

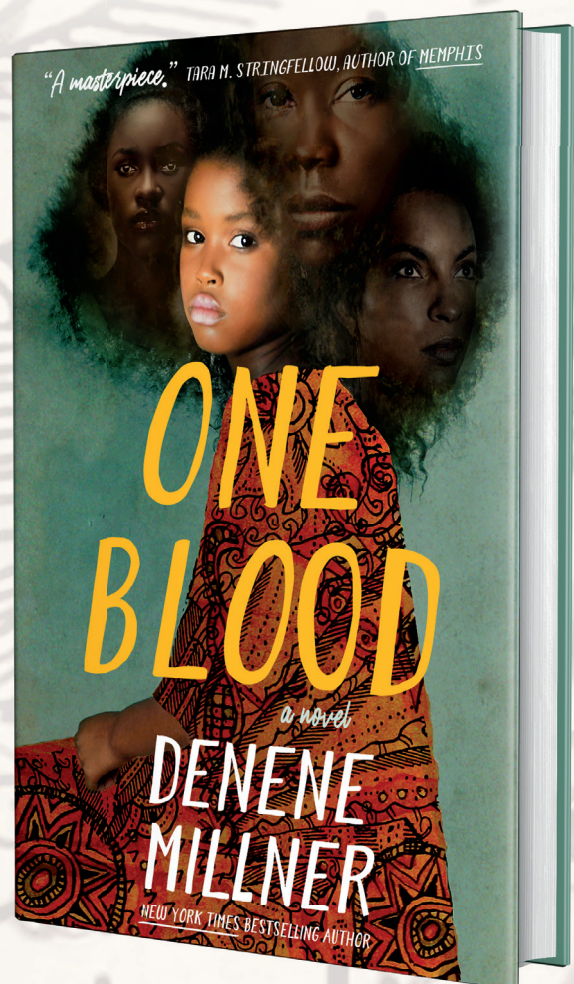
# READING GROUP GUIDE



Elshire Isaac for iVisionphoto

*Denene Millner* is a six-time *New York Times* bestselling author, Emmy Award-nominated TV show host and award-winning journalist who has written thirty-one books, among them Taraji P. Henson's *Around the Way Girl* and the picture book *Early Sunday Morning*. Millner is also the editorial director of Denene Millner Books, an award-winning imprint that has published two Caldecott Honor books, a Newbery Honor Book, the Kirkus Prize for Children's Literature and a Southern Book Award. A MacDowell Fellow, Millner has written essays for the *New York Times*, *Glamour* and NPR, whose Georgia affiliate hosted her critically-acclaimed podcast, *Speakeasy with Denene*. Millner is a graduate of Hofstra University. She lives in Atlanta with her two daughters and their goldendoodle, Franklin.

- 1.** Maw Maw is a midwife and healer in the town of Rose—a needed commodity in a rural community where health resources are scarce. Why is she only tolerated by the people who need her help?
- 2.** What is your initial impression of Bassej through the lens of Maw Maw, the church community, and through hearing Bassej's own voice? What is your understanding of her ambitions, and what role did they play in her ultimate tragedy?
- 3.** Mr. Aaron employs bravery, defiance, and strength to stave off terror and destruction meted out by white neighbors against the Black citizens of Rose—actions that counter the historical narrative that Black men either suffered under the weight of the Jim Crow South or met its violence with peaceful resistance. Why was he able to get away with his version of defiance?



**4.** Grace loses her ability to see into the future and connect with the dead when her physical bond with Maw Maw is broken. Why do you think it went away? Why do you think she was able to get it back while in labor?

**5.** LoLo's parenting abilities are informed by her father's abandonment, the stern brutality of The Mothers and the physical and emotional abuse she suffered at the hands of her cousins. How does that upbringing affect her parenting? Does she think she's a good mother? Do you?

**6.** Tommy is crazy about LoLo and delivers on his promise to take care of her and their family, but he commits the ultimate betrayal in their marriage. Can he have a secret family and still be a good man?

**7.** LoLo warns Rae not to marry Roman. Still, Rae pushes through out of love for not just her intended but also for the institution of marriage. Was their relationship doomed from the start?

**8.** Though she is angry at her father for cheating on her mother, Rae does the same thing—run to the arms of another man when her relationship issues with Roman become insurmountably difficult. Is there a difference between her affair and that of her father's? Does Rae's affair help or harm her?

**9.** Roman's ambition is to be an author, and Rae agrees to be the family earner while balancing a traditional role in the household so that Roman can focus on his goal. Rae sees this, initially, as being a supportive wife to her husband, but LoLo thinks Roman is using her daughter. Who is right?

**10.** In her most desperate moment, LoLo tried to die by suicide—laying down in the creek water in her backyard. Years later, Rae visited that same creek in a dream and was instructed to walk across the water. What role does water play in *One Blood*, and what is its significance for LoLo, Rae, and Grace?

**11.** Maw Maw says that “being scared of blood is like being scared of yo’self.” What do you think she means by this? Can one come to know oneself outside of their own “blood?”

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