

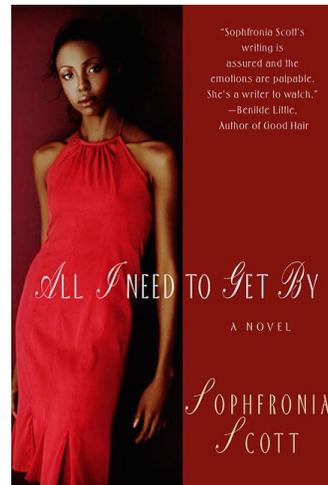
# READING GROUP GUIDE

## *All I Need to Get By*

By *Sophronia Scott*

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### **About this Guide**

The following author biography and list of questions about *All I Need to Get By* are intended as resources to aid individual readers and book groups who would like to learn more about the author and this book. We hope that this guide will provide you a starting place for discussion, and suggest a variety of perspectives from which you might approach *All I Need to Get By*.

### **About the Book**

Crita has come a long way from her small-town Ohio roots. A successful tax accountant living in Manhattan, she finally has the independent life that she dreamed of as a girl. However, with one fateful phone call, Crita's life is turned upside down. Suddenly back home, living under her parent's roof, Crita must confront two powerful men from her childhood--Link, her destructive brother with whom she shares a dark secret, and Tree, her first love.

Facing memories that she would rather forget, Crita struggles to reconcile a tumultuous past with a calmer, quieter present. Needing help along the way, she may even learn to lean on Tree, the only man who could ever give her "what she needs to get by." In this riveting debut novel, Sophronia Scott speaks for anyone that knows just how hard it is to go back home again.

### **About the Author**

**Sophronia Scott** proudly hails from Toni Morrison's hometown of Lorain, Ohio. She is the third of seven children born to her steelworker father and stay-at-home mother. After graduating from Harvard in 1988, Sophronia went to work for *Time* magazine where, in early 1990, she and a colleague conceived *Time's* "Twentysomething" cover story and became the magazine's youngest cover story writers. Sophronia is the former StyleWatch editor at *People* magazine and the former Senior Entertainment editor at *TeenPeople*. Sophronia resides with her husband in Manhattan. *All I Need to Get By* is her first novel.



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## Discussion Questions

1. Do you agree with Mama's assertion that the world is made up of caretakers and those who are cared for? If not, why? Is it true for her family? Why or why not?
2. Why are the stories of their grandmother and Daddy's childhood so important to the Carter siblings? Do you have similar family stories that you consider important or inspiring? What are they?
3. What makes it so hard for Crita to go home again? Is it one issue (Linc) or many?
4. The theme of family and what is expected of a family member shows up repeatedly in the book. Crita and Tree argue over it as well. How far does one go to help family? Who in the book went too far? Who didn't go far enough?
5. In many ways Daddy seems both powerful and powerless when it comes to his children's lives. Is he an effective father? Why or why not?
6. How is Crita's story different from those usually written about African-American families? How is it similar?
7. How does Crita have to change so that she can find her way back to Tree?
8. What aspects, if any, in Crita and Linc's relationship do you see in your own with your siblings?
9. Linc grew up with a love and support that some young black men don't have. Why wasn't it enough for him? Do you blame him for his fall?
10. What role do dreams play in the book?
11. How does the family change as Daddy deteriorates?
12. If you were Crita, what would you have done differently when you learned of Linc's drug use?

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