

APPENDIX

Synopsis of *Passing*

Irene Redfield coincidentally meets her mulatto friend, Clare Kendry in a restaurant in Chicago. They have separated for twelve years. Clare is adopted by her white aunts after the death of his drunken father, who works as janitor. Irene only hears rumors about her having been seen at the dinner in a fashionable hotel accompanied by white people. There is also a rumor about her driving in Lincoln Park with a man, who is unmistakably white and rich.

Clare confesses that she has passed for white and marries a white man. She leaves her aunts after marries as she never reveals her true identity to her husband. Clare, who feels happy with the sudden encounter, insists on Irene's visiting her. Despite her lack of time as she has to go back to her family in New York, Irene agrees to visit her.

When Irene visits Clare in Chicago, Clare reveals her fear to have another child as she is afraid that the child might be black. Irene is also shocked as John Bellew, Clare's husband declares his hatred toward black community. Jokingly, she called her wife "Nig" as her complexion is getting darker and darker.

In Chicago, Clare refuses to visit Irene because someone might see her in a black neighborhood. Even though Irene has ignored Clare's letter, she invites her inside when she visits her in New York. Clare decides to attend the Negro Welfare League dance, which is coordinated by Irene since a lot of white people go. Besides, her husband is out of town. After the dance, Clare attends some party held by the black community without her husband knowing it. When her husband, supposedly in Philadelphia, finds Clare at the party, Clare falls out of window and brings her agony of her identity to death.

Synopsis of Iola Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted

Iola Leroy is the daughter of Eugene Leroy a wealthy southern slave owner. Her mother, Marie is a quarter black, a slave who takes care of Leroy when he is ill and abandoned by his friends. Her parents decide to raise Iola and her siblings, Harry and Gracie as whites and send them to northern school to protect them from prejudice and slavery. Later at school, Iola supports the pro-slavery stance and never realizes that she is an enslaved mulatto.

Upon Leroy's death, his cousin tricks the family to overtake Leroy's property. He separates Marie and her children, and then sells them as slaves. Marie and Gracie suffer from yellow fever and Gracie dies. Iola, held by an abusive master, is freed by the Union Army. Exiled from family and home, Iola becomes a nurse in the army. Dr. Gresham, a white Union hospital physician falls in love with her but dislikes her care for Tom, a black man who is wounded in a skirmish with confederate forces. Failed to suppress his feeling, Dr. Gresham proposes to Iola. Iola refuses the proposal as she does not want to marry a man

whose race has oppressed her family and race. She begins to accept her identity as a black woman.

When the Civil War ends, Iola manages to reunite with her family. They move to Georgia where they meet with progressive northern thinkers, Dr. Latimer, Dr. Gresham and Miss Delany. Having fully received her identity as a black woman, Iola rejects Dr. Gresham's second proposal and then marries Dr. Latimer, a mulatto who decides to pass as black. Both succeed in their respective career as physician and teacher. The reunited Leroy family work as an advocate for racial empowerment and civil rights.

Biography of Nella Larsen

Nella Larsen was born on 13 April 1891. She was the daughter of a West Indian man named Peter Walker, who married a Danish woman. When she was two years old, his father died and her mother was remarried to a white Dane, Peter Larsen. As a result she grew up as a black child of the lower-middle class white household.

After graduating from a local public school, Larsen attended Fisk University's Normal School in 1907. Between 1912 and 1915, she was trained as a nurse in New York and worked as head nurse at John Andrew Memorial Hospital and Nurse Training School soon after her graduation. In 1916, she met Elmer Imes, a physicist. They married and she began to write the following year.

Larsen firstly published her first literary work of two articles about Danish games in 1920. Both articles were published in the *Brownies' Book*, a children's magazine. Then she left nursing in 1921 to become a librarian. Soon, she

befriended some Harlem Renaissance activists that made her leave her job as a librarian to become a writer.

In 1928, she published her first novel *Quicksand* which received a significant critical acclaim. Her second novel *Passing*, which was published the following year also received praise from her fellow contemporaries. Her works lead her to become the first African-American woman to be awarded Guggenheim fellowship of creative writing.

When her marriage failed because of her husband's infidelity, Larsen stopped writing and disappeared. Some of her friends speculated that, like her characters of her novels, she had crossed the color in order to link with her white relatives. They denied her and until her death in 30 March 1964, she died alone in her apartment.

Sources: "Nella Larsen Biography", "Nella Larsen"

Biography of Frances E. W. Harper

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper was born on September 24, 1825 in Maryland, Baltimore. She was born a free black woman. Her father was a white man and her mother was a black woman. After her mother died, she was raised by her uncle, William Watkins who founded and taught at a local school for free black children.

After completing her formal education, she worked as a maid for Armstrong family in Baltimore. The family gave her permission to read all of the books in the family's personal library and family-owned bookstore. This triggered

her interest in writing. Soon, Harper began writing prose and poetry as a reflection of her own feeling and thoughts on various social and political issues.

After several years of creating and gathering poetry and prose, she published her first book of poetry entitled *Forest Leaves* in 1846. She left her job in Armstrong family to join Union Seminary in Columbus, Ohio where she became the first female member. She also helped slaves to escape through the Underground Railroad and wrote for an anti-slavery newspaper, earning her reputation as the mother of African American journalism.

In 1860, she married Fenton Harper and had a daughter, Mary. Her husband's death in 1864 led her back to Philadelphia to teach and lecture. Then she published *Moses: A Story of the Nile* (1869), *Poems* (1871), *Sketches of Southern Life* (1872). She also wrote articles on various topics which were published on newspapers and magazines. In 1892, after her interest shifted from poetry to fiction, she wrote *Iola Leroy or Shadows Uplifted* which was considered as the most impressive novel written by African American writer. She died in 1911, but her wisdom and desire for human equality survived well until 1990's and lived on for years to come.

Sources: Parish, "Frances Ellen Watkins Harper".