

Passing Nella Larsen

FOREWORD BY ALI SMITH WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY FRANCESCA WADE Who better to serve as a guide to great books and their authors than Virginia Woolf?

Nella Larsen was an important writer associated with the Harlem Renaissance. While she was not prolific her work was powerful and critically acclaimed. Collected here are all three of her published short stories; "Freedom," "The Wrong Man," and "Sanctuary." These stories are about love, loss, mistaken identity, and death.

Nella Larsen was an important writer associated with the Harlem Renaissance. While she was not prolific her work was powerful and critically acclaimed. Collected here are both of her novels, *Passing* and *Quicksand*, as well as all three of her published short stories; "Freedom," "The Wrong Man," and "Sanctuary." *Quicksand*, was autobiographical in nature and examined a woman's need for sexual fulfillment balanced against respectability and acceptance amid a deeply religious society. The novel is deeply pessimistic and ends as the protagonist is sucked into a life that is at odds with all that she desired. *Passing* confronts the reality of racial passing. The novel focuses on two childhood friends Clare and Irene, both of whom are light skinned enough to pass as white, who have reconnected with one another after many years apart. Clare has chosen to pass while Irene has embraced her racial heritage and become an important member of her community. The Novel examines how people pass on many different levels and in many different ways. Some forms of passing are perfectly acceptable while others can lead to disaster. *White Like Her: My Family's Story of Race and Racial Passing* is the story of Gail Lukasik's mother's "passing," Gail's struggle with the shame of her mother's choice, and her subsequent journey of self-discovery and redemption. In the historical context of the Jim Crow South, Gail explores her mother's decision to pass, how she hid her secret even from her own husband, and the price she paid for choosing whiteness. Haunted by her mother's fear and shame, Gail embarks on a quest to uncover her mother's racial lineage, tracing her family back to eighteenth-century colonial Louisiana. In coming to terms with her decision to publicly out her mother, Gail changed how she looks at race and heritage. With a foreword written by Kenyatta Berry, host of PBS's *Genealogy Roadshow*, this unique and fascinating story of coming to terms with oneself breaks down barriers.

Hypocrisy and prejudice compel a principled racially mixed teacher to desert a steady job and a socially prominent fiancée.

The narrator engages in an existential search for the meaning of his black identity--from his Indianapolis roots to his taste of the expatriate life in Paris--in a novel that addresses the issues pertaining to upper-middle-class blacks. 15,000 first printing.

The Nella Larsen Collection is comprised of five Nella Larsen fiction including; *Quicksand*, *Passing*, *Freedom*, *The Wrong Man*, and *Sanctuary*. *Quicksand*, Larsen's first novel, tells the story of Helga Crane who is the lovely and refined daughter of a Danish mother and a West Indian black father who abandons Helga and her mother soon after Helga is born. Unable to feel comfortable with any of her white-skinned relatives, Helga travels America, visits Denmark searching for people she feels at home with. In *Passing* Clare and Irene are childhood friends who lose touch when Clare's father dies and she moves in with two white aunts. By hiding that Clare was part-black, they allowed her to 'pass' as a white woman and marry a white racist. Irene lives in Harlem, commits herself to racial uplift, and marries a black doctor. *Passing* centers on the meeting of these childhood friends later in life, and the unfolding of events as each woman is fascinated and seduced by the other's daring lifestyle. *Freedom*, *The Wrong Man*, and *Sanctuary* are three stories about love, loss, mistaken identity, and death. Nella Larsen was an American novelist of the Harlem Renaissance. Though her literary output was scant, what she wrote earned her recognition by her contemporaries and by present-day critics.

'A wickedly funny and emotionally complex novel.' Jenny Offill, author of *Weather* and *Dept. of Speculation* 'A ripe and excellent debut... funny and smart and human and true.' Andrew O'Hagan, author of *Mayflies* *Wild Pets* follows Iris, Ezra and Nance in the years after university. They fall in and out of bed with each other, reread *The Art of War*, grieve the closing of *Fabric* and write book proposals on the history of salt, while submerging their nights in drink and drugs. Confronting adulthood with high wit and low behaviour against contemporary political and social turmoil, these young men and women seem to have everything going for them. So why are they still swimming desperately against the tide? A bold, honest novel, *Wild Pets* is about the fragility of mental health, power imbalances in friendship and sex, and creative ambition fused with destruction - and the lingering power of first loves.

