



## Blacker the Berry...

*Wallace Thurman*

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Wallace Thurman

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One of the most widely read and controversial works of the Harlem Renaissance, *The Blacker the Berry*...was the first novel to openly explore prejudice within the Black community. This pioneering novel found a way beyond the bondage of Blackness in American life to a new meaning in truth and beauty.

Emma Lou Brown's dark complexion is a source of sorrow and humiliation -- not only to herself, but to her lighter-skinned family and friends and to the white community of Boise, Idaho, her home-town. As a young woman, Emma travels to New York's Harlem, hoping to find a safe haven in the Black Mecca of the 1920s. Wallace Thurman re-creates this legendary time and place in rich detail, describing Emma's visits to nightclubs and dance halls and house-rent parties, her sex life and her catastrophic love affairs, her dreams and her disillusionments -- and the momentous decision she makes in order to survive.

A lost classic of Black American literature, *The Blacker the Berry*...is a compelling portrait of the destructive depth of racial bias in this country. A new introduction by Shirlee Taylor Haizlip, author of *The Sweeter the Juice*, highlights the timelessness of the issues of race and skin color in America.

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