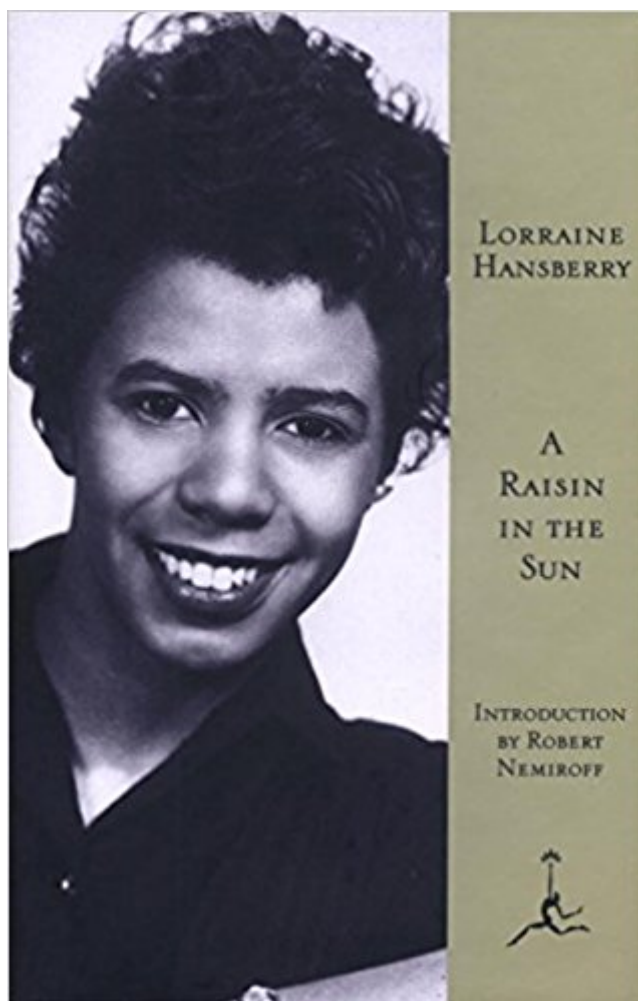


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# A Raisin In The Sun (Modern Library)



## Synopsis

"Never before, the entire history of the American theater, has so much of the truth of black people's lives been seen on the stage," observed James Baldwin shortly before *A Raisin in the Sun* opened on Broadway in 1959. Indeed Lorraine Hansberry's award-winning drama about the hopes and aspirations of a struggling, working-class family living on the South Side of Chicago connected profoundly with the psyche of black America--and changed American theater forever. The play's title comes from a line in Langston Hughes's poem "Harlem," which warns that a dream deferred might "dry up/like a raisin in the sun." "The events of every passing year add resonance to *A Raisin in the Sun*," said *The New York Times*. "It is as if history is conspiring to make the play a classic." This Modern Library edition presents the fully restored, uncut version of Hansberry's landmark work with an introduction by Robert Nemiroff.

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## Customer Reviews

• A beautiful, lovable play. It is affectionately human, funny and touching. . . . A work of theatrical magic in which the usual barrier between audience and stage disappears. • John Chapman, *New York News* • An honest, intelligible, and moving experience. • Walter Kerr, *New York Herald Tribune* • Miss Hansberry has etched her characters with understanding, and told her story with dramatic impact. She has a keen sense of humor, an ear for accurate speech and compassion for people. • Robert Coleman, *New York Mirror* • *A Raisin in the Sun* has vigor as well as veracity. • Brooks Atkinson, *New York Times* • It is honest drama, catching up real people. . . . It

will make you proud of human beings.â •Frank Aston, New York World-Telegram & Sunâ œA wonderfully emotional evening.â •John McClain, New York Journal American

"Never before, the entire history of the American theater, has so much of the truth of black people's lives been seen on the stage," observed James Baldwin shortly before "A Raisin in the Sun" opened on Broadway in 1959. Indeed Lorraine Hansberry's award-winning drama about the hopes and aspirations of a struggling, working-class family living on the South Side of Chicago connected profoundly with the psyche of black America--and changed American theater forever. The play's title comes from a line in Langston Hughes's poem "Harlem," which warns that a dream deferred might "dry up/like a raisin in the sun." "The events of every passing year add resonance to "A Raisin in the Sun," said "The New York Times. "It is as if history is conspiring to make the play a classic." This Modern Library edition presents the fully restored, uncut version of Hansberry's landmark work with an introduction by Robert Nemiroff.

I come to this play with the thought that ever since the first slave came to the American Colonies there has always been a Civil Rights struggle. This play is part of its voice, covering perhaps ideas current just after World War II and into the middle 1950's. It is a play full of dreams of empowerment and self-realization for members of one family and for members of all African-American families. It came to the theater prior to the famous "I have a dream" speech given by Dr. Martin Luther King. It is deservedly a milestone in modern American theater. In the space of three acts it's dialog and characterization provides a nuanced and textured look into the race relations I grew up with--even as a 'white boy.' Without taking anything away from this work's power, I believe that the work also reflects the Irish Struggle in pre-Independence, British Colonial times, as expressed by Sean O'Casey in JUNEAU AND THE PAYCOCK. Every culture and time has its special touchstones but for me, O' Casey showed the way and so I give this four rather than five stars. It doesn't help any that I have only seen the contemporary movie versions of the play: they seem to have been hampered by the theatrical conventions of the time. And much that would have seemed so fresh in the mid-fifties provided the basis for works that developed from the Civil Rights era and showcased even stronger African-American characters. This author and the original cast were the pioneers.

What a great story! I had to read this for a class and i hesitated because I felt like I knew the story. I felt like it was going to be an over-exaggerated play about poor black people in a poor community trying to come up, and it was that. But, somehow there was more depth to the characters and plot

than I expected. By the end of the second act, I found myself all twisted up inside the characters' conflicts and personalities because they were not much different than my own personal struggles. By the end of the play, I was begging for the playwright to give me some advice on how to quench this inner conflict within myself. This was an absolute masterpiece!

This play was beautifully written as it tells the struggles of a black family living in Chicago who are trying to improve their lives while holding on to deep traditions during the turbulent times of the Civil Rights movement. Ms Hansberry hit it right on the nail. It brought home the sentiment of New York living during this critical moment in time. I loved it to the end.

I should probably love this. I bought it for my son to read as part of his summer reading program for high school. Being that I teach English at a community college, you would expect me to enjoy this play, and I did, though reading plays isn't the most fun, given that they are meant to be seen. Still, it's a compelling look at race relations in America, where the racism was more out in the open rather than more institutionalized racism we have with us today.

The life and struggles to maintain a modicum of self-worth in a world filled with things that run counter are what sets the foundation for this play. It brought into focus our collective drive to achieve something more than what society says we can and the missteps that we often make to prove them wrong. This play runs the gamut of the human experience - from ambition to apathy to cautious optimism, in such a way that anyone can connect. A truly good read.

This play was required reading for a course, Images of Women in Literature. I was discouraged at first, and put it off for weeks. However, we were also required to view a film version, I chose the 2008 version with Sean "P. Diddy" Combs and Phylicia Rashad. The story drew me in from the start. I'm glad I gave it the fair chance it deserved! There is a clear cultural, era, and gender identification, well written & easy to follow!

The way that Lorraine Hansberry is able to capture the essence of the black struggle during this time is indescribable. The story line moves along smoothly and I can barely put the book down.

The only reason why I had purchased this book is because I needed it for my AP Language class. Personally, I don't think I would have read it otherwise, but, since I did, my knowledge on how

people felt during segregation has expanded tremendously. As well as the struggle of poor people.8/10 Would read again.

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