A FINALIST FOR THE 2016 CENTER FOR FICTION FIRST NOVEL PRIZE AND THE 2017 YOUNG LIONS AWARD "A terrifically auspicious debut." —Janet Maslin, *The New York Times* "Smart, timely and powerful . . . A rich examination of America's treatment of race, and the ways we attempt to discuss and confront it today." —*The Huffington Post* The Freeman family--Charles, Laurel, and their daughters, teenage Charlotte and nine-year-old Callie--have been invited to the Toneybee Institute to participate in a research experiment. They will live in an apartment on campus with Charlie, a young chimp abandoned by his mother. The Freemans were selected because they know sign language; they are supposed to teach it to Charlie and welcome him as a member of their family. But when Charlotte discovers the truth about the institute's history of questionable studies, the secrets of the past invade the present in devious ways. The power of this shattering novel resides in Greenidge's undeniable storytelling talents. What appears to be a story of mothers and daughters, of sisterhood put to the test, of adolescent love and grown-up misconduct, and of history's long reach, becomes a provocative and compelling exploration of America's failure to find a language to talk about race. "A magnificently textured, vital, visceral feat of storytelling . . . [by] a sharp, poignant, extraordinary new voice of American literature." —Téa Obreht, author of *The Tiger's Wife*

A satirical approach to debunking the myths of white supremacy and racial purity, this 1931 novel recounts the consequences of a mysterious scientific process that transforms black people into whites. Fandom and first love collide in in this joyful, feminist contemporary romance from acclaimed author Cori McCarthy—perfect for fans of Rainbow Rowell and Ashley Poston Iris Thorne wants to blaze her own path. That's easier said than done when you're the granddaughter of M. E. Thorne, famous author of the *Elementia* series, hailed as the feminist response to J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. And with a major motion picture adaptation of her grandmother's books in the works, Iris can say goodbye to her dream of making her own way in the music industry. When Iris and her brother get invited to the film set in Ireland, she's pretty sure the trip will be a nightmare. Except Iris can't deny the rugged beauty of the Irish countryside. And brushing shoulders with the hot, young cast isn't awful, especially the infuriatingly charming lead actor, Eamon O'Brien. Iris even finds the impassioned female director inspiring. But when the filming falls into jeopardy, everything Iris thought she knew about *Elementia*—and herself—is in question. Will making a film for the big screen help Iris to see the big picture?

Presents classic novels from the 1920s and 1930s that offer insight into the cultural dynamics of the Harlem Renaissance era and celebrate the period's diverse literary styles.

Born to a Danish seamstress and a black West Indian cook, Nella Larsen lived her life in the shadows of America's racial divide. Her writings about that life, briefly celebrated in her time, were lost to later generations--only to be rediscovered and hailed by many. In his search for Nella Larsen, George Hutchinson exposes the truths and half-truths surrounding her, as well as the complex reality they mask and mirror. His book is a cultural biography of the color line as it was lived by one person who truly embodied all of its ambiguities and complexities.

Nella Larsen's distinctive and revealing novel about racial identity set in New York in 1929. Soon to be a major motion picture starring Tessa Thompson, Ruth Negga and Alexander Skarsgård. Irene Redfield, married to a successful physician, enjoys a comfortable life in Harlem, New York. Reluctantly, she renews her friendship with old school friend, Clare Kendry. Clare, who like Irene is light skinned, 'passes' as white and is married to a racist white man who has no idea about Clare's racial heritage. Even though Irene knows that reigniting her friendship with Clare will lead to trouble, she can't resist allowing Irene into her world. Irene in turn wants to rekindle her bonds with the African American community of her youth. As tensions mount between friends and between couples, this taut and mesmerizing narrative spins towards an unexpected end. This edition of *Passing* features an introduction by writer and academic, Christa Holm Vogelius.

