

The Virgin Islands Consortium

When Sula Sang | A Tribute To Toni Morrison By Winston Nugent

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Toni Morrison was the first African-American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, in 1993. She was the author of 11 novels as well as children's books and essay collections. Among them were celebrated works like "Song of Solomon," which received the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1977, and "Beloved," which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1988. She died on Monday at the age of 88.

A story in the lifetime of grassroots women, ancient trees while firewood burned in memories of those who spoke in silence.

A story told once about people when they came into the night pertinacious from a world in an open book, where the pages were brownish and preserved in linseed oil from the barks of trees not yet planted.

Then came a voice echoing through the colored valley of life. A voice chanting hymns:

“The love of a woman and a bottle of wine last for a time.”

A voice of words on a mission placing bios and family albums in an open book where the pages were pellucid as the Slave Trade.

Where blue-black women washed clothes on the backs of river stones while men appeared and disappeared like overcast clouds.

A story told once in a lifetime about people who were as immutable as the Kingdoms of Ancient Africa.

The above poem is an excerpt from the soon to be published book: “A Symphony In The Color Of Our Skin” by Winston Nugent.

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