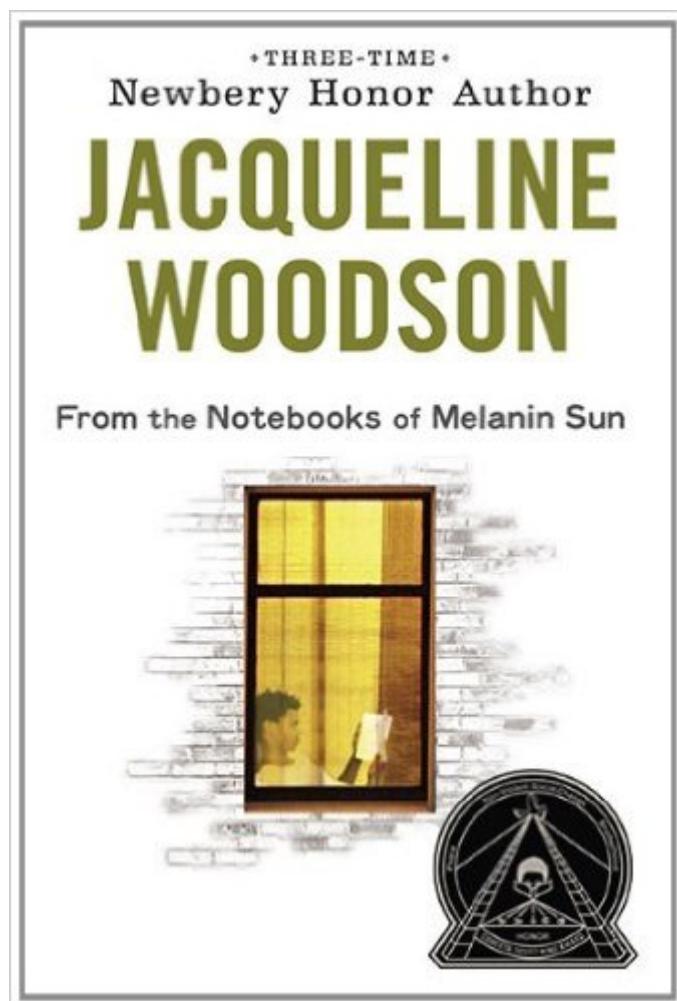


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From The Notebooks Of Melanin Sun



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

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.

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.

From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun By: Jacqueline Woodson This book is about a boy. Melanin Sun and his mama have always been a whole family with a special kind of love and care. Soon Melanin is finding out that his mom is shutting doors that were always open. And now? They have been having problems. Mel has been finding out that his mama is keeping secrets since he was a child. I think that this is a good book because it makes you laugh and cry. This book is interesting because it's in racial times.

Melanin Sun--a sensitive, thirteen-year-old African American living in Brooklyn, New York--finds himself struggling one summer with the conflicting emotions caused by his mother's revelation that she is a lesbian. In anger, Melanin withdraws from his mother and turns to his notebooks for comfort, journaling about the insecurities, doubts, and confusion generated by his mother's disclosure. Melanin's journal entries reveal a young man endeavoring to come to terms with his own adolescence, fears of peer rejection, and the pain caused by his self-imposed isolation. Through his writing, Melanin experiences profound and positive personal growth. As summer wanes, he is drawn inexorably toward acceptance of his mother's homosexuality. In *NOTEBOOKS*, Woodson treats a highly emotional issue with acute sensitivity. She provides readers with a painfully realistic view of the complex emotional crisis experienced by an adolescent plunged into turmoil by his mother's homosexuality. Despite the fact that Woodson's characterizations succumb to stereotypes at times, and her plot appears to capitulate to the need for an affirmative resolution, *NOTEBOOKS* delivers an intelligent and discriminating treatment of the controversial topic of homosexuality. The novel, moreover, proves a welcome addition to the body of adolescent novels treating relevant social issues and concerns. *NOTEBOOKS* will appeal particularly to adolescents in grades seven through twelve who possess a special interest in the topic of homosexuality. Woodson's sensitive and age-appropriate treatment of the issue, however, makes it accessible reading for all individuals in this age group. Highly recommended for adolescents struggling with conflicting emotions related to parental homosexuality.

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