

Michelle Obama: Lessons in Life [C2]

La 44a first lady degli Stati Uniti pubblica un libro di memorie nel quale condivide con il pubblico la sua esperienza degli ultimi decenni, mettendo a fuoco il suo ruolo di donna e madre afroamericana che lotta coraggiosamente contro gli stereotipi.



“To go high”, in the phrase that will now always be connected with Michelle Obama, is an **ongoing battle** a daily moment-by-moment decision **to** choose empathy, and openness. One afternoon not long after the Obamas had moved in**to** the White House, Michelle organised a **playdate** for her youngest daughter, Sasha. The children were at their new **school** and she was worried about how they were **settling in**. So, in a move recognisable **to** parents everywhere, she **hovered** unseen nearby, listening **intently**, “quietly **overcome** with emotion any time a new **peal of laughter** erupted from Sasha’s room”. En detalle When it was over she did, again, what any parent of a small child might do, and went out **to** meet the friend’s mother. She wanted **to** chat about how the **playdate** had gone and maybe make a new friend for herself — at which **point**, argoment**o**”) all **relatability**”) abruptly ended: a **rustling** surrounded her as her Secret Service detail, who hadn’t planned for this, talked urgently in**to** their **wrist**

microphones. The mother's car was [swiftly](#) encircled by a Counter Assault Team. "Hey there", Obama said. The woman, "[eyeballing](#) the guards [clad](#) in helmets and black battle dress ... very, very slowly opened the car door and got out". It's a funny anecdote. But like every [story](#) in *The Light We Carry*, and in Obama's previous book, her memoir *Becoming*, it is [told](#) in the service of a serious [point](#), argomento"), which in this case is that making sustaining friendships requires effort and intention. This book grew out of the great personal response [to](#) *Becoming* — the small [gatherings](#) that followed stadium events, the women who wrote directly [to](#) her for [advice](#), who recognised their own lives in that of their former first lady. They will find more [to](#) recognise here, where the mundane is given [equal billing](#) with the entirely exceptional in what [amountsto](#) a carefully worked out manifest[to](#) for surviving, and hopefully [thriving](#), in the world. It is a polished performance, [tightly](#) structured, direct, conversational, in the [folksy](#) but [laser-sharp](#) public style both Obamas made their own, a [tone](#) that would work across a kitchen table or from a pulpit or even in those vast stadiums; sometimes [deceptively](#) simple, and not always original, but well [earned](#). That [point](#), argomento") about friendships, for instance. Behind it are the years she spent working full-time, in sole charge of two small children, when Barack was campaigning in Washing[to](#)n and serially [failing to](#) turn up for dinner when he was supposed [to](#): the female friends she made were a [lifeline](#) then, and continue [to](#) be. Where *Becoming* — which has so far sold more than 17 million copies — is the [story](#) of her life, *The Light We Carry*, subtitled "[Overcoming](#) in Uncertain Times", [comprises](#) the lessons of that life. She explores the importance of faith — underst[to](#)od more as taking one deliberate step at a time and trusting in the future, rather than as religious faith; of friendship and of partnership. There is a chapter on parenting, which she largely [turns over to](#) her own mother's lessons, and is worth [the price of admission](#) d'ingresso") alone. She makes no secret of how [hurt](#) she felt by the [dismissal](#), rigetto") that followed her even into the White House: the caricature of her as an angry Black woman, and the way anything she said [to](#) mitigate it was used [to](#) prove the prejudice all over again. She describes a period of "low-grade" depression during the pandemic, when her previously near-impregnable armour of [busyness](#) disappeared. In the final part of the book, she [turns outward to address](#) a

clear “you”. There is the sudden sense of a specific audience, all those who are “different” (and not just as defined by race), whom she’d like [to](#) buttress and [warn](#). “When the [climb](#) finally ends and you arrive, exhausted and [sweating](#), [to](#) that high place with a pretty view that you’ve long dreamed about, there’s one thing you’re almost always guaranteed [to](#) encounter, and that’s an air-conditioned luxury [tour](#) bus and a group of people who did none of the work, having been [driven straight up](#) an access road, their picnic [blankets](#) already [laid out](#), their party well [under way](#).” [To add insult to](#) injury, they may then [intimate](#) that you are the one who [took](#) the [shortcut](#)”) – “[affirmative action](#), or [scholarship](#) kid, or gender quota, or [diversity hire](#)” — and [thus](#) don’t [deserve to](#) be there. To go high, in the phrase that will now always be connected with her, is an [ongoing battle to](#) evade these [sinkholes](#); a daily, [grinding](#), moment-by-moment decision [to](#) choose empathy, and openness, [to](#) ask “How do we build places where [gladness](#) lives?”, and then [set out to](#) do it.” **She makes no secret of how [hurt](#) she felt by the [dismissal](#), [ripetto](#)”) that followed her even into [to](#) the White House: the caricature of her as an angry Black woman. Published in The Guardian on November 15, 2022. Reprinted with permission.**

Glossary

- **deceptively** = ingannevolmente
- **turns over** = consegnare
- **scholarship** = borsa di studio
- **set out** = prepararsi
- **overcome** = sopraffatta
- **rustling** = fruscio
- **dismissal** = rifiuto, rigetto
- **relatability** = sentirsi identificato
- **eyeballing** = osservare
- **advice** = consiglio
- **comprises** = includere
- **shortcut** = scorciatoia
- **school** = escuela
- **peal of laughter** = risata fragorosa
- **gatherings** = riunioni
- **climb** = scalata
- **intimate** = fare capire
- **tightly** = fermamente
- **hurt** = ferita
- **failing** = fallire
- **to buttress** = sostenere
- **driven straight up** = condotti direttamente in cima
- **ongoing battle** = battaglia in corso
- **intently** = con attenzione
- **amounts to** = equivalere
- **turns outward** = aprirsi
- **affirmative action** = discriminazione positiva
- **warn** = mettere in guardia
- **diversity hire** = assunta in quota minoranze
- **sinkholes** = voragini
- **gladness** = gioia
- **wrist** = polso
- **equal billing** = medesima attenzione

- **thriving** = prosperare
- **laid out** = stese
- **hovered** = aggirarsi
- **point** = punto, argomento
- **folksy** = semplice, comune
- **to turn up** = presentarsi
- **the price of admission** = il prezzo per entrare, il biglietto d'ingresso
- **under way** = incorso
- **grinding** = ardua
- **settling in** = stabilirsi
- **earned** = meritare, guadagnarsi
- **Overcoming** = superare
- **busyness** = frenesia, operosità
- **blankets** = coperte
- **clad** = curati, bardati
- **lifeline** = ancora di salvezza
- **To add insult to injury** = oltre al danno la beffa
- **playdate** = pomeriggio di giochi
- **to** = dirigere
- **address** = dirigere
- **sweating** = sudare
- **deserve** = meritare
- **swiftly** = velocemente
- **laser-sharp** = penetrante quanto un laser
- **thus** = pertanto