

Surviving the White Gaze

author: Rebecca Carroll

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Synopsis

author	Rebecca Carroll
readBy	Rebecca Carroll
inLanguage	english

An *Esquire* Best Book of 2021
A “œgorgeous and powerful”
(*The New York Times Book Review*) memoir from cultural critic Rebecca Carroll recounting her painful struggle to overcome a completely white childhood to forge her identity as a Black woman in America.
Rebecca Carroll grew up the only Black person in her rural New Hampshire town. Adopted at birth by artistic parents who believed in peace, love, and zero population growth, her early childhood was loving and idyllic—and yet she couldn’t articulate the deep sense of isolation she increasingly felt as she grew older.
Everything changed when she met her birth mother, a young white woman, who consistently undermined Carroll’s sense of her Blackness and self-esteem. Carroll’s childhood became harrowing, and her memoir explores the tension between the aching desire for her birth mother’s acceptance, the loyalty she feels toward her adoptive parents, and the search for her racial identity. As an adult, Carroll forged a path from city to city, struggling along the way with difficult boyfriends, depression, eating disorders, and excessive drinking. Ultimately, through the support of her chosen Black family, she was able to heal.
“Generous, intimate, searching, and formidable” (*The Boston Globe*), *Surviving the White Gaze* is a timely examination of racism and racial identity in America today.

Reader's comments

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