



Racebrave: New and Selected Works

Karsonya Wise Whitehead

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Passionate, edgy, unapologetic... RaceBrave: new and selected works provides another glimpse into Karsonya Wise Whitehead's work to document her experience raising two black boys in a post-racial America. On July 7, 2014, the day Eric Garner was murdered, Whitehead set out to write about what was happening across America to unarmed black people, in doing so she explores the feelings of hopelessness and helplessness that resonate with parents around the country-sometimes with humor, sometimes with sadness, but always with an ear that bends toward the truth. In marking these moments, Whitehead also reached back into her childhood diaries to examine how life has changed for her, as a writer, a poet, and a mother over the years. RaceBrave is a masterwork that covers multiple topics and captures every mood: today, my heart stopped is both dolorous and heartbreaking as it examines what happens when black men demand the right to be seen and to be able to breathe, while the birth of your activism examines the days leading up the Baltimore Uprising as Whitehead's sons chose to march for ten days straight for justice, for Freddie Grey, and ultimately in search of the world that they are hoping to co-create. Going back into her archives, confederate flag memories highlights Whitehead's feelings about the confederate flag in both 1980 and in 2015 while speaking my truth, finally reveals a story that she has been trying to write about for twenty-five years. In the section, "Black Love is Black Wealth," Whitehead celebrates the many aspects of love with we are gathered, a poem in memory of her favorite uncle; a regenerative descant, in celebration of the retirement of a Marine after thirty-years of service; and, soulmates and soulfood (kuro ai), five short playful tender poems about being brave enough to fall and remain in love. At once personal and political, poignant and apoplectic, these forty-five poems evoke a society where all voices are heard, all perspectives are respected, and everyone has the courage to be RaceBrave.

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