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Reviews

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Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, United States, 2017. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. The House Behind the Cedars is the first novel by American author Charles W. Chesnutt. It was published in 1900 by Houghton, Mifflin and Company. The story occurs in the southern American states of North and South Carolina a few years following the American Civil War. Rena Walden, a young woman of mixed white and black ancestry, leaves home to join her brother, who has migrated to a new city, where he lives as a white man. Following her brother's lead, Rena begins living as a white woman. The secret of her identity leads to conflict when she falls in love with a white aristocrat who learns the truth of her heredity. The ensuing drama emphasizes themes of interracial relations and depicted the intricacies of racial identity in the American south. Chesnutt's autobiography informed the novel's themes. Being of predominantly European ancestry, Chesnutt was light skinned enough to pass as a white man, although he openly identified with his African-American roots. Additionally, his portrayal of interracial romantic relations in The House Behind the Cedars was controversial. Although the novel was critically well received, its controversy contributed to poor financial performance. Plot: The novel opens a few years after the Civil War [3] with John Warwick, from Clarence, South Carolina, leaving a hotel in Patesville, North Carolina. He walks around the town in which he used to live, and tries to visit Judge Archibald Straight, but he is not in his office. Warwick's attention is captured by a striking young woman, who he does not recognize as Rena, and follows her to the house behind the cedars. Warwick cautiously approaches the house, worried about being seen, and...

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