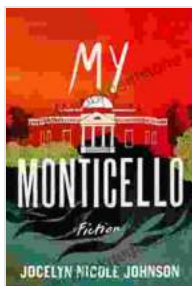


Exploring the Complexities of Race, Power, and Resistance in Jocelyn Nicole Johnson's 'My Monticello'



My Monticello: Fiction by Jocelyn Nicole Johnson

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 5911 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 215 pages



Jocelyn Nicole Johnson's 'My Monticello' is a powerful work of historical fiction that delves into the lives of enslaved people in the United States. Set in the shadow of Monticello, the plantation home of Thomas Jefferson, the novel offers a nuanced and unflinching look at the complexities of race, power, and resistance in the antebellum South.

Historical Context

Monticello was a thriving plantation, home to hundreds of enslaved people who labored to maintain the estate and its luxurious lifestyle. Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States and author of the Declaration of Independence, was a complex figure who both enslaved people and spoke out against slavery. His relationship with Sally Hemings,

an enslaved woman who was likely his concubine, has been the subject of much debate and controversy.

Johnson's novel is set in the years leading up to the Civil War, a time of great tension and upheaval in the United States. The abolitionist movement was gaining momentum, and the issue of slavery was dividing the nation. Against this backdrop, 'My Monticello' tells the story of three enslaved people: Monticello Wine, Monticello House, and Monticello Gardens.

The Characters

Monticello Wine is a skilled cooper who dreams of freedom. He is acutely aware of the injustices he faces, and he longs for a better life for himself and his loved ones. **Monticello House** is a young woman who works as a maid in Jefferson's mansion. She is intelligent and ambitious, and she refuses to be defined by her status as a slave. **Monticello Gardens** is a skilled gardener who is responsible for maintaining the plantation's beautiful grounds. He is a proud and independent man who takes solace in his work.

These three characters represent the diverse experiences of enslaved people in the antebellum South. They are individuals with their own unique strengths, weaknesses, and dreams. Their stories offer a powerful and moving account of the human cost of slavery.

Themes

'My Monticello' explores a range of complex and challenging themes. **Race** is at the heart of the novel, and Johnson does not shy away from depicting the brutality and dehumanization that enslaved people faced. She also examines the ways in which race shaped the lives of both enslaved and free people. **Power** is another central theme. Jefferson, as the master of

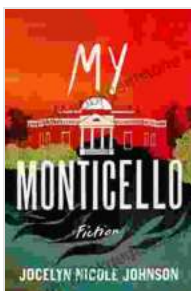
Monticello, has absolute power over the lives of his slaves. Johnson shows how this power corrupts Jefferson and those around him.

Resistance is a recurring theme throughout the novel. The characters in 'My Monticello' resist slavery in a variety of ways, from small acts of defiance to open rebellion. Johnson shows that resistance is essential for survival, and that it can take many forms.

Literary Style

Johnson's writing is lyrical and evocative. She uses vivid imagery and sensory details to create a rich and immersive world. Her prose is often poetic, but it never sacrifices clarity or accessibility. Johnson's characters are complex and well-drawn, and her story is both heartbreaking and hopeful.

'My Monticello' is a powerful and important novel that sheds light on the dark history of slavery in the United States. It is a story of resilience, resistance, and the indomitable spirit of the human being. Johnson's novel is a must-read for anyone interested in American history, race, or the human condition.



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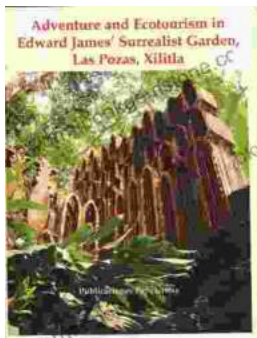
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