



Leon's Story (Sunburst Books)

Leon Walter Tillage

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"Leon's Story is a powerful, wonderful thing!" -- Nikki Giovanni

I remember that as a young boy I used to look in the mirror and I would curse my color, my blackness. But in those days they didn't call you "black." They didn't say "minority." They called us "colored" or "nigger."

Leon Tillage grew up the son of a sharecropper in a small town in North Carolina. Told in vignettes, this is his story about walking four miles to the school for black children, and watching a school bus full of white children go past. It's about his being forced to sit in the balcony at the movie theater, hiding all night when the Klansmen came riding, and worse. Much worse.

But it is also the story of a strong family and the love that bound them together. And, finally, it's about working to change an oppressive existence by joining the civil rights movement. Edited from recorded interviews conducted by Susan L. Roth, Leon's story will stay with readers long after they have finished his powerful account.

Leon's Story is the winner of the 1998 Boston Globe - Horn Book Award for Nonfiction.

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