

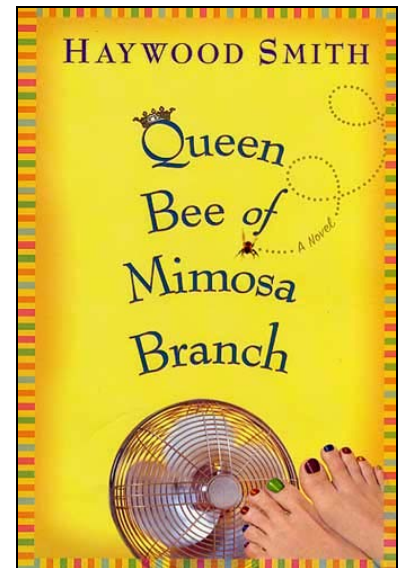
# READING GROUP GUIDE

## *The Queen Bee of Mimosa Branch* by Haywood Smith

St. Martin's Press

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### Introduction to *The Queen Bee of Mimosa Branch*

Southern housewife Linwood Breedlove Scott was happily content in her comfortable, complacent thirty-year marriage, but when her husband cleans out their bank accounts and runs off with a stripper, her life takes a hilarious, yet touching, right turn into reality. With no place to go but home, she's forced back to her insular hometown and the "eccentric" family she escaped by marrying at nineteen: her senile father, her loving-yet-controlling mother, her long-suffering aunt, her crazy uncle, and her good-for-nothing brother. But despite her newly dependent situation and her family's genteel insanity, Lin begins to stand on her own two feet and wake up to the joys-and perils-of life as a single woman. And she also learns surprising lessons about her family: that things aren't always what they seem, and that the power of love governs even the most dysfunctional of relationships. This joy-filled, moving, and wise-cracking novel delivers a portrait of Southern life, Southern families, and self-discovery that readers will never forget.

### Praise for *The Queen Bee of Mimosa Branch*

"Haywood Smith paints a portrait of lasting relationships between family and lifelong friends in the small-town South. Her colorful cast of characters is unforgettable."

--*Southern Living*

"A veritable goldmine of Southern homespun homilies and hospitality, where the Ya-Ya sisterhood would feel right at home."

--*Booklist*

"Snapshots of Southern living will charm even the hardest-hearted Yankee."

--*Publishers Weekly*

"Hilariously on the mark...the perfect combination of wit and touching sentiment...[A] one-of-a-kind feel-good read."

--*Romantic Times*

A "hilarious slice of life." --*Midwest Book Review*

## Reading Group Guide Questions

1. When Linwood Scott's life falls apart, she has nowhere to turn but her family. Do you think she had any other choice? In the same circumstances, would you return to your family?
2. How does Linwood's attitude toward self-sufficiency change throughout the course of the novel?
3. Female friendships are crucial to the healing of Linwood Scott. In what ways were her friends instrumental in helping her through her trials and tribulations?
4. Would you characterize Miss Mamie as a strong woman? A controlled woman? A controlling woman? In what ways is her relationship with men similar or different from Linwood's?
5. What was the turning point of Linwood's relationship with her brother?
6. How did you feel the author portrayed the issues of Alzheimer's and senility?
7. Were you satisfied with the way things turned out between Linwood and Grant? Why or why not?
8. Where could you imagine Linwood's life heading after the novel closes?

## About the Author

Atlanta native **Haywood Smith** lives on the shores of Lake Lanier near the small town of Buford, Georgia. She has one son, currently in medical school who is "married to a wonderful, fearless Christian woman," and a close family that includes her mother, three sisters, and a brother. Inspired by her own observations of Southern life and family, she created this funny, joyous tribute to one woman's triumph over adversity.