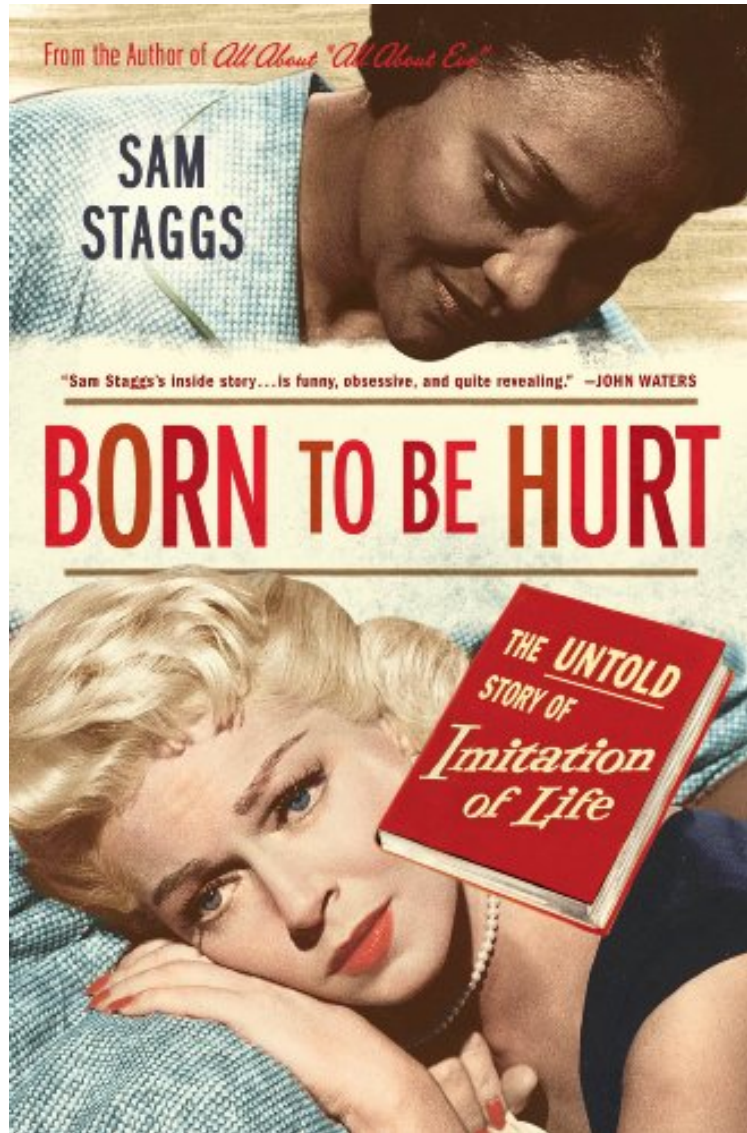


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Born to Be Hurt: The Untold Story of Imitation of Life

Sam Staggs

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Sam Staggs : Born to Be Hurt: The Untold Story of Imitation of Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Born to Be Hurt: The Untold Story of Imitation of Life:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great, nostalgia.By Michael TeoAlways liked that film with all the gloss, gaudiness, flamboyance, and camp! A perennial, and utter tear-jerker for those romantic hearts. An insightful mine of wonderful trivia. Marvellous read.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Charles TurnerElevates this old standard tear jerker into the realm of classic cinema where it belongs.0 of 0 people found the

following review helpful. Informative and fun. If you love the film By Thom Thomas Informative and fun. If you love the film... this gives you a behind the camera take on what was happening to all involved.

Few movies inspire the devotion of Douglas Sirk's 1959 drama *Imitation of Life* an irresistible story of two single mothers raising daughters together and also commentary on ambition, sex, and racial identity. *Born to be Hurt* is the first in-depth biography of *Imitation of Life*. Lana Turner, on the brink of personal and professional ruin after her mobster boyfriend Johnny Stompanato was stabbed by her daughter, starred as glamorous actress Lora Meredith. Juanita Moore played the greatest role up to that time for an African-American actress: Lora's loyal maid and dearest friend. And America's cutie pie, Sandra Dee, and powerful newcomer Susan Kohner played the daughters, one sunny and blonde and popular, the other tortured and black-passing-for-white. Stagg's traces the movie's arc from Fannie Hurst's novel through the writing and casting to the filming, the promotion, and the reception it received. In *Born to be Hurt*, he combines vast research, extensive interviews with surviving cast members, and superb storytelling to create a rich, revelatory work about one of the twentieth century's most iconic movies.

From Publishers Weekly Douglas Sirk's film *Imitation of Life* sparks another beguiling celebration of Old Hollywood for Stagg's, author of *All About All About Eve*. Stagg's sections the 1959 melodramas subplots into a campy blonde side (Lana Turner and Sandra Dee as a Broadway star and her daughter, battling over a man), and a tragic dark side (Juanita Miller and Susan Kohner as a black maid and the light-skinned daughter who repudiates her). Refracting themes of racial anxiety, confused identity and the mutual wounds parents and children inflict through Sirk's subtly ironic direction, the movie, Stagg's writes, is a florid valentine with a death's-head where Cupid ought to be. Stagg's luxuriously digressive account ranges far beyond the featured attraction. Drawing on chatty interviews with those who worked on or in the film, he profiles studio executives, stars and makeup men alike, assesses their oeuvre and gossips about their scandals, and takes extraneous potshots at everything from modern-day starlets (nasal-voiced and rather dim overall) to the Catholic Church (a monolithic theocracy verging on fascism). Stagg's is an often incisive critic, but one who leaves himself raptly open to the emotional impact of movies; he shows readers how compelling Hollywood's imitation of life can be. (Feb.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. If you believe there is such a thing as politics in movie tastes, *Born to Be Hurt* is the book for you. Sam Stagg's inside story of the entire *Imitation of Life* phenomenon is funny, obsessive and quite revealing and, like any good fanatic, he takes sides. John Waters Sam Stagg's is one of our liveliest and most likable pop-culture historians. His chronicle of *Imitation of Life*, one of the iconic movies of the late 1950s, is beautifully researched and told in his own singular, engaging voice. Thanks to this book, I finally understand the peculiar hold that this movie has had on me for all these years. -- Brian Kellow, author of *Ethel Merman: A Life* and *The Bennetts: An Acting Family* [A]nother beguiling celebration of Old Hollywood for Stagg's Stagg's luxuriously digressive account ranges far beyond the featured attraction he shows readers how compelling Hollywood's imitation of life can be. Publishers Weekly