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A gorgeous, moving memoir of how one of America's most innovative and respected journalists found his voice by coming to terms with a painful past. New York Times columnist Charles M. Blow mines the compelling poetry of the out-of-time African-American Louisiana town where he grew up - a place where slavery's legacy was felt astonishingly close, reverberating in the elders' stories and in the near-constant wash of violence. Charles's attachment to his mother - a fiercely driven woman with five sons, brass knuckles in her glove box, a job plucking poultry at a nearby factory, a soon-to-be-ex husband, and a love of newspapers and learning - cannot protect him from secret abuse at the hands of an older cousin. It's damage that triggers years of anger and searing self-questioning. Finally, Charles escapes to a nearby state university, where he joins a black fraternity after a passage of brutal hazing, and then enters a world of racial and sexual privilege that feels like everything he's ever needed and wanted, until he's called upon, himself, to become the one perpetuating the shocking abuse. A powerfully redemptive memoir that both fits the tradition of African-American storytelling from the South, and gives it an indelible new slant. **DISCLAIMER:** "We cannot guarantee the availability of this ebook on an external site."

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