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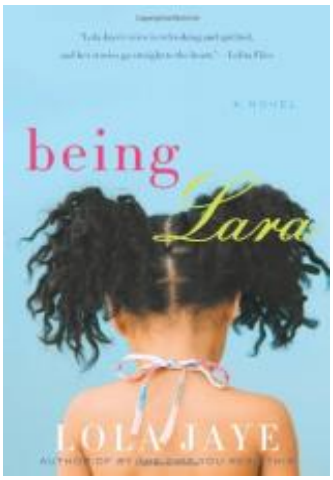
Being Lara: A Novel

by Lola Jaye



About the Book

What other explanation could there be? With her dark complexion and kinky hair, so unlike her fair-skinned parents, Lara knew she was different. At eight she finally learned the word "adopted." Twenty-two years later, a stranger arrives as she blows out the candles on her thirtieth birthday cake --- a woman in a blue-and-black head tie who also claims the title "Lara?s mother."

Lara, always in control, now finds her life slipping free of the stranglehold she's had on it. Unexpected, dangerously unfamiliar emotions are turning Lara's life upside down, pulling her between Nigeria and London, forcing her to confront the truth about her past. But if she's brave enough to embrace the lives of her two mothers, she may discover once and for all what it truly means to be Lara.

Discussion Guide

1. Why do you think Lara?s first instinct was to run when Yomi first appeared at the party?

2. Lara and Sandi seem quite different in personality and character. What were the core elements that brought them together?

3. Lara and Tyler have found one another, but what do you think they can do to ensure their relationship is an everlasting one?

4. On reflection, Yomi feels she has made mistakes. How do you think Yomi could have done things differently?

5. Barry has a hard time dealing with Yomi's appearance. What do you think were Barry?s reasons for shielding the devastating truth from Lara? How might he be experiencing this whole process differently than the women in the novel?

6. Pat is still estranged from her family. Do you think Pat should approach rebuilding her family ties? Why or why not?

7. Do you think people should be allowed to adopt children of a different race? Why or why not?

8. What do you think are the advantages of being raised in a cross-racial household? What are the disadvantages?

9. When it comes to international adoptions, how do you think adoptive parents should handle giving their child information about their culture?

Author Bio

Lola Jaye was born and raised in London, England, where she still makes her home; she has also lived briefly in Nigeria. **By the Time You Read This** --- Lola's first U.S. novel --- was published by HarperCollins in 2009. Her inspirational essay "Reaching for the Stars: How You Can Make Your Dreams Come True," in which she charted her journey from foster child to author, was released in 2009 as part of the U.K.'s wildly popular Quick Reads program.

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