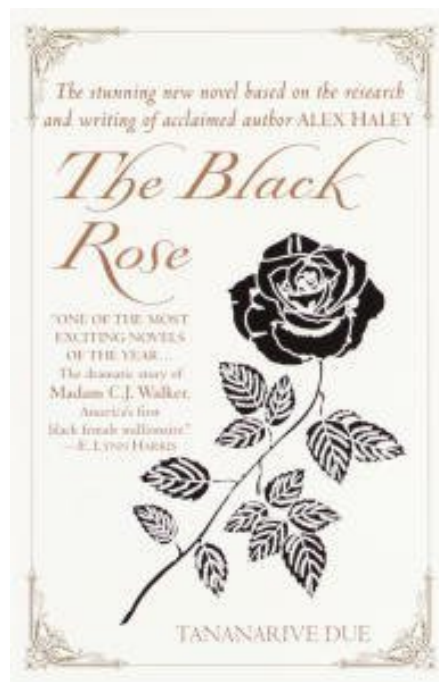




The Black Rose: The Dramatic Story of Madam C.J. Walker, America's First Black Female Millionaire

Tananarive Due

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Born to former slaves on a Louisiana plantation in 1867, Madam C.J. Walker rose from poverty and indignity to become America's first black female millionaire, the head of a hugely successful beauty company, and a leading philanthropist in African American causes. Renowned author Alex Haley became fascinated by the story of this extraordinary heroine, and before his death in 1992, he embarked on the research and outline of a major novel based on her life. Now with *The Black Rose*, critically acclaimed writer Tananarive Due brings Haley's work to an inspiring completion.

Blending documented history, vivid dialogue, and a sweeping fictionalized narrative, Tananarive Due paints a vivid portrait of this passionate and tenacious pioneer and the unforgettable era in which she lived.

The Black Rose: The Dramatic Story of Madam C.J. Walker, America's First Black Female Millionaire Details

Date : Published September 1st 2000 by Ballantine Books (first published 2000)

ISBN :

Author : Tananarive Due

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Biography, Nonfiction, Cultural, African American, History, Historical

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From Reader Review The Black Rose: The Dramatic Story of Madam C.J. Walker, America's First Black Female Millionaire for online ebook

Kia Taylor says

I enjoy historical fiction novels and this one is no exception. I read this years ago and enjoyed it then as well. Picked it up a while ago because I felt like reading a "real book" and it is one of the few that I have left. I think I enjoyed it a little more the first time around, but it was still a good read. If you are a big Tananarive Due fan like I am, it is a complete departure from her suspense/thriller books. After having read Joplin's Ghost a few times though, it was neat to read her brief characterization of him here as Madame lived in St. Louis and visited the Rosebud cafe.

The story of Madame CJ Walker, the first black millionaire, is a fascinating rags to riches story. Orphan at a young age to washerwoman to crazy wealthy in an era where few black people, much less women, achieved any kind of wealth at all.

Some interesting issues were raised here too about ambition, giving back to the community/politics, relationships where the woman is more successful than the man...

I put the book down eager to read some more historical material on Walker so that is always a good thing.

Lisa says

3.5 stars... Overall, this was a fascinating story about the first black female millionaire. It is awe-inspiring to see how Sarah Breedlove started with absolutely nothing as the daughter of former slaves and became not only incredibly wealthy, but an inspiration to hundreds of thousands of people. The book was well-written, but I had to knock it down half a star for stretches in the book that plodded on without making much impact to the story. These parts of the book made it difficult to finish. I was also disappointed to read in the afterword just how much had been imagined by the author, particularly the character of Lottie. I think Sarah's story is quite fascinating, and I would love to read more biographical information about her life.

Lady says

I loved this story! I had no idea America's first self made millionaire was Madam C.J. Walker. I saw a program on the Smithsonian channel featuring the new African American History Museum. One of the highlights they mentioned was Madam Walker and her story sounded intriguing. This book didn't disappoint on this fascinating woman's life.

Ecia says

Tedious but good!

Tracey Y Smith says

I am a big fan of historical fiction, but I think this was a very sanitized, whitewashed version of Madame C.J. Walker's life. Since the millionaire kept no diary and no one is alive that knew her, there's little insight into her personality and character. We can only assume her characteristics based on what she accomplished. In looking at her background, this lady came up in extremely rough circumstances, so I think there would be more of a toughness and edge to her than presented in Ms. Due's book. However, I thought the book was good in terms of providing more information about Madame Walker, her marriage to the gold-digging Mr. Walker and her rivalry with black hair-care entrepreneur Annie Prescope

Susan says

Inspiring story...Unfortunately, I lost interest toward the end. And I always wonder about the genre of historical fiction, especially in the case of someone not generally well-known. It seems to me that the fiction has such potential for becoming the fact. For example, in the case of Madame Walker, I learned in a quick wikipedia search, that she had several brothers. The book only mentions one brother. Not that the number of siblings is extremely important, I guess. But, still....

