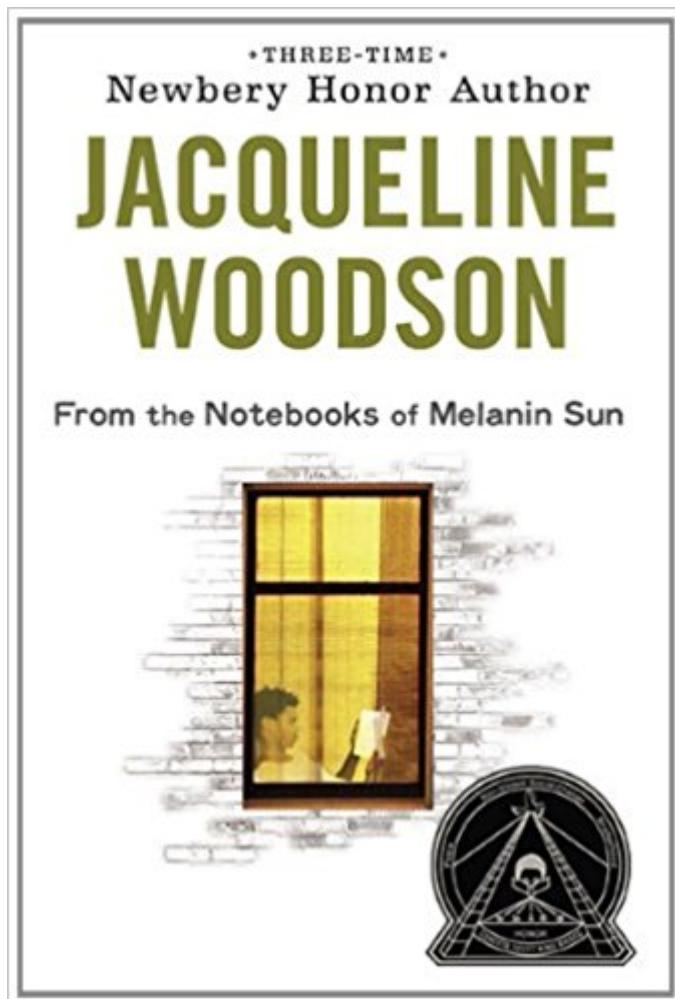


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From The Notebooks Of Melanin Sun



Synopsis

Three-time Newbery Honor author Jacqueline Woodson explores race and sexuality through the eyes of a compelling narrator. Melanin Sun has a lot to say. But sometimes it's hard to speak his mind, so he fills up notebooks with his thoughts instead. He writes about his mom a lot--they're about as close as they can be, because they have no other family. So when she suddenly tells him she's gay, his world is turned upside down. And if that weren't hard enough for him to accept, her girlfriend is white. Melanin Sun is angry and scared. How can his mom do this to him--is this the end of their closeness? What will his friends think? And can he let her girlfriend be part of their family?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Woodson's (*I Hadn't Meant to Tell You This*) perceptively wrought novel imaginatively tackles such weighty issues as racism and sexuality. At age 13, Melanin Sun, an African American boy growing up in Brooklyn with his single mother, sometimes longs for the days when life was as "simple as chocolate cakes and Lego sets." Instead, his feelings grow more complicated after his mother explains that she is gay and in love with Kristin, the white woman whom she has recently invited home. "You're a dyke! A dyke!" he screams at her, enraged. His shock and sense of alienation are quickly exacerbated when the neighbors begin to gossip and he becomes the object of cruel taunts. Through Melanin's voice, Woodson frankly expresses the resentment and confusion of an adolescent desperately struggling to reestablish normalcy. She shatters stereotypes even as she evokes the tenderness of a mother/son relationship. Offering no easy answers, Woodson teaches

