



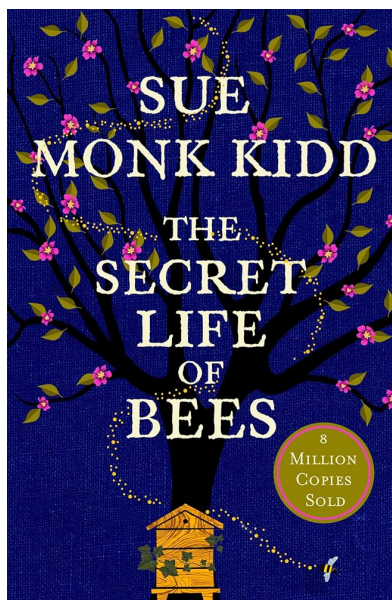
Prison Reading Groups
25 years
1999-2024

Book Talk

The Secret Life of Bees

by Sue Monk Kidd

Number of pages: 258



Set in South Carolina, 1964, *The Secret Life of Bees* follows Lily Owens' childhood, plagued by the mystery of her mother's death. When Rosaleen, Lily's brilliantly courageous black "stand-in mother", is imprisoned for insulting three of the town's deepest racists, she and Lily escape to Tiburon, where they are taken in by three black beekeeping sisters. These women captivate Lily with their Black Madonna and sense of sisterhood; this novel is one of womanhood and togetherness, in the face of racism, misogyny and tough times.

We recommend this book if you enjoyed *The Invention of Wings* by the same author or *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett.

Discussion Questions:

1. Can you relate to any of the themes explored in the book?

2. What was your reaction to the Black Madonna and the rituals the women do?

3. How do you think motherhood is portrayed in the novel?

4. Who was your favourite character?

5. What do you think was the purpose of May's Wailing Wall?

Thank you to our volunteer, Heidi, for choosing this title and creating the resource.