Chester Brown reinvents the comic book medium to create the critically acclaimed historical biography *Louis Riel*. Brown won the Harvey Awards for best writing and best graphic novel for his compelling, meticulous, and dispassionate retelling of the charismatic, and perhaps insane, nineteenth-century Metis leader's life. Brown coolly documents with dramatic subtlety the violent rebellion on the Canadian prairie led by Riel, an embattled figure in Canadian history, regarded by some as a martyr who died in the name of freedom, while others consider him a treacherous murderer.

Seminar paper from the year 2015 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 2,7, University of Bonn, language: English, abstract: *Passing* by Nella Larsen, published in 1929, features the issue of racial passing in a society which segregates people of Negro descent from the dominant white American class. Wall claims that "Not only is *Passing* set in Harlem at the height of its vogue, it is itself a product of the vogue. Aptly then, it acknowledges the opportunities as well as the risks that the more fluid racial and cultural boundaries of the period created". Irene Redfield, one of the two female protagonists, is able to pass, but still chose a life within Harlem and a coloured husband. Her counterpart Clare Kendry, on the contrary, is completely passing by being married to a white man who does not know about her descent. Still, she is highly fascinated by the life Irene leads in Harlem and thus she attempts at leading a double-life. As Clare becomes increasingly involved in the black culture of that time, she also has to fear about her husband finding out the truth about her. In order to set the issue of racial passing in a historical and cultural framework, I attempt at focusing on the connection between the novel and a jurisdictional case from 1925, called the Rhinelander Case. This case is also being referred to in *Passing*: "What if Belle should divorce Clare? Could he? There was the Rhinelander case". Furthermore, Madigan claims the following: "That Larsen has the case enter Irene's mind so quickly, however, testifies to the Rhinelanders' importance to discussions of miscegenation, the law, and racial passing during the period of the Harlem Renaissance". Leonard Kip Rhinelander, who was from the upper white class of New York, got married to Alice Jones, who was mixed-raced and from the working class. Rhinelander attempted at annulling the marriage as he claimed he had not known about his wife's race before the wedding. She countered by claiming that he has known about their race before their marriage as it was unmistakable. The jury the young couple had to face was all-male and white. Thereupon, this term paper will deal with the following research question: How can the relationship between the Rhinelander Case and Nella Larsen's *Passing* be defined and which are the means by which this relationship is being constituted?

Inspired by the McMartin preschool trials and the Satanic Panic of the '80s, the critically acclaimed author of *The Remaking* delivers another pulse pounding, true-crime-based horror novel. Richard doesn't have a past. For him, there is only the present: a new marriage to Tamara, a first chance at fatherhood to her son Elijah, and a quiet but pleasant life as an art teacher at Elijah's elementary school in Danvers, Virginia. Then the body of a rabbit, ritualistically murdered, appears on the school grounds with a birthday card for Richard tucked beneath it. Richard doesn't have a birthday—but Sean does . . . Sean is a five-year-old boy who has just moved to Greenfield, Virginia, with his mother. Like most mothers of the 1980s, she's worried about bills, childcare, putting food on the table . . . and an encroaching threat to American life that can take the face of anyone: a politician, a friendly neighbor, or even a teacher. When Sean's school sends a letter to the parents revealing that Sean's favorite teacher is under investigation, a white lie from Sean lights a fire that engulfs the entire nation—and Sean and his mother are left holding the match. Now, thirty years later, someone is here to remind Richard that they remember what Sean did. And though Sean doesn't exist anymore, someone needs to pay the price for his lies.

Countless African Americans have passed as white, leaving behind families and friends, roots and communities. It was, as Allyson Hobbs writes, a chosen exile. This history of passing explores the possibilities, challenges, and losses that racial indeterminacy presented to men and women living in a country obsessed with racial distinctions.