the reader that love can lead to acceptance of all manner of differences. Ages 12-up. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 7-11?Fourteen-year-old Melanin Sun has a lot to say?not out loud, but in notebooks he keeps. Named for his dark skin, he knows about being on the outside of things. "Difference matters," he writes early on. What follows is not the usual identity crisis, however. His mother, a law student who sometimes acts more like a best friend, tells him she's in love with a woman?a white one, at that. His reaction is negative, strong, and hurtful. Nonetheless, at the end, Melanin seems to have sorted out his feelings?slowly, believably?and recognized in his mother and her lover a vulnerability he feels himself for other reasons. He comes around because of who he is, not because it's the "right" thing to do. Woodson has made Melanin an affecting and memorable, even admirable, character. Once thought "slow" in school because of his reticence, he is in fact a well-read, gifted young man with a talent for writing. The author effectively alternates excerpts from his notebooks?the thoughts intended for his own eyes only?with first-person descriptions of the action. Unfortunately, neither the cover nor the title will draw kids in; the book will need introduction and perhaps booktalking.?Claudia Morrow, Berkeley Public Library, CA
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This is a pretty short book that I was required to read in my college literature class. It tells the story of a young, very poor African-American child of a single mother, and how their relationship changes when Melanin Sun finds out his mother is gay, and also is with a rich white woman. It was a very well-written book that really put you in Melanin Sun's place and made you feel for him. However, it has a lot of different challenges all thrown at Melanin Sun and it makes it a little overwhelming. This is an awesome book to read if you want to learn about a different type of life than you live; it really gives you a wonderful perspective from a different lens than you're used to. It was also a pretty easy read. I enjoyed it much more than most of my other literature class books for this reason - it was pretty easy to understand and straight-forward.

After reading many of Jacqueline Woodson's short stories from various black LGBT anthologies, I finally got a chance to read one of her heartfelt, moving novellas in 'From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun.' Melanin Sun is a 14-year-old, dark skinned, quiet guy whose only family is his mother E.C. and longs to ask out his crush Angie out. While dealing with some obstacles that he faces in his

young life, he writes his thoughts and challenges down in his notebooks to express what he normally wouldn't say out aloud (not even to his close mother). In the meantime, his mother makes a revelation to him that throws him for a loop when his mother reveals she's in love with a white woman by the name of Kristin. This truly tests the bond between mother and son through the majority of the story as he tries to either accept his mother's new found sexual identity along with racial issues that he expresses through some insistence in the book. As a twenty-something, I actually liked this story. While it is a simple, easy read, I do feel a lot of people who truly take a chance reading can take something out of it no matter how young or old they maybe. Melanin Sun is written in a very touching and realistic that some kids his age could definitely relate to. I also like how Woodson writes a story centering around a parent's sexuality that could prove being an emotional shift between parent and child. I'd say if you're an open-minded parent(s) with kid(s) read this together as a family it's very short and a nice heartwarming read.

For as long as thirteen-year-old Melanin Sun can remember, it's been just him and his mom. His father walked off before he was born. His mother never dated much. Usually after just two or three dates with a man she'd lose interest. Melanin Sun was happy with his life and family situation...until his mom discovered the pretty white lawyer named Kristin. Melanin Sun was horrified. His mother! His very own mother was a dyke! Did this mean Melanin Sun would grow up gay? Kissing Angie from down the street gave him a rush of butterflies in his stomach, but still. What if his friends found out? He'd be the laughingstock of his block. Through diary excerpts and straightforward narrative, Melanin Sun bears his soul to the reader with painful clarity. Angry and confused about sex and love and racial issues, he tried to punish his mother by shutting her out of his life and refusing to even talk to Kristin. When his friends found out, one of them did indeed make fun of his mother and it became clear that they would not be friends anymore. However Melanin Sun's other friend accepted the situation, so things were not as bad as he originally thought. Over the course of summer, Melanin Sun had to confront many issues he had about racism, sexuality, and tolerance. Shortly before school started he finally began to accept his mother's new lifestyle by accompanying her to the beach with her lover. The winner of the Coretta Scott King award, *From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun* is a very readable book that treats heavy issues in a gentle way.

Great reading for my 10 year old. It applied the topic of gender and prejudices, which they talked about in school. My son enjoyed the book and so did I. It is also a rather fast read, which helps kids who are not very avid readers and might be intimidated by bigger books.

It tells a story from a raw perspective that is rarely seen in literature. I loved the poetry in the book. The novel got me thinking and rethinking about how I view the world.

This was the first Woodson book I've read and I am interested in reading more from her. She developed the characters well and I enjoyed how the story moved along. On the downside, I felt the ending was rushed, underdeveloped, and somewhat unrealistic (I would go into detail but I don't want to spoil it). Though I was less than impressed with the ending, the book was a great read and I'm waiting for my next Woodson book as I type.

Love anything by Jacqueline Woodson!

This book is amazing. My friends are reading this book and I recommend it to my friendsFive star book

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