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Black Is The New White



Synopsis

OTHER COMEDIANS TELL JOKES. PAUL MOONEY TELLS THE TRUTH. For more than forty years—whether writing for Richard Pryor and Saturday Night Live or performing stand-up to sold-out crowds around the country—Paul Mooney has been provocative, incisive . . . and absolutely hilarious. His comedy has always been indisputably real and raw, reflecting race issues in America, and this fascinating, fearless new memoir continues that unapologetically candid tradition. While other stars soared only to crash and burn, Paul Mooney has stayed chiefly behind the scenes, and he's got a lifetime of stories to show for it. As head writer for The Richard Pryor Show, he helped tear down racial barriers and change the course of comedy. He helped Robin Williams and Sarah Bernhard break into show business. He paved the way for superstars like Eddie Murphy. Few have witnessed as much comedy history as Mooney; even fewer could recount it with such riotous honesty and depth of insight. He reveals the truth about his celebrated partnership with the brilliant, self-destructive Richard Pryor, from their first meeting to the very last joke, and reflects on some of his most notorious moments. Decades ago, Paul Mooney set out not just make audiences laugh but to make them think. *Black Is the New White* is his blisteringly funny, no-holds-barred memoir of how he continues to succeed wildly at both.

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Customer Reviews

Paul Mooney is a comic legend who has written for Chappelle's Show, In Living Color, The Richard Pryor Show, Saturday Night Live, Good Times, and Stanford and Son. He played Sam Cooke in

The Buddy Holly Story. His first comedy album, *Race*, was nominated for a Grammy, and he recently appeared in his own comedy special, *Know Your History: Jesus Was Black . . . And So Was Cleopatra*. He performs stand-up comedy to sold-out crowds around the country. He lives in New York City and Los Angeles.

CHAPTER 1 I'm sliding into a booth in a coffee shop on Santa Monica Boulevard, slapping the table to wake Richard Pryor from his hangover nod. "Man," I say to him, "I just saw a lady so pretty, somebody should suck her daddy's dick for a job well done." Richard stares at me. Early afternoon, too early for Richard. I smell the brandy he doses his coffee with. He is a little slowed-down by all the poisons in his blood, but even slowed-down Richard Pryor is quicker than any other human being on earth. He laughs. I'm not saying Richard just laughs like an ordinary person laughs. I mean he laughs. His face lights up like a Times Square billboard and his whole body wags like a dog happy to see its owner. You know you can die happy when you can make Richard Pryor laugh. It's this huge blast of appreciation, hipness, and intelligence. He gets it. His laugh is like ripping open a bag of joy, letting loose a storm that blows you head over heels. It is that powerful. The greatest comics -- and Richard is bar none the greatest -- always have the greatest laughs. Later on, as the hard living takes its toll and the MS takes over, most of Richard's laughs will turn into fits of coughing, as though he's trying to hack up his liver. But a Richard Pryor laugh is still and always will be like getting a high five from God. California yellow sun and Pacific blue sky. That September day in 1968, Richard and I are in Duke's Coffee Shop, the original one, in the old Tropicana Motel. Two dudes, two dudes, like Richard starts one of his routines. We are the only black guys who can make the scene in Hollywood. We are groundbreakers, accepted at all the clubs, invited to all the parties. When we break into it, Hollywood is still a closed, racist town. The place has never seen anybody like us. We are fearless. We go everywhere. We break down barriers. We still get harassed by bigots and cheated by the system, but it never stops us. Later that night my wife, Yvonne, gets dressed up and we go to Troubadour on Santa Monica to hear Richard perform his stand-up routine. He's a different comic when I am in the audience. He hears my laugh and he shifts gears, elevating his act to a higher, edgier level. I can tell he is trying to make me laugh, but I'm not going to give it up that easy. I make him work for it. He pushes himself. From the stage of the Troubadour that night, I hear Richard do the line I gave him earlier in Duke's coffee shop. "Coming here tonight, I saw a woman so motherfucking beautiful gorgeous that it made me want to suck her daddy's dick for a job well done." The joke kills. The way Richard tells it, it kills. The audience practically vomits laughter. Later that same night -- or is it early morning by then? -- Richard tells me to hold my arm

