



Bigmama Didn't Shop at Woolworth's

Sunny Nash

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Bigmama didn't shop at Woolworth's. It wasn't because Woolworth's charged more for things than the hawkers who drove through the neighborhood; it was because black shoppers were not welcome in stores on the Main Streets of towns like Bryan, Texas.

Bigmama was Sunny Nash's grandmother, and when Sunny was growing up in the 1950s, she learned from her elders what life was and should be. Through her own young eyes, she saw not only the indignities and economic hardships her family and friends suffered—unpaved roads, mosquito-infested ditches and outdoor toilets, back stairs to balcony seating in the movies—but also the love and warmth of everyday life in Candy Hill, a segregated neighborhood.

In the tradition of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but with the power of real-life perspective, Sunny Nash tells her pre-civil rights story with immediacy and poignancy. For those familiar with the restrictions of the segregated South, Nash also shares the secret of surviving with spirit intact: the ordinary and special moments of her family, friends, and herself in Candy Hill; how they tolerated and overcame prejudices; how they dealt with daily obstacles in earning a living, receiving an education, voting, and purchasing property; and what they learned from one another.

In this valuable contribution to Texas and its racial history, Nash fills the book with powerful vignettes that provide insight into this time of segregation and change.

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