'Every idiot who goes about with "Merry Christmas" on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding' Dickens's story of solitary miser Ebenezer Scrooge, who is taught the true meaning of Christmas by a series of ghostly visitors, has had an enduring influence on the way we think about the season. Dickens's other Christmas writings collected here include 'The Story of the Goblins who Stole a Sexton'; 'The Haunted Man'; and shorter pieces, some drawn from the 'Christmas Stories' that Dickens wrote annually for his weekly journals. In all of them Dickens celebrates Christmas as a time of geniality, charity and remembrance. Edited with an introduction by MICHAEL SLATER

Minnie's Sacrifice (1869) is a novel by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. Originally serialized in the *Christian Recorder*, *Minnie's Sacrifice* is a rediscovered work of fiction from one of nineteenth century America's most prominent black writers and activists. The novel, which addresses such themes as miscegenation, passing, and the institutionalized rape of enslaved women, is a vastly underappreciated work that repurposes the story of Moses to tell a tale with a powerful political message. On a plantation in the American South, a slave named Miriam mourns the untimely death of her only daughter. Agnes, who succumbed while giving birth to a baby boy in their cabin at the edge of Mr. Le Croix's property, left her son in her mother's care. Visiting Miriam's cabin later that day, Camilla, the master's daughter, discovers a blond-haired, blue-eyed boy. Bringing this to the attention of her father, Camilla proposes that the boy be sent away from the plantation to be brought up as white. Unable to accept that the boy should be considered a slave, Camilla begs her father to take the child north, all the while failing to connect her own father to the boy's birth. After brief contemplation, he nervously consents to her plan, but for all her cunning and bravery, Camilla is entirely unprepared for what her merciful endeavor will reveal. *Minnie's Sacrifice*, by an author who inspired Zora Neale Hurston and Ida B. Wells, is a groundbreaking work of African American fiction and a definitive masterpiece from Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, a pioneer in her craft. With a beautifully designed cover and professionally typeset manuscript, this edition of Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's *Minnie's Sacrifice* is a classic of African American literature reimagined for modern readers.

Born to a white mother and an absent black father, and despised for her dark skin, Helga Crane has long had to fend for herself. As a young woman, Helga teaches at an all-black school in the South, but even here she feels different. Moving to Harlem and eventually to Denmark, she attempts to carve out a comfortable life and place for herself, but ends up back where she started, choosing emotional freedom that quickly translates into a narrow existence. *Quicksand*, Nella Larsen's powerful first novel, has intriguing autobiographical parallels and at the same time invokes the international dimension of African American culture of the 1920s. It also evocatively portrays the racial and gender restrictions that can mark a life. "Fine, thoughtful and courageous. It is, on the whole, the best piece of fiction that Negro America has produced since the heyday of [Charles] Chesnutt." (W. E. B. Du Bois)

Jed--young, gay, black, out of rehab and out of prospects in his hometown of Chicago--flees to the city of his fantasies, a museum of modernism and decadence: Berlin. The paradise that tyranny created, the subsidized city isolated behind the Berlin Wall, is where he's chosen to become the figure that he so admires, the black American expatriate. Newly sober and nostalgic for the Weimar days of Isherwood and Auden, Jed arrives to chase boys and to escape from what it means to be a black male in America. But history, both personal and political, can't be avoided with time or distance. Whether it's the judgment of the cousin he grew up with and her husband's bourgeois German family, the lure of white wine in a down-and-out bar, a gang of racists looking for a brawl, or the ravaged visage of Rock Hudson flashing behind the face of every white boy he desperately longs for, the past never stays past even in faraway Berlin. In the age of Reagan and AIDS in a city on the verge of tearing down its walls, he clammers toward some semblance of adulthood amid the outcasts and expats, intellectuals and artists, queers and misfits. And, on occasion, the city keeps its Isherwood promises and the boy he kisses, incredibly, kisses him back. An intoxicating, provocative novel of appetite, identity, and self-construction, Darryl Pinckney's *Black Deutschland* tells the story of an outsider, trapped between a painful past and a tenebrous future, in Europe's brightest and darkest city.

