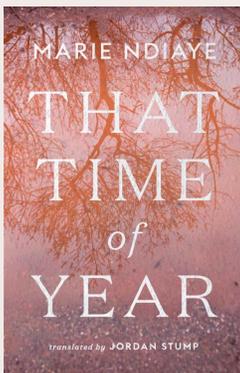


THAT TIME OF YEAR

Marie NDiaye, translated from French by Jordan Stump

1. *That Time of Year* is a ghostly tale, a horror story, and an allegory of alienation. What forms of othering—geographic, economic, cultural, or other—does the novel explore?
2. Herman is told he can only discover what happened to his wife and child if he becomes a villager. What does the novel suggest about the desires, pressures, and tradeoffs of assimilation?
3. The longer Herman stays in the village, he finds himself in a “dulled, larval inertia,” with a “progressive indifference to action and mental labor” (pg. 84, 88). How does *That Time of Year* portray labor, the desire for upward mobility, or the lack of that desire?
4. Herman admits he and his family never gave “a moment’s thought” to what happened in the village outside of holiday season (pg. 4). What does the novel suggest about the relationship of tourists to the places they visit?
5. *That Time of Year* portrays various forms of visual and psychological scrutiny: Herman regards the villagers, and the villagers regard him. What does the novel suggest about the relationship between surveillance and privacy, especially as it relates to being a social insider or outsider?
6. Herman has few specific memories of his wife and child or their summer together. How does the novel portray the relationship between time, memory, and emotional states like grief and paranoia?
7. What possible explanations does the novel suggest about Rose and her child’s disappearance? Does the conclusion resolve their fate, or Herman’s?



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