

## Black Fiction Matters

### **Everywhere You Don't Belong (2020) by Gabriel Bump**

Raised by a civil-rights activist grandmother on the South Side of Chicago, Claude McKay Love searches for a sense of belonging before a riot compels his departure for college, where he discovers he cannot escape his past.

### **Hitting a Straight Lick With a Crooked Stick: Stories from the Harlem Renaissance (2020) by Zora Neale Hurston**

Featuring eight lesser-known stories, a collection of Harlem Renaissance tales by the revered folklorist and author of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* explores subjects ranging from class and migration to racism and sexism.

### **The Care and Feeding of Ravenously Hungry Girls (2019) by Anissa Gray**

Sisters Althea, Viola, and Lillian are knot-tight, with eldest Althea the de facto matriarch of a family seen as top of the heap in their town. So when Althea and husband Proctor are arrested for mysterious reasons and townsfolk turn their heads in disgust, Viola and Lillian take over caring for their teenage nieces.

### **We Cast a Shadow (2019) by Maurice Carlos Ruffin**

In a near-future Southern city, everyone is talking about a new experimental medical procedure that boasts unprecedented success rates. In a society plagued by racism, segregation, and private prisons, this operation saves lives with a controversial method--by turning people white. A satiric and horrifying what-if novel.

### **The Nickel Boys (2019) by Colson Whitehead**

Colson Whitehead brilliantly dramatizes another strand of American history through the story of two boys sentenced to a hellish reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida.

### **Red at the Bone (2019) by Jacqueline Woodson**

As Melody celebrates a coming of age ceremony at her grandparents' house in 2001 Brooklyn, her family remembers 1985, when Melody's own mother prepared for a similar party that never took place in this novel about different social classes.

### **Black Friday (2018) by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah**

A piercingly raw debut story collection from a young writer with an explosive voice; a treacherously surreal, and, at times, heartbreakingly satirical look at what it's like to be young and black in America.

### **How Long 'til Black Future Month? (2018) by N. K Jemisin**

Offers a collection of the author's short fiction, including "The City Born Great," where a young street kid fights to give birth to an old metropolis's soul.

**An American Marriage (2018) by Tayari Jones**

A portrait of a strained marriage when the husband is convicted of a crime he did not commit and the consequences of a skewed justice system that often criminalizes young black men.

**An Unkindness of Ghosts (2017) by Rivers Solomon**

If you like science fiction, Solomon debuts with a raw distillation of slavery, feudalism, prison, and religion that kicks like rotgut moonshine. On the generational starship Matilda, which will take hundreds of years to reach its destination a tech-ignorant white supremacy cult called the Sovereignty runs on the labor and intimidation of a black enslaved class.

**The Underground Railroad (2016) by Colson Whitehead**

The award-winning author of The Noble Hustle chronicles the daring survival story of a cotton plantation slave in Georgia, who, after suffering at the hands of both her owners and fellow slaves, races through the Underground Railroad with a relentless slave-catcher close behind. 2016 National Book Award Winner.

**If Beale Street Could Talk (1974) by James Baldwin**

When a pregnant Tish's boyfriend Fonny, a sculptor, is wrongfully jailed for the rape of a Puerto Rican woman, their families unite to prove the charge false. There is a beautiful 2019 film adaptation.