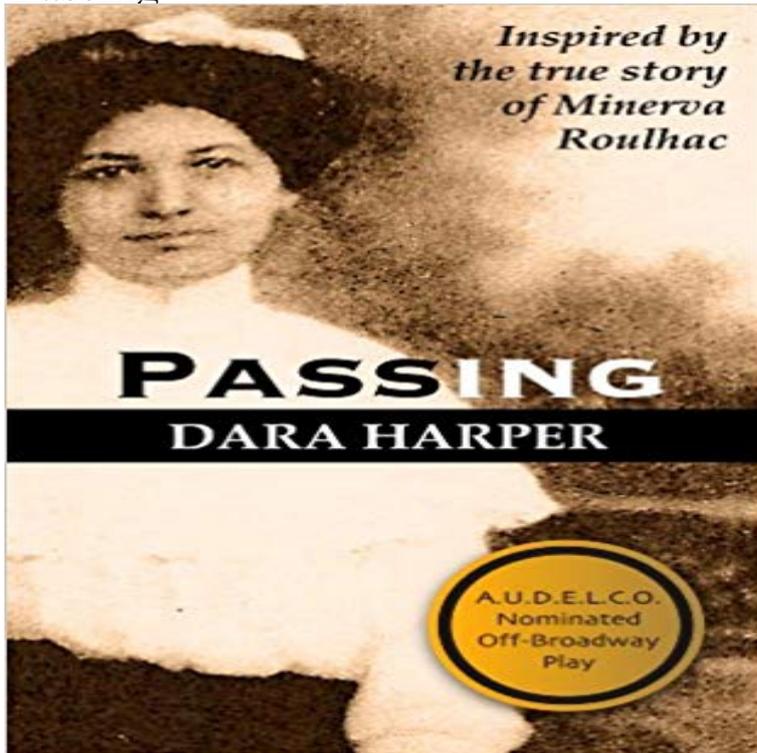


Passing



Passing is a one-woman play that has inspired audiences across the country to challenge traditional views about race in America. Based on the true story of the playwrights great-grandmother. Passing takes place in the 1940s, but emphasizes a message of love and hope that still resonates today. Minerva Roulhac was born at the turn of the century in the segregated south. She was orphaned as a child. Despite her Caucasian appearance, she was adopted by a former slave. She grew up in Marianna, Florida's black community while her brother, Jordan ran away from home and started a new life, passing for white. Jordan's decision caused a painful divide between him and Minerva. After overcoming life-threatening obstacles, she fell in love and married Robert Roulhac. Together, they raised eight college-educated children and stood against prejudice. Minerva lived to be nearly 100 years old. In this play, she imparts the wisdom that helped her survive everything from Jim Crow to the Great Depression. Playwright Dara Harper also wrote *Shades Of War* and penned three novels; *Magic In Moon Time*, *Grits & Grace* and *The Justice Women*. EXCERPT: I roomed with Emma Mae Thompson. She had silky auburn hair and gray eyes with little touches of blue. She dressed in the finest fashions and had a figure that the fellas went crazy for. Back then, I was mostly skin and bones. Chile, I didn't get these hips til after I had my babies. Her father owned one of the biggest insurance companies in Memphis. They were quite wealthy by colored folks standards. When I introduced myself to Emma Mae, she took me in with those bright eyes of hers and said, You could pass if you wanted to. There's no hope for me with these big ole lips, but you could pass. I made it clear that I wasn't interested in passing and that I considered myself a colored woman through and through. Look

at us, Minerva. Do you know that we can have any colored man we set our sights to? They all want to marry a pretty yellow woman with good hair. When I was in Europe, they thought I was white! For Gods sake, there are Eye-talians darker than you! I didnt even like looking in the mirror sometimes because it made me aware of what others saw. All those times I went to town and people thought that Mama Aggie was my maid... and the times when white people stared at me while I sat in the colored section... and how my own people treated me better because I looked white... I tried not to think about the pain. But whenever it got to me, Mama Aggie would say, Theres nothing wrong with the way God made you.

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