

# Child of the dark

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Carolina Maria de Jesus [hither after will be referred as “ Carolina”] was a black woman who lived in a favela [slum], in Sao Paulo, Brazil with her three illegitimate children. After having spent only two years in a primary school, she acquired educational skills by writing and reading and by continuing to study on her own. In 1958, a creative journalist, Audalio Dantas, came across her fragments of diary and viewed it as a scholarly work and helped her to get it published. After the publication, Carolina turned to be an international icon as the best novelist in Brazilian publishing record.

Carolina’s tale is an admonitory tale that mirrors not only her but on the social system of which she was a component. Carolina, being a deprived black woman with a mercurial, forceful personality, she was remarkably concise of the burden of the legacy of the gender prejudice, racial discrimination, and political apartheid of the marginalized. This book view mainly concentrates on the racial discrimination that was prevalence during her ordeal and how “ Child of the Dark” deals and portrays the tribulation of racial discrimination she handled and faced during her torment in favela.

Carolina was able to meet both ends by gathering and selling rubbish. With help of little money she was able to raise, she offered adequate food to her family members and was able to manage to raise her children to be first-rate people and safeguarding them from brutal standard of living of favela and from notorious criminals. Her idiosyncrasy was that she not only maintained a concise record of the injustice she met as a poor resident of favela but also injustice leashed on black during these years. Her work made the light of plights of thousands of favela residents against whom inequities and injustice were unleashed.

At the start of 1955, she started to write stories, poems and also notes on her diary. Her first entry in the diary was on 15 July, 1955 where she mentioned her inability to buy pair of shoes as a gift to be presented to her daughter. Her diary portrayed disgust over her wretched life alleviated with touches of gentleness. Aggrieved by the society's outlook towards poor, she commented that " Black is our life" and " everything is black around us." [44].

Carolina raised her voice against the evils of favelas and oppressions unleashed on residents of favelas. Carolina being a black woman spoke for Black where blacks even though officially declared that they were out of slavery but still regarded as second-rate citizens and are constantly dissuaded opportunities mainly on the basis of their race. Though within the favela, Carolina behaved as a loner but her fellow fevelados considered her as a stable person who could be trusted. Many favelados regarded and admired her ability of reading and writing. Some favelados sent their children to her when they were released from FEBEM, an institution for homeless and delinquent children. Whenever there was a quarrel or fight, it was Carolina who reported it to police. Thus, Carolina acted as an agent of decency and stability in the sordid world of favela. The uniqueness of Carolina's book is that she speaks outside a social, familial and economic tradition:

Though, she had maintained isolation from other fellow residents of favela but she did care for their sufferings and she writes " Here is the favela almost everyone has a different fight to live. But I am the only one who writes of what suffering is. I do this for the good of the others." [37-38].

When cultural figures of Brazil visited the governor Campos Elisio's palace, Carolina did not take initiative to greet him and at the fag end of the sessions when the governor himself went over to her, she said to him " Ah, Were you here ?."

She also had made political criticism that she observed during her time and she criticized then Brazilian president decision to present jewels to the Queen of Elizabeth of England for her birthday while ignoring the fact that his postman was dressed in rags.

For Carolina, though the issue of her race is determined as a will to last not as a member of a racial group, but as a black woman, who has to survive to feed her children. As a member of minority group or an ethnic group which is constantly threatened into quietness through joblessness, slavery and oppression, Carolina stands not on an idealized initiative of kinship, community and tradition. Though, she may be a black lady but her voice reflects that of a woman in representing her ordeal.

Carolina's book is the best -seller even today and it is having highest selling record in the Brazilian book industry as of today. Not only Carolina's literary contribution turned out to be sensational as it exposed truths or secrets about slum life in Brazil and also of the fact that it had been contributed by a self-taught, slum dwelling ferocious woman who refused to play by the rules and insisted the right to dream of promoting herself and her children on her own provisos. It is to be observed that though Carolina's priorities were the constant struggle and hunger, she also portrayed the racist indiscrimination that prevailed in Brazil during her life. .