Look out for Danzy Senna's latest book, *New People*, on sale in August! Birdie and Cole are the daughters of a black father and a white mother, intellectuals and activists in the Civil Rights Movement in 1970s Boston. The sisters are so close that they speak their own language, yet Birdie, with her light skin and straight hair, is often mistaken for white, while Cole is dark enough to fit in with the other kids at school. Despite their differences, Cole is Birdie's confidant, her protector, the mirror by which she understands herself. Then their parents' marriage collapses. One night Birdie watches her father and his new girlfriend drive away with Cole. Soon Birdie and her mother are on the road as well, drifting across the country in search of a new home. But for Birdie, home will always be Cole. Haunted by the loss of her sister, she sets out a desperate search for the family that left her behind. The extraordinary national bestseller that launched Danzy Senna's literary career, *Caucasia* is a modern classic, at once a powerful coming of age story and a groundbreaking work on identity and race in America.

Nella Larsen (1891-1964) occupies a central place in African-American and Modernist literature, and her status as a Harlem Renaissance woman writer is rivaled only by Zora Neale Hurston's. This Norton Critical Edition of Larsen's electrifying 1929 novel is accompanied by Carla Kaplan's insightfully detailed introduction, explanatory annotations, and a Note on the Text "Backgrounds and Contexts" connects *Passing* to the historical events of the day, most notably the sensational Rhinelander/Jones case of 1925. Fourteen contemporary reviews are reprinted, including those by Alice Dunbar-Nelson, W. B. Seabrook, Mary Griffin, and W. E. B. Du Bois. Little-known documents, including those by Juanita Ellsworth and Caleb Johnson, reveal America's fascination with-and fear of-the cultural phenomenon of passing. Also included are Larsen's statements on the novel and on passing, as well as a generous selection of her letters. The theme of "The Tragic Mulatto(a)" in American literature is explored through related writings by Lydia Maria Child, William Wells Brown, Kate Chopin, Mark Twain, Countee Cullen, and Langston Hughes, among others. Finally, Joseph Seamon Cotter, Jr., Jessie Redmon Fauset, Countee Cullen, W. E. B. Du Bois, Allen Semi [Nella Larsen], George S. Schuyler, Carl Van Vechten, and Langston Hughes voice their impressions of passing from the perspective of the Harlem Renaissance. "Criticism" provides sixteen diverse interpretations of *Passing* by, among others, Deborah E. McDowell, Judith Butler, Cheryl A. Wall, Thadious M. Davis, George Hutchinson, Mary Helen Washington, Ann duCille, Gayle Wald, Claudia Tate, and Jennifer DeVere Brody. A Chronology and Selected Bibliography are also included. Book jacket.

This volume brings together the complete fiction of the author of *Passing* and *Quicksand*, one of the most gifted writers of the Harlem Renaissance. Throughout her short but brilliant literary career, Nella Larsen wrote piercing dramas about the black middle class that featured sensitive, spirited heroines struggling to find a place where they belonged. *Passing*, Larsen's best-known work, is a disturbing story about the unraveling lives of two childhood friends, one of whom turns her back on her past and marries a white bigot. Just as disquieting is the portrait in *Quicksand* of Helga Crane, half black and half white, who is unable to escape her loneliness no matter where and with whom she lives. Race and marriage offer few securities here or in the other stories in this compulsively readable collection, rich in psychological complexity and imbued with a sense of place that brings Harlem vibrantly to life.

