



The Color of Water

By James McBride

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Look out for McBride's new book, *Five-Carat Soul*

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Good Lord Bird*, winner of the 2013 National Book Award for Fiction, and *Kill 'Em and Leave*, a James Brown biography.

The incredible modern classic that launched James McBride's literary career.

Over two years on *The New York Times* bestseller list

Who is Ruth McBride Jordan? A self-declared "light-skinned" woman evasive about her ethnicity, yet steadfast in her love for her twelve black children. James McBride, journalist, musician, and son, explores his mother's past, as well as his own upbringing and heritage, in a poignant and powerful debut, *The Color Of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother*.

The son of a black minister and a woman who would not admit she was white, James McBride grew up in "orchestrated chaos" with his eleven siblings in the poor, all-black projects of Red Hook, Brooklyn. "Mommy," a fiercely protective woman with "dark eyes full of pep and fire," herded her brood to Manhattan's free cultural events, sent them off on buses to the best (and mainly Jewish) schools, demanded good grades, and commanded respect. As a young man, McBride saw his mother as a source of embarrassment, worry, and confusion—and reached thirty before he began to discover the truth about her early life and long-buried pain.

In *The Color of Water*, McBride retraces his mother's footsteps and, through her searing and spirited voice, recreates her remarkable story. The daughter of a failed itinerant Orthodox rabbi, she was born Rachel Shilsky (actually Ruchel Dwara Zylska) in Poland on April 1, 1921. Fleeing pogroms, her family emigrated to America and ultimately settled in Suffolk, Virginia, a small town where anti-Semitism and racial tensions ran high. With candor and immediacy, Ruth describes her parents' loveless marriage; her fragile, handicapped mother; her cruel, sexually-abusive father; and the rest of the family and life she abandoned.

At seventeen, after fleeing Virginia and settling in New York City, Ruth married a black minister and founded the all- black New Brown Memorial Baptist Church in her Red Hook living room. "God is the color of water," Ruth McBride taught her children, firmly convinced that life's blessings and life's values transcend race. Twice widowed, and continually confronting overwhelming adversity and racism, Ruth's determination, drive and discipline saw her dozen children through college—and most through graduate school. At age 65, she herself received a degree in social work from Temple University.

Interspersed throughout his mother's compelling narrative, McBride shares candid recollections of his own experiences as a mixed-race child of poverty, his flirtations with drugs and violence, and his eventual self- realization and professional success. *The Color of Water* touches readers of all colors as a vivid portrait of growing up, a haunting meditation on race and identity, and a lyrical valentine to a mother from her son.

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The Color of Water By James McBride Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Order this book ... and please don't be put off by its pallid subtitle, *A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother*, which doesn't begin to do justice to the utterly unique and moving story contained within. *The Color of Water* tells the remarkable story of Ruth McBride Jordan, the two good men she married, and the 12 good children she raised. Jordan, born Rachel Shilsky, a Polish Jew, immigrated to America soon after birth; as an adult she moved to New York City, leaving her family and faith behind in Virginia. Jordan met and married a black man, making her isolation even more profound. The book is a success story, a testament to one woman's true heart, solid values, and indomitable will. Ruth Jordan battled not only racism but also poverty to raise her children and, despite being sorely tested, never wavered. In telling her story--along with her son's--*The Color of Water* addresses racial identity with compassion, insight, and realism. It is, in a word, inspiring, and you will finish it with unalloyed admiration for a flawed but remarkable individual. And, perhaps, a little more faith in us all.

From Library Journal

The need to clarify his racial identity prompted the author to penetrate his veiled and troubled family history. Ruth McBride Jordan concealed her former life as Rachel Deborah Shilsky, the daughter of an Orthodox Jewish rabbi, from her children. Her grim upbringing in an abusive environment is left behind when she moves to Harlem, marries a black man, converts to Christianity, and cofounds a Baptist congregation with her husband. The courage and tenacity shown by this twice-widowed mother who manages to raise 12 children, all of whom go on to successful careers, are remarkable. The intertwined accounts, told alternately by mother and son, are enhanced by the gifted voices of readers Andre Braugher and Lainie Kazan. Highly recommended for public libraries.

Linda Bredengerd, Univ. of Pittsburgh Lib., Bradford, Pa.

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Review

Engrossing. -- *Cincinnati Enquirer*

Inspiring. -- *Glamour*

Lyrical. -- *Detroit News*

Moving. -- *New York Times Book Review*

Poignant. -- *Miami Herald*

Remarkable. -- *Emerge*

Terrific. -- *The Nation*

The triumph of the book--and of their lives--is that race and religion are transcended by family love. -- *The New York Times Book Review, H. Jack Geiger*

Unforgettable. -- *Publishers Weekly*

Vibrant. -- *Boston Globe*

Wonderful. -- *Baltimore Sun*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

David Long:

Do you have favorite book? For those who have, what is your favorite's book? E-book is very important thing for us to learn everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim or even goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They are reading whatever they get because their hobby is usually reading a book. What about the person who don't like looking at a book? Sometime, man or woman feel need book once they found difficult problem as well as exercise. Well, probably you will want this The Color of Water.

James Sellers:

Does one one of the book lovers? If yes, do you ever feeling doubt if you find yourself in the book store? Aim to pick one book that you just dont know the inside because don't ascertain book by its protect may doesn't work at this point is difficult job because you are scared that the inside maybe not because fantastic as in the outside search likes. Maybe you answer might be The Color of Water why because the excellent cover that make you consider with regards to the content will not disappoint you. The inside or content will be fantastic as the outside or even cover. Your reading sixth sense will directly guide you to pick up this book.

James Harris:

The book untitled The Color of Water contain a lot of information on this. The writer explains your girlfriend idea with easy means. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read this. The book was published by famous author. The author will bring you in the new age of literary works. It is easy to read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or program, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can available their official web-site as well as order it. Have a nice study.

Hoa Gilkey:

This The Color of Water is new way for you who has fascination to look for some information given it relief your hunger of information. Getting deeper you upon it getting knowledge more you know or you who still having little bit of digest in reading this The Color of Water can be the light food in your case because the information inside that book is easy to get by means of anyone. These books acquire itself in the form that is reachable by anyone, yep I mean in the e-book contact form. People who think that in e-book form make them feel tired even dizzy this book is the answer. So you cannot find any in reading a publication especially this one. You can find what you are looking for. It should be here for you actually. So , don't miss that! Just

read this e-book style for your better life and also knowledge.

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