



Fire Shut Up in My Bones

Charles M. Blow

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A *New York Times* Notable Book | Lambda Literary Award Winner | Long-listed for the PEN Open Book Award

“Charles Blow is the James Baldwin of our age.” — *Washington Blade*

“[An] exquisite memoir . . . Delicately wrought and arresting.” — *New York Times*

Universally praised on its publication, *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* is a pioneering journalist’s indelible coming-of-age tale.

Charles M. Blow’s mother was a fiercely driven woman with five sons, brass knuckles in her glove box, and a job plucking poultry at a factory near their segregated Louisiana town, where slavery’s legacy felt close. When her philandering husband finally pushed her over the edge, she fired a pistol at his fleeing back, missing every shot, thanks to “love that blurred her vision and bent the barrel.” Charles was the baby of the family, fiercely attached to his “do-right” mother. Until one day that divided his life into Before and After—the day an older cousin took advantage of the young boy. The story of how Charles escaped that world to become one of America’s most innovative and respected public figures is a stirring, redemptive journey that works its way into the deepest chambers of the heart.

“Stunning . . . Blow’s words grab hold of you . . . [and] lead you to a place of healing.” — *Essence*

“The memoir of the year.” — A. V. Club

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