

The Town of Babylon: A Long Tail Novel

The Town of Babylon is a novel by Colson Whitehead that was published in 2019. The novel is set in the town of Babylon, New York, in the 1960s and 1970s. It tells the story of a black family named the Richards family, who move to Babylon from Harlem in search of a better life. The novel explores themes of race, class, and family.



The Town of Babylon: A Novel by Alejandro Varela

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language	: English
Item Weight	: 1.44 pounds
File size	: 1696 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 307 pages
Screen Reader	: Supported
Hardcover	: 342 pages
Dimensions	: 6.14 x 0.81 x 9.21 inches



Plot

The novel begins in 1969, when the Richards family moves to Babylon from Harlem. The family is led by patriarch W.E.B. Du Bois Richards, a former sharecropper who has become a successful businessman. His wife, Winnie, is a stay-at-home mom who is struggling to adjust to life in a white suburb. The family's two children, Rufus and Clara, are both teenagers who are trying to find their place in the world.

The Richards family quickly faces a number of challenges in Babylon. They are the only black family in town, and they are often subjected to racism and discrimination. W.E.B. is denied a job at the local bank, and Rufus is beaten up by a group of white boys. Despite these challenges, the Richards family is determined to make a life for themselves in Babylon.

Over the next several years, the Richards family experiences both good times and bad times. Rufus becomes a successful drug dealer, while Clara becomes a civil rights activist. W.E.B. and Winnie continue to work hard to provide for their family, and they eventually achieve their dream of owning their own home.

However, the Richards family's happiness is short-lived. In 1978, Rufus is killed in a drug deal gone wrong. Clara is devastated by her brother's death, and she begins to spiral out of control. W.E.B. and Winnie are heartbroken, but they are determined to keep their family together.

The novel ends in 1989, with the Richards family still living in Babylon. W.E.B. and Winnie are now retired, and Clara is working as a social worker. The family has faced many challenges over the years, but they have overcome them all together. The Town of Babylon is a story of love, loss, and resilience.

Characters

The Town of Babylon features a cast of complex and well-developed characters. The Richards family is the heart of the novel, and each member of the family has their own unique story to tell.

- **W.E.B. Du Bois Richards** is the patriarch of the Richards family. He is a former sharecropper who has become a successful businessman. W.E.B. is a proud and independent man, but he is also deeply affected by the racism that he faces in Babylon.
- **Winnie Richards** is the matriarch of the Richards family. She is a stay-at-home mom who is struggling to adjust to life in a white suburb. Winnie is a loving and supportive wife and mother, but she is also haunted by the memories of her past.
- **Rufus Richards** is the oldest child of the Richards family. He is a talented and ambitious young man, but he is also drawn to the dangerous world of drug dealing. Rufus is a complex character who is both sympathetic and frustrating.
- **Clara Richards** is the youngest child of the Richards family. She is a bright and passionate young woman who becomes involved in the civil rights movement. Clara is a strong and independent character who is determined to make a difference in the world.

Themes

The Town of Babylon explores a number of important themes, including race, class, and family. The novel shows how racism can affect people's lives in both subtle and overt ways. It also explores the challenges that black families face in white suburbs. The novel also celebrates the power of family and the importance of sticking together through thick and thin.

Critical Reception

The Town of Babylon received widespread critical acclaim upon its release. The novel was praised for its complex and well-developed characters, its

unflinching look at race and class, and its beautiful and lyrical prose. The novel was named a finalist for the National Book Award for Fiction and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. It was also named one of the best books of the year by The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Time magazine.

The Town of Babylon is a powerful and moving novel that tells the story of a black family's struggle for a better life in white America. The novel explores important themes of race, class, and family, and it features a cast of complex and well-developed characters. The Town of Babylon is a must-read for anyone interested in contemporary American fiction.



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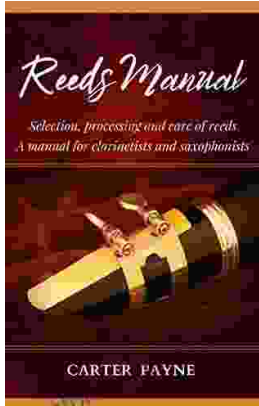
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