



Don't Play in the Sun: One Woman's Journey Through the Color Complex

Marita Golden

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"Don't play in the sun. You're going to have to get a light-skinned husband for the sake of your children as it is."

In these words from her mother, novelist and memoirist Marita Golden learned as a girl that she was the wrong color. Her mother had absorbed "colorism" without thinking about it. But, as Golden shows in this provocative book, biases based on skin color persist—and so do their long-lasting repercussions.

Golden recalls deciding against a distinguished black university because she didn't want to worry about whether she was light enough to be homecoming queen. A male friend bitterly remembers that he was teased about his girlfriend because she was too dark for him. Even now, when she attends a party full of accomplished black men and their wives, Golden wonders why those wives are all nearly white. From Halle Berry to Michael Jackson, from Nigeria to Cuba, from what she sees in the mirror to what she notices about the Grammys, Golden exposes the many facets of "colorism" and their effect on American culture. Part memoir, part cultural history, and part analysis, **Don't Play in the Sun** also dramatizes one accomplished black woman's inner journey from self-loathing to self-acceptance and pride.

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