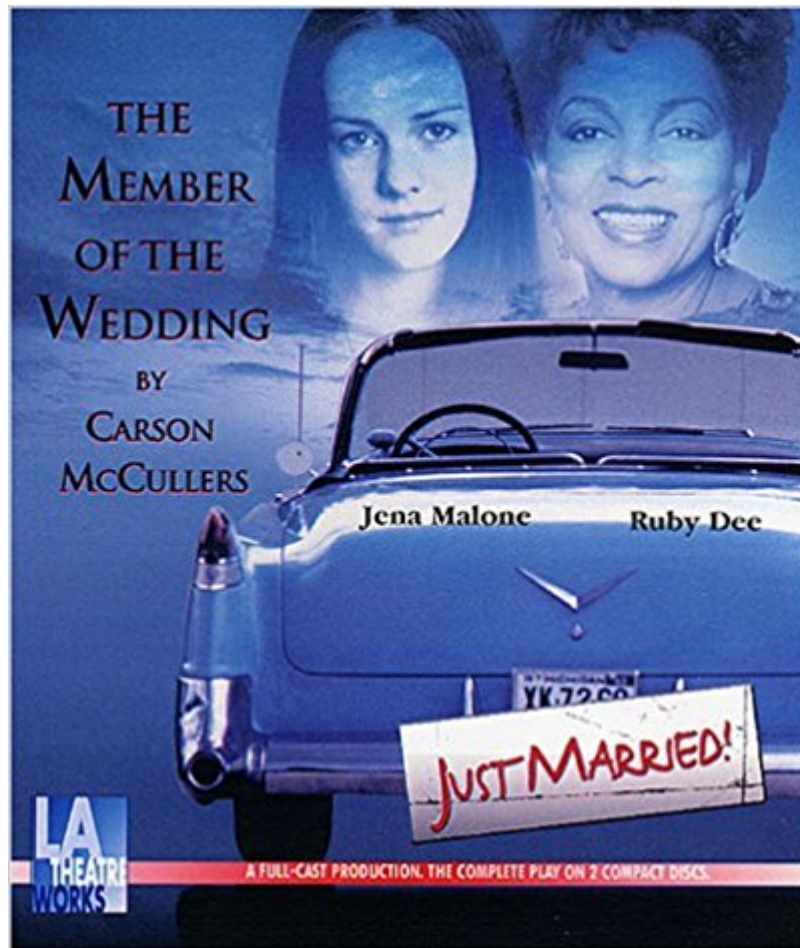




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The Member Of The Wedding



Synopsis

Outspoken tomboy Frankie befriends the family's maid in one of the most beautiful plays ever written about loneliness and love. Tall, awkward, and lonely, Frankie Addams has a vivid imagination but no friends. Even her father calls her a great big long-legged 12-year-old blunderbuss, and the friendless girl spends most of her time in the kitchen, pouring out her heart to Berenice, the gentle and wise family cook and housekeeper. Frankie's jealousy of her brother's impending marriage, and her curious belief that she must accompany him and his bride on their honeymoon in order to belong, drives her to strange measures. She devises a desperate plan, reinventing herself as the seemingly sophisticated F. Jasmine, a gawky beauty in a pink dress who looks closer to 16 than 12. But she's ill prepared for what follows from this troubling game of make-believe. Carson McCullers captures the universal in the particular in this sensitive, nuanced portrayal of one girl's struggle into adulthood. A L.A. Theatre Works full-cast performance featuring: June Angela, John Cothran Jr., Ruby Dee, Daniel Henson, Victor Mack, Jena Malone, Lawrence Pressman, Jacquelyn Riggs and Tegan West.

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Customer Reviews

Twelve-year-old Frankie Adams, longing at once for escape and belonging, takes her role as "member of the wedding" to mean that when her older brother marries she will join the happy couple in their new life together. But Frankie is unlucky in love; her mother is dead, and Frankie narrowly escapes being raped by a drunken soldier during a farewell tour of the town. Worst of all, "member

of the wedding" doesn't mean what she thinks. A gorgeous, brief coming-of-age novel. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Novel by Carson Mccullers, published in 1946. It depicts the inner life of 12-year-old Frankie Addams, a Georgia tomboy who imagines that she will be taken by the bride and groom (her brother) on their honeymoon. Frankie finds refuge in the company of two equally isolated characters, her ailing six-year-old cousin John Henry and her father's black housekeeper, Berenice, who serves as both mother figure and oracle. Much of the novel consists of a series of kitchen-table conversations among these three. The threesome is broken by the cousin's death and Berenice's own wedding. --The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature

This is a story of 12 year old Frances who lives in the south during WW11, She becomes infatuated with the idea of her older brothers wedding and much angst ensues. Her widowed father is a shadowy figure and the non nonsense black maid Bernice, tries to comfort and advise the girl. The story drags in the middle as Frances' longings and Bernice's many marriages are recounted over and over. Yet it is still a solid story with much pathos.