Seminar paper from the year 2013 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 1,3, Free University of Berlin, language: English, abstract: The 1850 United States Census offered for the first time three options in the category of color: In addition to 'white' and 'black,' the option of 'mulatto' was introduced (Douglas and Yates 44). The idea for this inclusion was forwarded by the northern states of the U.S. as the South was not keen on acknowledging any mixing of the races: A mulatto or mulatta is a child born to one white and one black parent. During slavery, thousands of mulatto children were born to slave mothers and white free men, most often the masters of the women. Due to the one-drop rule (which classified anyone with as little as one drop of African blood as black), these children inherited the race and status from their mothers. In the 1920s, when the author Nella Larsen came to fame, the 'color line' between black and white Americans was drawn more sharply than ever before (cf. Kaplan xv). As mulattoes and mulattas can be of a very light complexion, they are predestined to 'pass' for white. This means that they can cross the constructed color line and live as white people. There are various, widely differing, guesses as to how many mulatto and black people passed in the late 1920s: The numbers range from 5,000 people in the U.S. each year to 75,000 people in only one city per day (cf. Kaplan xv). The concept of passing created two distinct feelings. The fact that people could simply assume another racial identity created fascination, on the one hand, and terror, on the other hand. The two protagonists of Nella Larsen's *Passing* (1929), Irene and Clare, are mulattas. Though they have grown up together, they have made different choices and lead different lives: Clare has passed for white for many years, whereas Irene has stayed within the black community. A detailed comparison shows that these two women do not only represent different options for mulatto people, but that they also share characteristics. As far as character types are concerned, Clare represents the tragic mulatta. Yet Larsen puts forth a revision of this literary tradition and character type. Irene exemplifies the moral black bourgeoisie, though it becomes evident that Larsen distances herself from Irene and the black bourgeoisie's morals and ethics. Irene, in addition, also possesses tragic elements. Despite representing different character types, both Irene and Clare are the literary descendants of Lola Leroy, title character of Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's novel *Lola Leroy*; or, *Shadows Uplifted*.

Passing refers to the process whereby a person of one race, gender, nationality, or sexual orientation adopts the guise of another. Historically, this has often involved black slaves passing as white in order to gain their freedom. More generally, it has served as a way for women and people of color to access male or white privilege. In their examination of this practice of crossing boundaries, the contributors to this volume offer a unique perspective for studying the construction and meaning of personal and cultural identities. These essays consider a wide range of texts and moments from colonial times to the present that raise significant questions about the political motivations inherent in the origins and maintenance of identity categories and boundaries. Through discussions of such literary works as *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom*, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Hidden Hand*, *Black Like Me*, and *Giovanni's Room*, the authors examine issues of power and privilege and ways in which passing might challenge the often rigid structures of identity politics. Their interrogation

of the semiotics of behavior, dress, language, and the body itself contributes significantly to an understanding of national, racial, gender, and sexual identity in American literature and culture. Contextualizing and building on the theoretical work of such scholars as Judith Butler, Diana Fuss, Marjorie Garber, and Henry Louis Gates Jr., *Passing and the Fictions of Identity* will be of value to students and scholars working in the areas of race, gender, and identity theory, as well as U.S. history and literature. Contributors: Martha Cutter, Katharine Nicholson Ings, Samira Kawash, Adrian Piper, Valerie Rohy, Marion Rust, Julia Stern, Gayle Wald, Ellen M. Weinauer, Elizabeth Young

Fleeing to Rome in the wake of coming out to his Muslim family, a failed relationship, and blackmail, eighteen-year-old Amir Azadi embarks on a more authentic life with new friends and dates in the Sistine Chapel before an encounter with a U.S. Customs officer places his hard-won freedom at risk.

A classic analysis of the Black middle class studies its origin and development, accentuating its behavior, attitudes, and values during the 1940s and 1950s

Nella Larsen's 1929 novel *Passing* is hailed today as a significant literary work of Harlem Renaissance, though for several decades it, like all of her works, was out of print. As history rights a wrong and recommitting Larsen's name to memory, it is beneficial to look at the other writings she published over her short career, collected here in *Beyond Passing: The Further Writings of Nella Larsen*. Contained within are her autobiographical novel *Quicksand*, and three short stories "Freedom," "The Wrong Man," and "Sanctuary." With a growing number of titles under its Magna Releases banner, CSRC Storytelling promotes and provides positivity, power and presence in print, restoring literary classics across genres and making them newly accessible to modern readers. This collection of Nella Larsen stories is a CSRC Storytelling Magna Release.

