

### Brown Girl, Brownstones (Contemporary Classics by Women) 19th (nineteenth) Edition by Marshall, Paule published by The Feminist Press at CUNY (2006)

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story describes the life of Barbadian immigrants in Brooklyn during the Great Depression and then in World War II. The primary characters include Selina and Ina Boyce and their parents, who suffer from racism and extreme poverty. The book focuses most directly on the growth and development of the character Selina. The book did not gain widespread recognition until it was reprinted in 1981. The action opens on a discussion of the brownstone neighborhood in which the Boyce family lives. Selina Boyce, age 10, fantasizes about the white family that used to live in her house. The rented house is occupied by the Boyce family, frivolous father Deighton, stern mother Silla and Selina's older sister, Ina, as well as Suggie Skeete, a Barbadian woman who rents a room and frequently has male visitors. Additionally, a spinster woman and her mother, Maritze and Miss Mary, both white, live upstairs. In the early pages we learn that Ina, Selina's older sister, has reached puberty and is home sick with what we can assume are menstrual cramps. Understandably, she does not want to talk to Selina or entertain her. Selina finds her father, Deighton, working on some accounting books he is studying in hopes of getting a job. Deighton tells Selina that he has been left a plot of land back in Barbados, and he tells her not to tell anyone about it until her mother knows. Selina asks if she can tell her best friend, Beryl, and her dad acquiesces, and gives her some money for candy. On her way to the candy shop, Selina runs into the hyper-sexualized Suggie, as well as another neighborhood woman, Miss Thompson. She also sees Beryl in the park and asks her to stop by later. Seeing her mother coming home, Selina struggles to clean herself up, in fear of being chastised.

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