



Sandrine's Letter to Tomorrow

Dedra Johnson

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"Reading Dedra Johnson's *Sandrine's Letter to Tomorrow*, I was fully in the presence of the mind, heart and soul of a richly rendered, fascinating fictional character. I knew I was also in the presence of the brilliant voice and sensibility of a major new American writer. This is an important novel by a true artist."--**Robert Olen Butler**

"Dedra Johnson has caught something wonderful in *Sandrine's Letter to Tomorrow*. She writes brilliantly about childhood, New Orleans, the intricacies of a vexed family life. *Sandrine* is a remarkable debut novel that will catch your heart."--**Frederick Barthelme**

Despite being a straight-A student and voracious reader, eight-year old Sandrine Miller is treated as little more than a servant by her mother, who forces Sandrine to clean house, do chores and take care of her younger half sister, Yolanda. On top of the despair of her life at home, Sandrine must confront growing up against the harshness of life in 1970s-era New Orleans, where men in cars follow her home from school and she is ostracized because she is a light-skinned black girl. The only refuge Sandrine has against her bleak world is spending summers with her beloved grandmother, Mamalita. After Mamalita's death, Sandrine realizes that she must escape from her mother, from New Orleans, from everything she has known, if she is to have any kind of future. In the tradition of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, *Sandrine's Letter to Tomorrow* is a brilliant debut from an important new African-American voice in literary fiction.

A native and current resident of New Orleans, Dedra Johnson received her MFA from the University of Florida, where she was a finalist for the Hurston/Wright Award for College Writers. *Sandrine's Letter to Tomorrow* was a runner-up for the William Faulkner-William Wisdom Award in 2006.



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