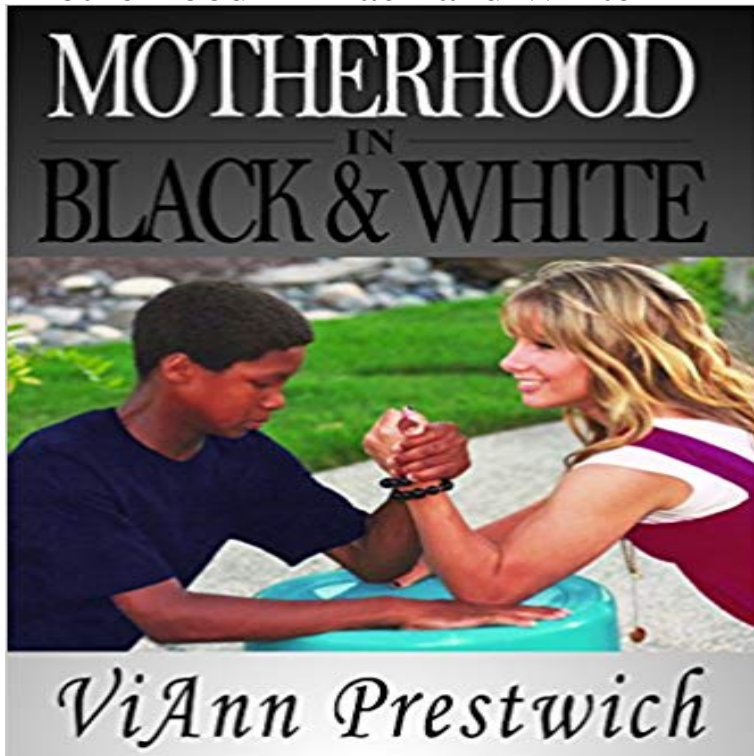


Motherhood in Black and White



When this brother and sister knelt down to arm-wrestle more than a decade ago, there was no racial tension between the two. She was a cocky, 16-year-old, blond basketball player who lifted weights. He was a skinny tween who didn't think his sister could beat him. This was a brother and sister contest which went on for the next three years, and then he won. She's never agreed to a physical match since, so now they just argue--sibling rivalry and love. There wasn't a racial divide. True, his older brother dubbed him a cry baby after he complained about a stranger calling him a chocolate boy. Except, he was only 4-years-old at the time and didn't view the title as racist; he just hated chocolate. A few years later, he was the one laughing at the dumb blond sister when she super-glued her hands together and the school suggested medical intervention. This book is a story of motherhood, adoption, failed adoptions, race, and love. A must read if you've ever loved a child. Professional Endorsements: This book shines with the author's humanity, wisdom, and intelligence, along with a sly humor that made me laugh out loud several times on each page. Read it and be reassured that there is hope for the world after all. Four of ViAnn's five children are adopted and one is not. Like Crayolas, the five range through colors from peach to dark brown, and the book tells the story of shepherding them through the years from birth to all grown up. Like every mother, adoptive or otherwise, ViAnn worries about how to do it right. She struggles with the conflict between her simple - simple? - love for her kids and the esteem-challenging monkey wrenches that life, culture, and the community throw at her. It comes as no surprise that, in addition to the usual parenting issues, the mixture of the children's colors elicits gratuitous commentary from friends, relatives, and random passersby - commentary that

(again, no surprise) ranges from the excruciatingly cruel to the breathtakingly dumb. But no need to rush to the authors defense. She takes it all on with an admirable equanimity that comes from her emotional steadiness together with the hanging-on-by-your-teeth that is the death-defying roller coaster of motherhood.

- Joan Traub, New York Attorney/Writer.

Mother of three grown daughters. Years ago ViAnn opened her home to children regardless of race. In these stories, she opens her home again to us and shares her journey of adoption and inter-family racial relations. *Motherhood in Black and White* provides a unique and equalizing microcosm of race relations. ViAnn uses her familys experiences as a backdrop for the emotions of both blacks and whites as well as adoptive parents and children.

While many might assert that race relations in the United States have regressed, ViAnn provides us opportunities to see additional possibilities of growth - provocatively and movingly presented. It is a journey that grows and matures in a compelling and persuasive way, and will take the reader along with it. And as she, at the end of the first chapter, makes a specific plea, we can hear a general one will we, both black and white, overcome our fear, and help?

- Dr. Verl T.

Pope, Professor of Counseling, Northern Kentucky University. While reading this book I realized the insights offered in these pages arent just for those who are raising children of difference races, they are for everyone. The author shares her story in an eye-opening and honest way, giving the reader an understanding of the unique challenges and rewards involved in raising a family of adopted children of different races. Its a compelling read, complete with humor, introspection, and a way of looking kindly past the foibles of others and choosing to remain positive and loving - a wonderful message for everyone. - L. Whiting, Adoptee and Public Relations and Career Specialist

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