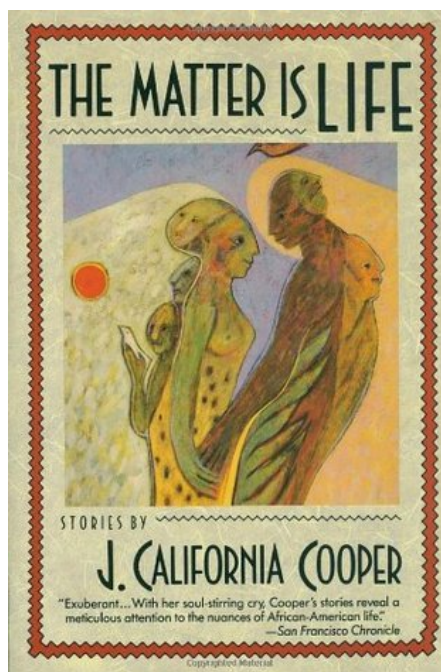




The Matter Is Life

J. California Cooper

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A fourth collection of stories by the award-winning author.

The Matter Is Life Details

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Author : J. California Cooper

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From Reader Review The Matter Is Life for online ebook

booksbythecup says

How do you feel about short stories? Are they a regular part of your reading or do you find that after you read them you feel like the story is incomplete??I remember thinking in the past when I tried short stories they felt unfinished since I had become accustomed to reading a complete book. But there has been one author who had consistently made me feel right at home, like my grandmother or wise older auntie has sat me down and left me with a few lessons on life. Because her age and life experience exceed my own and she can tell a story like no one else, I pull up a chair, grab a pot of tea (well maybe a pitcher of sweet tea for her) and I hunker down for what I know will be another treasured and cherished moment in our relationship. ?That, in a nutshell, is how I feel after reading J. California Cooper. Everytime. Although it's been several years since I've read one of her novels or collections of stories, it's like we haven't missed a beat. We are picking up where we left off and for the life of me, I can't figure out how I can review those feelings. It just doesn't seem possible.??Overall, I didn't think I had much to say about a collection of short stories, but the feelings and emotions and the words, they just tumbled out. Reading JCC always makes me think of my dear friend who introduced me to this author many years ago. She was my best friend, more like a sister.

Full review here

<https://booksbythecup.wordpress.com/2...>

Darlene says

This was the first book I have read by J. California Cooper and I was thoroughly pleased. This is a collection of short stories, full of truth, that's hard to put down. My favorite was Dora. You will be taken through lots of emotions from joy to sadness and the realization life doesn't always turn out as we planned. We must also be wary because it is in our most vulnerable moments that we have the potential to make the biggest mistakes.

Sonya says

One of my favorite authors/poets since college.

Shawn says

Wow. Amazing collection of short stories. A brilliance that catches you off guard; searing honesty in every story, like listening in to "ol' folks" talking about the way life was, is, and will be. Written in the vernacular of a time and place few of us can claim intimate knowledge of, but delivered in a way that leaves you enthralled and enlightened.

This is writing at its finest. How have I overlooked Ms. Cooper all these years? Lesson learned, I have some catching up to do.

Beverlee says

Fantastic!! I enjoyed these stories because it's the perfect combination of simplicity & lesson(s) to learn.

Deborah Palmer says

All her books are excellent. I love the way she develops relationships in the books. The characters are full bodied and realistic. Not just cut and dried romance. You always learn something from Ms. Coopers stories.

Laura says

This is a collection of eight short stories about the lives of a handful of African-American characters by Cooper. I'm not sure how Cooper never crossed my radar before now. I think that her stories would be very accessible for high school students, and the bonus is that many of them serve as a very strong warnings against making bad choices in life. In these stories, one of the moral themes seems to be about the consequences of vanity and greed. The characters who care only about image and status fall hard, and the characters who live steady lives of hard work and romantic fidelity end up the winners.

What's most interesting about Cooper's writing is the voice in these stories. It feels like the beginning of each story starts when the narrator has set a big piece of cake or pie in front of you with a big cup of coffee, and then, as you're digging in, she starts to say, "Did you ever hear about so-and-so? Let me tell you her/his story..." and off you go. The writing has a very conversational feel, but what's even more interesting is that if these stories were read aloud and not read with the print visible, there would be a layer of meaning missing. There is a strong connection in Cooper's writing between how the word appears on the page and how it sounds spoken. In one story, Cooper even inserts musical notations into the middle of sentences.

Of all the stories, my two favorites were "How, Why to Get Rich" about three kids who try their hand working as day laborers in the field only to discover the brutal back-breaking work that farm work is, and "The Doras" which is the story about a young orphan girl, Dora, who takes her destiny into her own hands and tries to make the lives of her daughters better than her own. I liked this story best, actually, because the narrator plays more of a role in this story beyond simply telling the story. We see how the story of Dora and her daughters affects the narrator's own choices in her life regarding her marriage and her children. It felt less contrived, and it felt like there was more of a purpose for the narrator's presence.

Marilyn says

Outstanding collection of short stories by one of my favorite authors - J. California Cooper. Highly recommend: "Friends, Anyone?," "Vanity," and "The Doras" out of this collection.

Demetrice Enis says

Builds character

T.L. Cooper says

The Matter is Life by J. California Cooper took me by surprise. I felt off-center as I began to read. Cooper uses language and grammar to give her characters voice and individuality. She writes stories that delve into the dirty aspects of life with an intense and uncomfortable honesty. Cooper writes life without dressing it up in frills and lace. Cooper addresses myriad topics from religion to drug use to family dynamics in this book of short stories. She delves into the way humans interact with one another as well as with themselves. She lets life's tatters and tears show. She creates raw and gritty characters in stories that feel all too real. The Matter is Life pushes the reader to think about why life matters and how to better embrace the what matters in life.

Angee Perry says

Nice chapter book as my children would say.
The different characters were so intense.
Clean & Concise story-lines made for a great read.

Veronica Bohanna says

This is my favorite author! I love everything she writes!

Tonya says

Easy to follow...memorable characters...back drops you can imagine...definitely feel good books you quickly fall in love with!

I Be Reading says

J. California Cooper is the master. Period.

Shanda says

This is my life, my decisions or indecisions affect me
