Harvest

By Catherine Landis

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About this Guide
The following author biography and list of questions about Harvest 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 Harvest.

About the Book
With a history of childhood loss and tragedy, Arliss Greene grows up to love his cattle more than his family. The memory of his family's displacement, due to TVA's construction of Norris Dam, stays with him as he struggles to make a living farming. His son Daniel tries to distance himself, but an inexplicable attachment to East Tennessee causes him to return to the hilltop where he grew up. He is shocked and disappointed when his wife, Leda, a city girl, ends up working with Arliss, farming the family land. Decisions are made, with repercussions that reverberate throughout their lives, the lives of their children, and the life of the farm from the 1930s to the beginning of the new century.

Written with an unerring ear for the cadence and language of the South, Harvest is a powerful, character-driven novel. A story of family, marriage, farming, baseball, the power of memory, and what sustains people through loss, Harvest is a reckoning of sacrifices and a testament to human resilience.

Catherine Landis, the author of the critically lauded BookSense 76 pick Some Days There's Pie, has written a compelling new novel with an assured Southern inflection and lovingly rendered three-dimensional characters.
About the Author

Catherine Landis is the author of the critically acclaimed novel Some Days There’s Pie. She grew up in Chattanooga, Tennessee, graduated from Davidson College in North Carolina, and lives and works in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do the tragedies that Arliss endures as a child affect the decisions he makes as an adult?

2. What are Daniel’s feelings about his Appalachian heritage? Are they conflicted? Do they change during the course of the book?

3. How does the book chronicle the differences between the childhoods experienced by Arliss, his sons, and his grandchildren?

4. Compare the relationship Daniel forms with his friend Brian to that which he shares with Leda.

5. Discuss the idea of entropy as it might apply to Arliss’s farm and to the characters in Harvest.

6. What from her past prepares Leda for her life as a farmer?

7. Would you consider Harvest a Southern book? Why or why not?

8. Discuss the role of cedar trees in the book.

9. What does Arliss’s dream tell the reader about him?

10. Why would Arliss prefer to see his land turned into a subdivision rather than revert back to fallow ground?

11. How would you describe Leda’s relationship with Merle?

12. What does Arliss hope to see when he visits the dam? What does he see?
13. What is your view on the tension between development and conservation?

14. What is the role of cultural heritage in modern lives?