



Trick Baby

Iceberg Slim

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This novel charts the rise of White Folks, a white negro who uses his colour as his trump card in the tough game of the con. Blue-eyed, light-haired and white-skinned, White Folks was a successful con man, a hustler in the jungle of Southside Chicago where only the sharpest survived.

Trick Baby Details

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Author : Iceberg Slim

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From Reader Review Trick Baby for online ebook

Nascha says

I personally think that this book was the best of all of Iceberg Slim's books.

Slim tells the story of a young man known as White Folks but who was referred to as Trick Baby. Born to an interracial couple in the ghetto, White Folks is bi-racial but appears to be Caucasian. After the marriage falls apart and his father leaves them, people assume that his mother was a prostitute and that his birth was the result of a "trick" (or sex with a john for those unaware of urban slang.) After White Folks' mother's descent into mental illness, he falls into a life of crime. He does make some attempts at reformation but those quickly fall to the wayside.

Slim does a great job of taking you from the cradle to White Folks' adulthood. I'm not sure if this is a real person's story or if it was a character that Slim created, but it really feels authentic.

One of the best urban lit books I've ever read.

Eboni says

Great story about conning.

Frank García says

Love Iceberg's work, but just could never get into this, despite the hype.

Jessica Holter says

Everybody it a trick sometimes, and everybody is a pimp.

AndreCrabtree says

Not at good as Iceberg's first book. I just didn't find White Folks as compelling a character.

Walter O'Bryant says

I read this book after becoming a fan of Robert Beck. Anyone who considers themselves 'street smart' should read this book. Maybe 'squares' should read it too because it reveals things about life that everyone should be aware of!

Titilayo says

mindblowing and crazy like memphis in the middle of the summer. just crunk for no reason!

James Newman says

Ice Berg Slim is a true master of the word. His dialogue is dazzling. His cast so real you can almost touch them. "Pimp" is the book to start with, but Trick Baby is just as good and stands alone as a brilliant example of American writing.

Trick Baby is a term used for the offspring of a black prostitute who has given birth to a baby who is half white. The baby of a white John (client of the prostitute) is considered a trick baby. Half black. Half white. After his mother is gang raped and put into a secure mental hospital, White Folks (trick baby) falls into the company of Blue, a grifter con-man who teaches Folks the art of Con. How to hustle for money in downtown Chicago. Folks has an advantage as he looks like a peckerwood (white man) Blue and Folks play the con and earn lots of money on the grifter circuit.

They play to close to danger and the con catches up with them.

Quote from Trick Baby. Folks and Blue talk about religion.

Blue: "My conviction is that God never existed. I believe the Bible was written by the slickest bunch of peckerwood grifters that ever crapped between two sandals" Brilliant!

Read this book.

Michelle says

This is one of my favorite books. I fell in love with the main character Johnny O' brien and even tried to look him up to see if he was still alive! The story is about a mixed man who is so light he could pass for white. They referred to him as an Errol Flynn look alike in the book. If you google him you'll know the main character was FIONE! It tells of Johnny's black mother who was color struck and did not like black men. She married Johnny's father, an irish man, while he was drunk who soon left them after getting pressure from his family. Johnny's mother goes on to raise him by herself. After a tragic event, Johnny is left alone and taken up by his mentor/father figure (I forget his name but I think it's Blue). Blue teaches him how to con people out of money and pretty soon they're making big money together. Johnny is so loveable and his story telling is so raw. I initially rented it from the library but I've since bought it because I know I'll be reading it again!

Mish Middelman says

Painful chronicle of the black male underclass of the USA in the 1940s. Written in the 60s by Robert Beck who lived a similar life of crime in the same era and later went straight and became a writer. The "Trick Baby" of the title is the very pale skinned son of a black woman who gets whacked by racism from both sides – and sometimes shares the insider talk on both sides of the race line.

What I liked about it was its no-holds-barred directness about how a life of crime can get chosen without evil intention, and how powerful and ubiquitous racism is in cutting off black people's choices.

What I didn't like was the uncritical way the story slings around male sexism that is really on a par with

racism in its brutal and unconscious judgement and treatment of those outside the relatively privileged group.

Jed says

This book was made into a film that I remember was pretty good.

Doris walkins says

This book is about a bi racial man who appears to be white, being raised by his black mother in a black community that both ridicules him for supposedly being the product of prostitution and reveres him for being able to cross the color line and live a life not held back by the mere fact that one is black skinned

Mark says

I loved the vivid language ("renting a dame's machinery") and the love of the con. It reminded me of PIMP THE STORY OF MY LIFE (3/5) in that the protagonist's profession seems like something he is called to do rather than a profession. I also liked finding out that some people could be too lazy to be con artists! The lengthy technical descriptions of the cons and scams were nerdy and made me feel like I was reading a cyberpunk novel.

Corto says

...I read this many years ago...It was given to me during a very cold winter, by a security guard at my college with whom I'd struck up a friendship...Very exciting, street-wise novel- and I don't remember much else about it- except one thing that I learned from the main character, that I've put to use many times since with great effect... Might be time to revisit more of this author's work.

Ashti says

Iceberg Slim tells the story of a blue eyed, light haired, white skinned Negro called "White Folks" He was the most incredible con man the ghetto ever spawned!
