



Ebony Rising: Short Fiction of the Greater Harlem Renaissance Era

Craig Gable

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Ebony Rising is the first comprehensive, gender-balanced collection of short fiction from the greater Harlem Renaissance era (1912–1940). This was a time marked by writing of extraordinary breadth and depth by some of the most famous authors in African American literary history. Among them were Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Jean Toomer, Dorothy West, and Claude McKay. Not surprisingly, these authors have received an unprecedented amount of critical attention, and their work remains popular to this day.

For this anthology, Craig Gable has selected 52 short stories by 37 writers (20 women and 17 men) representing a wide range of style, form, subject matter, and social awareness. To underscore the movement's growth and change, the stories are arranged chronologically by year of publication. Some will be familiar to readers; many more will not, for this is not the "greatest hits" of the Harlem Renaissance. Instead, readers will find a remarkable collection of fiction by authors famous and obscure—some who lived in New York City and others who never resided there. There are stories set in Harlem, but they are just as likely to take place elsewhere in the United States. Alongside traditional stories, there are examples of detective fiction, political satire, even science fiction, with a few experiments in narrative structure and form for good measure. The stories take up issues of race, marriage, parenthood, crime, politics, religion, work, abuse, old age, and death—in short, the stuff of life, and of compelling and lasting fiction.

A selected bibliography documents some 300 books and articles on the Harlem Renaissance. There is a separate list of sources for other short stories by the authors appearing in this anthology; a list of award-winning short fiction from two black literary contests of the day; timelines of important historical, literary, and cultural events; and other aids for teachers, students, and reading groups.

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