However, I am glad I read it. And it makes me want to go to Indianapolis and take advantage of whatever history about her the city has to offer. So far, we have only been to the theater one time.

Natalie M. says

The Black Rose tells the story of Sarah Breedlove (later known as Madam C.J. Walker) who was the first African-American female millionaire in the United States. It's incredible how many hurdles she had to overcome in order to get this title, such as her gender, race, social class, and many other reasons. I loved this book and thought it was very inspiring and captivating. However, I would recommend this book to mature audiences/readers since there are some sexual passages in the book.

Karyl says

My local library has a display commemorating Black History Month, and I thought that even though I have a million books checked out to read, it would be a good thing to read a book written by an African-American about an African-American during this important month. And I was not disappointed. I'd never heard of Tananarive Due before, though now I want to seek out more of her books, but I had come across some history about Madam C.J. Walker. I was also intrigued by the fact that Alex Haley had done a great deal of the research for this novel before he died.

This is a fantastic rags-to-riches story, an amazing exemplification of the American dream. Sarah Breedlove was born just after the end of the Civil War to sharecroppers that had been slaves just a few years before.

Both her parents died of yellow fever when she was a child, and she and her sister had to support themselves from then on. Working long hours as a laundress, she never had time for school or even to take care of herself properly. Even as an adult, she had problems with her scalp and her hair that she could never heal until she came up with her own preparation. From then on, her hair began to grow, and she began to think that not only could she sell this miracle product, but she could change the lives of so many other black women by hiring them to sell her product. In this way she not only made her clients beautiful, but also gave them financial security for years to come in a time when black women, whether educated or not, were expected to do no more than cook or clean for the white families around them.

It's impressive how Madam always thought of others when she decided to sell her product. She didn't just want to make a lot of money for herself and her daughter, but to share her financial gains with every person of her race. That level of altruism is rarely seen nowadays.

Due touches on a lot of social issues in this novel, though frequently it's just a slight touch. Of course, Madam experiences racism from the white people around her, but it's also evident from other African-Americans whose families have been free longer or whose skin tone was much lighter. But she never let anything hold her down, and instead she reached higher and higher to create more opportunities for her African-American sisters and brothers.

It's such a shame that Madam died so young, especially considering that modern medicine could have treated her high blood pressure and whatever ailments (I'm suspecting diabetes) she suffered from. But her legacy lives on, and I hope that everyone learns the name of Madam C.J. Walker, the first black female millionaire, who surmounted so many obstacles to become so very successful.

Kim Jacobs says

This was a great historical fiction book based on the life of Madam C.J. Walker (Sarah), the first black female millionaire. The story takes you through the life of Sarah from a child to an adult and all of the struggles she faces while starting her own hair care business. It was amazing the problems Sarah faced and how she was able to overcome the obstacles and continue. I love the fact that although she strived to do well for herself she was always concerned with others as well.

Rocio says

One of the best and most influential books that i have ever read. I was tearing up with in the first couple of pages. I was a better person after having read this book.

Rusty says

I have loved reading biographies since I was a teenager and I found this one was especially interesting. First, I had never heard of Madam C.J. Walker, her life and her company. She was driven by her heart which told her that Negroes are just as intelligent as white people. Her life, her company and her passion was to help the women of her race and their families live a better life made so much sense to her during a time when the whites believed that black meant poor, uninteresting and of lesser intelligence.

Second, Madam (Sarah) had two great loves of her life. She lost the first one when he was killed in a demonstration of black workers seeking equal wages. The second she lost when he betrayed her with other women. She loved both and could forget neither. With her divorce from C.J. she devoted every minute she had to her company and expanding it. One goal was to make it succeed. Another goal was to support her daughter and herself. Yet another was to help black women support their families so their children may have a better life through education. And, as time passed, she realized that she wanted to further her race as much as possible.

This is her story. A story of being poor, humiliated and ignored. With determination and persistence, Sarah discovered a hair growing solution that helped her own miserable hair condition improve to a point where she no longer had bald patches and covered her head to hide it from others. The tale is emotional, tragic and sad in many ways but it's an excellent read. I commend the author for telling readers about this ambitious woman whose life spanned poverty to wealth. Well done.

Tim Childree says

This is an incredible novelization of an incredible woman's life. I have never been overly fond of historical fiction and biographical works (due to an over-saturation of required reading as a teenager), but I couldn't wait to get back to The Black Rose every time I had to put it down.

I cannot recommend the book highly enough, especially if, like me, your upbringing neglected to mention the amazing, hard-working entrepreneur who was Madam C.J. Walker.

Mary Robinette Kowal says

A beautiful look at the life of one of the most influential African-American women. Completely fascinating.

Frances says

Great read and even though it is fiction it was very informative!

Latanya says

I started this book on Sunday night and finished it Wednesday! Even though I knew the heroin died at the end, I still cried! I never thought I would enjoy reading historical fiction so much! I loved this book!
