

# GOOP BOOK CLUB

## A Reading Guide for *The Shadow King* by Maaza Mengiste

Sure, you might get made fun of if you underline your books. But we like being able to look back at the passages, scenes, words, quotes, and turns in a story that affected us. And we like being able to talk about them with you. Let us know what you think in our book club [Facebook group](#).

Here, we've picked some of the most poignant moments from *The Shadow King*.

1. Page 4: "One name always drags with it another: nothing travels alone."
2. Page 7: "Her expression is guarded, her posture peculiarly stiff, absent the natural elegance that she will not know for many years is hers."
3. Page 22: "You can blame her for many things, but don't blame Aster for everything."
4. Pages 46-47: "She is suspended above the celebratory voices, trapped by a curdling rage that she mistakes for fear."
5. Page 49: "We can see him tremble and we know that he will do what has been done by those he has called his fathers."
6. Page 98: "The cook hears Aster pleading and she hears Aster promising but she knows that Aster's punishment will come in another way: it will come in following the narrow road set for her."
7. Page 116: "Who remembers what it means to be more than what this world believes of us?"
8. Page 145: "We are existing in a moment beyond reason, the emperor wants to say."
9. Pages 172-173: "Haile Selassie listens: A true leader is not a stone lying immobile in a changing tide. A real king does not tuck into himself like a beast at night."

10. Page 179: "Childhood companions who knew what it meant to be trapped by duties and expectations, and who shouldered all of it by moving deeper into their familiar circles, taking advantage of privilege because it all came at such a high, invisible cost."
11. Page 183: "They dance with abandon, finding ways to combine the body's awful capabilities into a fluid, unbroken rhythm."
12. Page 268: "And when Daedalus built the labyrinth, Ettore, how could he have imagined his own imprisonment? What we raise up, my son, will follow us down."
13. Page 418: "Here is the truth he wants to ignore: that what is forged into memory tucks itself into bone and muscle."
14. Page 420: "I'm sorry, he adds, as if that is an apology, as if those are words strong enough to pull the ripped seams of her together and hold her intact."