Nella Larsen's distinctive and revealing novel about racial identity set in New York in 1929. Part of the Macmillan Collector's Library; a series of stunning, clothbound, pocket sized classics with gold foiled edges and ribbon markers. These beautiful books make perfect gifts or a treat for any book lover. This edition of *Passing* features an introduction by Christa Holm Vogelius. Irene Redfield, married to a successful physician, enjoys a comfortable life in Harlem, New York. Reluctantly, she renews her friendship with old school friend, Clare Kendry. Clare, who like Irene is light skinned, 'passes' as white and is married to a racist white man who has no idea about Clare's racial heritage. Even though Irene knows that reigniting her friendship with Clare will lead to trouble, she can't resist allowing Irene into her world. Irene in turn wants to rekindle her bonds with the African American community of her youth. As tensions mount between friends and between couples, this taut and mesmerizing narrative spins towards an unexpected end.

"Adopting her niece and nephew when her half-brother is murdered in Mogadishu, Somalia, half-Somali photographer Bella disciplines her free-spirited nature and reevaluates her options when the children's mother resurfaces."-- Provided by publisher.

An incisive reflection on black electoral politics, disenfranchisement, and the lasting legacy of the civil rights movement—now with a brand-new essay on the Covid-19 pandemic, reparations, and the 2020 George Floyd protests. *Blackballed* is Darryl Pinckney's meditation on a century and a half of participation by blacks in US electoral politics. In this combination of memoir, historical narrative, and contemporary political and social analysis, he investigates the struggle for black voting rights from Reconstruction through the civil rights movement to Barack Obama's two presidential campaigns. Drawing on the work of scholars, the memoirs of civil rights workers, and the speeches and writings of black leaders like Martin Luther King and Stokely Carmichael, Andrew Young and John Lewis, Pinckney traces the disagreements among blacks about the best strategies for achieving equality in American society as well as the ways in which they gradually came to create the Democratic voting bloc that contributed to the election of the first black president. Interspersed through the narrative are Pinckney's own memories of growing up during the civil rights era and the reactions of his parents to the changes taking place in American society. He concludes with an examination of ongoing efforts by Republicans to suppress the black vote, with particular attention to the Supreme Court's recent decision striking down part of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Also included here is Pinckney's essay "What Black Means Now," on the history of the black middle class, stereotypes about blacks and crime, and contemporary debates about "post-blackness," as well as a new essay, "Buck Moon in Harlem," which reflects on Juneteenth and the ongoing fight for racial justice, and offers a glimpse of New York City amid the Covid-19 pandemic and the protests following the killing of George Floyd.

Published in 1928, Nella Larsen's first novel "Quicksand" regards the story of Helga Crane, the lovely and refined mixed-race daughter of a Danish mother and a West Indian black father. The character is loosely based on Larsen's own experiences and deals with the character's struggle for racial and sexual identity, a theme common to Larsen's work. In Larsen's second novel, "Passing," published in 1929, the author revisits this struggle through the lives of two childhood friends, Clare Kendry and Irene Redfield, both of whom are of mixed African and European ancestry and are "passing" as whites. The novel picks up in the lives of the two as they later reunite in adulthood. An ambiguous relation develops between the two as they share a fascination for how each other's lives have transpired since they last knew each other. Larsen's work has been lauded for its exploration of race, gender, class, and sexuality amongst African Americans in early part of the 20th century. Now considered as a major figure of the Harlem Renaissance, Larsen's writing gives a firsthand insight into the struggle of African Americans during this era. Along with her two novels three of Larsen's short stories, "The Wrong Man," "Freedom," and "Sanctuary" are presented together here in this volume.

A writer of the Harlem Renaissance, Nella Larsen wrote just two novels, published here, and a handful of short stories. Critically acclaimed, both speak powerfully of the contradictions and restrictions experienced by black women at that time. *Quicksand*, written in 1928, is an autobiographical novel about Helga Crane, a mixed race woman caught between fulfilling her desires and gaining respectability in her middle class neighbourhood. Written a year later, *Passing* tells the story of two childhood friends, Clare and Irene, both light skinned enough to pass as white. Reconnecting in adulthood, Clare has chosen to live as a white woman, while Irene embraces black culture and has an important role in her community. Nella Larsen's novels are moving, characterful, and important books. She pioneered writing about the conflicts of sexuality, race and the secret suffering of

women in the early twentieth century.