out. "What for?" "Just hold it out, motherfucker." He slips a watch on my wrist. A good watch -- I can feel its heavyweight mass on my arm -- a \$10,000 beauty. The kind of watch you call a timepiece. "What's this for?" "The bit," he says. "What bit?" I play dumb. "The suck-her-father's-dick bit." "Oh, that," I say. "That's just you and me talking. I could hardly tell if you were awake when I told you that." "Take the fucking watch. You don't like it, motherfucker, sell it. Take the money, Mr. Mooney." He always calls me that. Mr. Mooney. Off that character on the The Lucy Show. I take the watch. The funniest man on the face of the earth wants me to write for him. It begins to click. I think: This thing we have, this Batman-and-Robin thing, can somehow turn into something that means money and good times for both of us. I toss lines to Richard. He puts them out to the audience. The audience flings money at him. Richard throws money at me. The truth is, it's never about the money for me. I love Richard. I am his biggest fan. I get off on him doing one of my jokes. It means so much to me. I want Richard to be happy and to succeed. My loyalty is to Richard, and my relationship with him is authentic, as though he is my brother. On all of Richard's albums, you can hear me laugh. I always laugh long and loud. Those first days together in 1968 are the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Copyright © 2009 by Louis Get's On My Nerves, Inc --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A very enjoyable read, with background detail on some of the best black comics around. Mooney is always funny anyway, but this was funny and spoke to some history that fans wouldn't necessarily know. Excellent!

As an African American author -- Pursuit of Exhibit 35 in the OJ Simpson murder trial: and its Hidden Secrets and film/documentary producer -- Serpents Rising: An Independent Investigation of the O.J. Simpson Murder Trial -- and investigator of concealed evidence in the OJ Simpson murder trial, evidence, mind you, that could have clearly and cleanly exonerated Simpson of murder; the trumpeting of cold hard truths of American society delivered by one, Paul Mooney, in "Black is the New White" was a literary journey I knew immediately was worth traveling. The Griot, for those of you who do not know, is the one who knows and passes on the truth and its history down through the millennia of Africa. The American Black male Griot, even more rare and precious, because of how fast we die, how short our life expectancy, how often we are deprived of knowledge of the 'real deal' through participation. Paul Mooney, gives one those truths through "Black is the New White", often cold, hard, funny, but real. His association with Richard Pryor makes the journey even more interesting as Paul gives a sober account of what goes on behind the doors of power in

Hollywood then and probably to a great extent even now. T.H. Johnson
Investigative Team Leader
Ocean Medical Investigative Group (OMIG)
Los Angeles, CA

Mr. Paul Mooney, is a legend, and comedic icon. This is an unflinching and honest account of his life. His friendship with Richard Pryor, is revealed in all of its glory. He doesn't sugar-coat the horror and genius of Pryor's life and career. Mooney is a true comedy master, and this is a no-holds barred review of his spectacular life.

I simply love Paul Mooney. I enjoyed the writing style and the commentary of notable people who were around him.

Loving this book. Great history of the life of Mooney.

it was the right item.

A nice memoir that reveals facts I did not know, regarding Mooney and Pryor's relationship. Lacking substance.

Paul Mooney is one of the funniest comedians out there. He's not only a comedian, he's a scholar, a deep thinker -- a very heavy dude!! I knew he and Richard Pryor were friends from way back and I also knew of Mooney's writing for Pryor and other comedians, TV shows, etc. But I didn't know the secrets which were revealed about Pryor; the times they spent together; and the state of things in their surrounds. This book gives a true inside story about Pryor. Mooney was a true friend and maybe Pryor's ONLY friend. I can only say -- Thanks Mr. Mooney for writing this book.

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