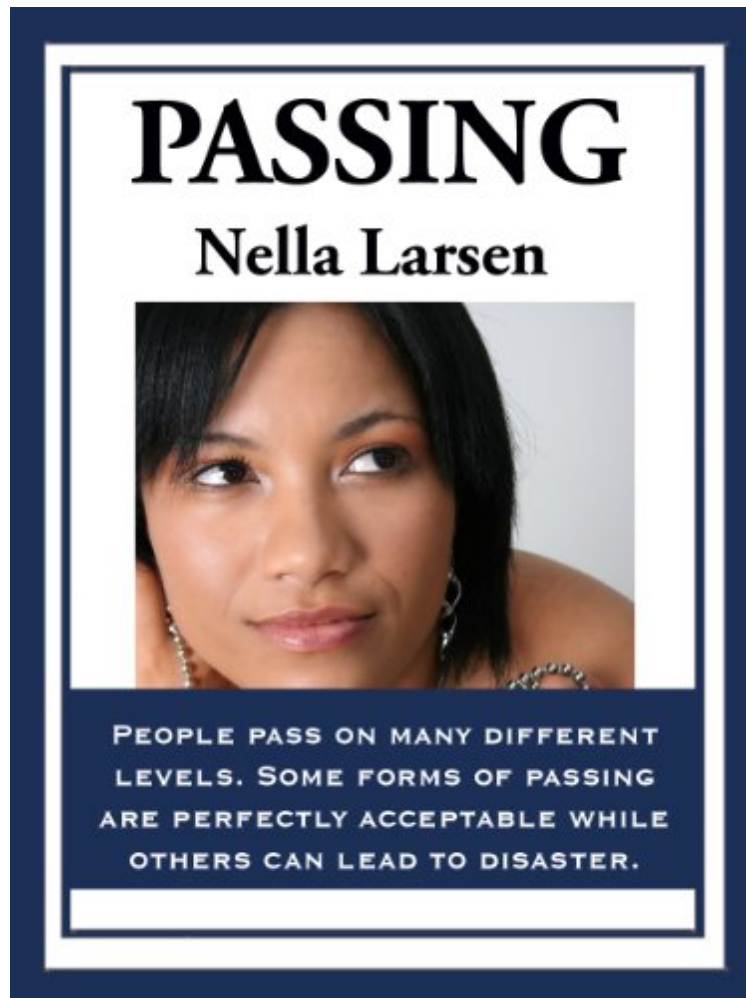


Passing

Von Nella Larsen

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Von Nella Larsen : Passing before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Passing:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Glace Into Yesteryear...Von Ms. PamWhat African American Family doesn't have its own tale of "Passing." It could have been a family member, neighbor, or just someone we knew - but passing is a part of our pass. Nella Larsen did an outstanding job of telling this timeless tale. It is a well told story and has been enjoyed and debated by generations past, present, and future.2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Stroll in Another's SkinVon Ein KundeYou now have the opportunity to experience the lives of those who choose to live as another race and to forget about their past and culture. Take this opportunity and become enveloped in a world full of lies, sorrow, agony, hatred, fear, and death. In Passing, one of two literary acclaimed works by Nella Larsen, the reader walks the thin line

