



A Lesson before Dying by Ernest J Gaines

In a small Cajun community in the late 1940s, a young black man named Jefferson is an unwitting party to a liquor store shootout in which three men are killed. The only survivor, he is convicted of murder and sentenced to death. Gaines explores the deep prejudice of the American South in the tradition of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.

A Lesson before Dying is a richly compassionate and deeply moving novel, the story of a young black man sentenced to death for a murder he did not commit, and a teacher who seeks to share his wisdom before the execution.