



White Lilacs

By Carolyn Meyer

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Young Rose Lee Jefferson is shocked to learn that the white residents of Dillon, Texas, want to raze the city's black enclave, Freedomtown, and build a park in its place. Rose Lee and the other residents of Freedomtown cannot bear the thought of losing their homes. But fighting the city's plans could be costly--or even life threatening. Will the families of Freedomtown be able to save their thriving community? "Includes a reader's guide."

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White Lilacs By Carolyn Meyer Bibliography

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- Dimensions: .82" h x 3.92" w x 7.24" l,
- Binding: School & Library Binding

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Based, as the author explains in an endnote, on an event that took place in 1921-22, this somber, moving story focuses on prejudice, injustice and everyday bravery. When the city council of Dillon, Tex., unveils its plans to raze Freedomtown--an all-black enclave in the town's center--and replace it with a park, the proposal unleashes a tumult of rage and defiance in the black community. The Freedomtowners' indignation dwindles down to a trickle of unrest and, eventually, resignation after a Klan cross-burning, the destruction of the local school and several other frightening, dispiriting events. As seen through the eyes of 12-year-old aspiring artist Rose Lee Jefferson, this struggle for equal rights quickly becomes a sorrowful march toward an inevitable eviction. Even Rose Lee's activist older brother--a World War I veteran and follower of Marcus Garvey--fails in his fight against Dillon's privileged class: he is tarred and feathered by local hooligans. Numerous historical details and snippets of then-current political thought are smoothly integrated into the story. Bleak though its conclusion is, this bittersweet novel is poignant and tender, both in its spare vernacular dialogue and delicate description. Ages 8-12.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 5-7-In a small Texas town in the 1920s, 12-year-old Rose Lee Jefferson's favorite places are the gardens tended by her beloved grandfather. Granted "toting privileges" by his white employers, he has planted a profusion of colorful flowers around his home, so striking that Rose Lee calls the spot the Garden of Eden. Happily surrounded by her hard working, loving family, the girl is shocked when she overhears the casual plan to move her entire black community to the sewer flats, so that a park can be built in the middle of town. Reactions from her neighbors range from quiet resignation and prayer to calls for strikes and a return to Africa. Some whites respond with threats of violence. Rose Lee feels sad and confused, but undertakes a special mission. Perfectly evoking time and place, Meyer carefully layers detail upon detail, until readers nearly breathe the humid floral scents and hear the languid voices so carelessly spelling destruction for a whole way of life. The tone and pace are just right, and characterization is true and varied. Although readers can't help but identify with Rose Lee's first-person narration, the presentation (based on a real incident) is well balanced. Ultimately, this story is about relationships and the difficulties that can be endured when caring people come together. Thematically reminiscent of Mildred Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (Dial, 1976), it could be read as a companion piece, but deserves attention in its own right. Thoughtful readers will hope for an encore.

Cindy Darling Codell, Clark Middle School, Winchester, KY

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 6-9. In 1921 the "colored" section of the Texas town of Dillon was called Freedom. It had its own school, its own churches, a general store, homes, and gardens. When the white residents of Dillon vote to turn the area into a town park, the residents of Freedom realize their loss is a foregone conclusion. The subsequent dismantling of the community and the businesses and families living and thriving there is seen through the eyes of Freedom teenager Rose Lee Jefferson. Characterizations and relationships ring true as Meyer depicts the black community chillingly intimidated by a silent Ku Klux Klan march; the tarring and feathering of Henry, Rose Lee's brother, a World War I veteran who refuses to buckle under to a rich white man's son; and Rose Lee's enlisting the aid of the daughter of the same rich white man to smuggle Henry to safety. Through it all, Rose Lee chronicles the last days of Freedom in a sketchbook, drawing pictures in an effort to capture the reality and spirit of the place she thought would always be home. Based on a true story, *White Lilacs* has

a concrete sense of time and place that will transport readers so effectively that their view of the present may be forever altered. *Janice Del Negro*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Grant:

The book *White Lilacs* can give more knowledge and also the precise product information about everything you want. So why must we leave the good thing like a book *White Lilacs*? A number of you have a different opinion about guide. But one aim this book can give many info for us. It is absolutely right. Right now, try to closer with the book. Knowledge or info that you take for that, it is possible to give for each other; you are able to share all of these. Book *White Lilacs* has simple shape but you know: it has great and large function for you. You can look the enormous world by available and read a reserve. So it is very wonderful.

Arturo Lamb:

The particular book *White Lilacs* will bring one to the new experience of reading a new book. The author style to describe the idea is very unique. In the event you try to find new book to learn, this book very ideal to you. The book *White Lilacs* is much recommended to you to see. You can also get the e-book from official web site, so you can quicker to read the book.

Terry Tatum:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or maybe go to the outside with them family members or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. In order to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read a new book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent all day every day to reading a book. The book *White Lilacs* it is very good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book features high quality.

Tony Reed:

The reason why? Because this *White Lilacs* is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap that but latter it will jolt you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who also write the book in such amazing way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining technique but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this anymore or you going to regret it. This phenomenal book will give you a lot of positive aspects than the other book include such as help improving your talent and your critical thinking means. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I had been you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

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