between black and white while struggling to keep out of the gray which we all eventually fall into. Narrated by Irene Redfield, a light-skinned African American woman, *Passing* describes a series of encounters between Irene and Clare Kendry, a woman who has chosen to use her fair skin to "pass" from the black community into the white's. The anguish that Irene suffers while Clare is present in her life is not resolved until an unexpected ending highlights the author's masterful plot. Drawing on her own experiences during the Harlem Renaissance which she weaves into her novels, Nella Larsen is able to place us directly into this setting of budding American culture. Born to a Danish mother and a West Indian father, Larsen puts her knowledge of passing and the black middle class directly onto the pages of the book. Though not an actual depiction of her life, one cannot help but notice the similarities between Larsen and Irene, as well as the possibility that such an event could have occurred in the author's life. The act of passing is described by Larsen as the "breaking away from all that was familiar and friendly to take one's chance in another environment, not entirely strange, perhaps, but certainly not entirely friendly." Throughout the novel she tackles questions circling the idea of passing and uses Clare Kendry as her pawn in an attempt to answer them. Clare's actions are viewed from a variety of perspectives and the changes in these perceptions reflect the plot of the book. Once *Passing* gets going, it is impossible to put down. However, it takes a while to get to that point as the necessary setup is prolonged. Most of the beginning of the novel is spent recounting Irene's encounter with Clare and all the thoughts that accompanied this meeting. At the conclusion of the story, so much is left unknown that the reader wants another chapter just to clear everything up. Questions are left unanswered and only broad guesses can be made about the actual occurrences and feelings in the end. The powerful choices that the characters in *Passing* make are those that we face ourselves. Nella Larsen does a remarkable job of making us believe that the people we are reading about have transcended the realm of being normal and are unlike us. On the contrary, we are just like them and are faced with choices concerning "passing" just like those in the novel. Reading the book only enhances our awareness of such occurrences and gives us a better understanding of who we really are by letting us take a stroll in another's skin. Through this mask, we witness someone else who is living in a different skin and realize that passing has serious repercussions. Larsen presents us with this story using an untapped race and class in literature and makes the stroll a truly eye-opening experience. 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A very unfamiliar, but interesting, topic Von Sarah Hammond Before reading this book, I had never really heard much of the idea of "passing." However, after reading this novel, I found myself very intrigued by it. "Passing" is a book about an African-American woman living her life as a white woman. She is married to a white man who has no idea of her original race. After many years, this woman finds herself longing to be back with her own race, and there is nothing she can do about it. Throughout this book, she and one of her childhood friends, who is still a part of the African-American race, struggle with the problems that come along with this lifestyle. Issues of race, marriage, friendship, and honesty make for a truly enthralling book with a very surprising ending. I recommend it fully.

Kurzbeschreibung Nella Larsen was an important writer associated with the Harlem Renaissance. While she was not prolific her work was powerful and critically acclaimed. *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. The heroine of *Passing* takes an elevator from the infernal August Chicago streets to the breezy rooftop of the heavenly Drayton Hotel, "wafted upward on a magic carpet to another world, pleasant, quiet, and strangely remote from the sizzling one that she had left below." Irene is black, but like her author, the Danish-African American Nella Larsen (a star of the 1920s to mid-1930s Harlem Renaissance and the first black woman to win a Guggenheim creative-writing award), she can "pass" in white society. Yet one woman in the tea room, "fair and golden, like a sunlit day," keeps staring at her, and eventually introduces herself as Irene's childhood friend Clare, who left their hometown 12 years before when her father died. Clare's father had been born "on the left hand"--he was the product of a legal marriage between a white man and a black woman and therefore cut off from his inheritance. So she was raised penniless by white racist relatives, and now she passes as white. Even Clare's violent white husband is in the dark about her past, though he teases her about her tan and affectionately calls her "Nig." He laughingly explains: "When we were first married, she was white as--as--well as white as a lily. But I declare she's getting darker and darker." As Larsen makes clear, *Passing* can also mean dying, and Clare is in peril of losing her identity and her life. The tale is simple on the surface--a few adventures in Chicago and New York's high life, with lots of real people and race-mixing events described (explicated by Thadious M. Davis's helpful introduction and footnotes). But underneath, it seethes with rage, guilt, sex, and complex deceptions. Irene fears losing her black husband to Clare, who seems increasingly predatory. Or is this all in Irene's mind? And is everyone wearing a mask? Larsen's book is a scary hall of mirrors, a murder mystery that can't resolve itself. It sticks with you. --Tim Appelo.com The heroine of *Passing* takes an elevator

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