Great middle greats fiction.

The oral tradition has always played an important role in African American literature, ranging from works such as Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. These and countless other novels affirm the power of sonance and sound in the African American literary canon. Considering the wide swath of work in this powerful lineage -- in addition to its shared heritage with performance -- Mae G. Henderson deploys her trope of "speaking in tongues" to theorize the preeminence of voice and narration in black women's literary performance through her reconstruction of a fundamentally spiritual practice as a critical concept for reading black women's writing dialogically and intertextually. The first half of the book is devoted to influential works of fiction, as Henderson offers a series of spirited, attentive readings of works by Zora Neale Hurston, Alice Walker, Sherley Anne Williams, Toni Morrison, Gayl Jones, and Nella Larsen. The second half shifts gears to consider the world of female African American performance, most notably in the figures of Josephine Baker and the video dancer. Drawing on the trope of "dancing diaspora," Henderson proposes a model of theorizing based on "performing testimony" and "critical witnessing." Throughout the book, Henderson draws on a history of black women not only in the Pentecostal Holiness Church, but also within the traditions of classical, Christian, African, and black diasporic spirituality and performance. Ultimately, *Speaking in Tongues and Dancing Diaspora* provides a deeply felt reflection on race and gender and their effects within the discourses of speaker/listener and audience/performer.

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER ONE OF BARACK OBAMA'S FAVORITE BOOKS OF THE YEAR NAMED A BEST BOOK OF 2020 BY THE NEW YORK TIMES * THE WASHINGTON POST * NPR * PEOPLE * TIME MAGAZINE* VANITY FAIR * GLAMOUR 2021 WOMEN'S PRIZE FINALIST "Bennett's tone and style recalls James Baldwin and Jacqueline Woodson, but it's especially reminiscent of Toni Morrison's 1970 debut novel, *The Bluest Eye*." —Kiley Reid, *Wall Street Journal* "A story of absolute, universal timelessness ... For any era, it's an accomplished, affecting novel. For this moment, it's piercing, subtly wending its way toward questions about who we are and who we want to be..." — *Entertainment Weekly* From The New York Times-bestselling author of *The Mothers*, a stunning new novel about twin sisters, inseparable as children, who ultimately choose to live in two very different worlds, one black and one white. The Vignes twin sisters will always be identical. But after growing up together in a small, southern black community and running away at age sixteen, it's not just the shape of their daily lives that is different as adults, it's everything: their families, their communities, their racial identities. Many years later, one sister lives with her black daughter in the same southern town she once tried to escape. The other secretly passes for white, and her white husband knows nothing of her past. Still, even separated by so many miles and just as many lies, the fates of the twins remain intertwined. What will happen to the next generation, when their own daughters' storylines intersect? Weaving together multiple strands and generations of this family, from the Deep South to California, from the 1950s to the 1990s, Brit Bennett produces a story that is at once a riveting, emotional family story and a brilliant exploration of the American history of passing. Looking well beyond issues of race, *The Vanishing Half* considers the lasting influence of the past as it shapes a person's decisions, desires, and expectations, and explores some of the multiple reasons and realms in which people sometimes feel pulled to live as something other than their origins. As with her New York Times-bestselling debut *The Mothers*, Brit Bennett offers an engrossing page-turner about family and relationships that is immersive and provocative, compassionate and wise.

Born to a white mother and an absent black father, and despised for her dark skin, Helga Crane has long had to fend for herself. As a young woman, Helga teaches at an all-black school in the South, but even here she feels different. Moving to Harlem and eventually to Denmark, she attempts to carve out a comfortable life and place for herself, but ends up back where she started, choosing emotional freedom that quickly translates into a narrow existence. *Quicksand*, Nella Larsen's powerful first novel, has intriguing autobiographical parallels and at the same time invokes the international dimension of African American culture of the 1920s. It also evocatively portrays the racial and gender restrictions that can mark a life. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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