I had heard that this book is taught at Princeton by Tony Morrison, so I was a little concerned when I put it on our summer family reading list that it might be over the heads of my kids (and me, for that matter). It turns out, the prose is so simple, yet affecting, that everyone in my family read it with ease. But did they relate to it? Well, I can say for my part that the book brought back memories of my own brother's wedding the summer I was 15 (and no I didn't think I was going to change my name and go off with the newly weds). The combination of excitement about the wedding and unease about the unknown landscape after your first sibling gets married all bubbled up in an unexpected way. Additionally, the writing was so evocative of the south, I was glad to read it and happy to have my kids read it too. As for the kids, they wouldn't tell you they loved it, but you could tell, even through their unflattering descriptions of the story, that they understood it and related to it. They thought Frankie was weird, but they could describe her in such detail that I knew they were paying attention. This book has many layers to it; I'm confident that if they study it in high school or college, they will see it afresh; and I'm happy they've had a chance to be exposed to such a great example of modern literature.

This story defies many of the rules of writing. There is one tension point in the story: what will

happen when Frankie tries to go live with her brother and his new bride. In the writing between the introduction to this crazy notion and the resolution almost at the end we get too be in the mind of a 12 year old girl who struggles with many of the things pre-pubescent teens deal with. It is this journey, and the interplay between Berenice, the maid, Frankie and Frankie's cousin, John Henry, that is the book. Carson McCullers writes in a quirky style that constantly wrenches you awake as she uses an adjective to describe something that doesn't seem to fit at the same time letting you feel the sweltering heat and dusty streets of a small Southern town. This book was published in 1946, before the time of the civil rights movement and it is interesting, and maybe disturbing to some, that the way Frankie treats Berenice at one moment is like a confidant and the next as an arrogant mistress. This is a good read. Some might bemoan the lack of action. There are no axe murders, gory descriptions or car chases. If that's what you want look elsewhere.

From which the film, "The Member of the Wedding" was taken. Life during second world war seen through the eyes of a frustrated frightened, lonely young motherless girl running headlong into puberty. Longing to fit in and surrounded by an absent, hard-working father, a loving black housekeeper and a much younger cousin next door and no more. She longs to see the world, get out, away and finally sees her chance in becoming a member of the marriage party when her brother marries and heads off on a quick honeymoon before heading back to base. Can she sneak out of the house with packed bag and go with them to see the world? Will life ever be different? And what if two very life-changing things happen to her little world? Will she survive? McCullers, whose own life was so sad, penned it perfectly.

While not quite as impressive as *Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, the two share the melancholy, gothic beauty of a faded South. Both raise interesting questions about identity, particularly as seen through the eyes of an adolescent. What *Member* does that is different is to narrow the scope from several related people to one young person's understanding of the dawn of her adult identity--and that alone. This means, then, that while a detailed and comprehensive view inside her mind, it can seem one-sided and obsessive, even if gorgeously written. Read alone, it's a phenomenal representation of the dawn of maturity with wonderful, lonely language.

This is nearly stream of consciousness in the mind of a twelve year old girl raised in the South. What makes this story so special is the author's ability to get into that mind and relate the improbable wandering thoughts of that young girl, almost grown and yet so childish. Other themes

are Southern culture and race relations. The girl/child has been raised by a black maid with whom she has a very special and loving relationship. But at times you know that she doesn't consider this woman worthy of due respect. By the time Frankie is thirteen and no longer a child, it is revealed that she is still more child than woman. She continues the self centered immaturity that is excused in her younger self, but is disappointing to the reader and to the one person who cared about her more than any other person.

This was an interesting book, but not exactly what I expected. Told from the mind of a 12 yr. old girl living in a small town, it certainly showed the sometimes naïve and convoluted thinking of a pubescent girl that lost her mother at an early age at that place in time. It also made me realize what limited options there were for girls and women back then, especially those in small towns with little worldly exposure or experience.

I guess I liked the book but I liked the movie more.

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