



## Born In Sin

By Evelyn Coleman

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"Come on Betty...Can't nobody stop us from winning, 'cause we fish," Keisha whispers fiercely to her friend. "I want you to swim. Come on...You and me, the first black girls going to the Olympics. Remember?"

For Betty, winning now means swimming upward from the depths of near-death. In the cold hum of the hospital, only Keisha can remember their dreams from earlier that summer, when she was to attend a premed vacation school at nearby Avery University. She had the grades for it. And her mama was determined to make it happen, no matter what. Keisha dreamed of being a doctor. Betty dreamed desperately of having a friend.

They were both at risk -- at least that's the label Keisha gets slapped with when, instead of to Avery, she is sent to a high-minded, white-hearted urban rescue program for teens in poverty, or, as she figures it, born in sin. She is outraged to be thrown together with Clarissa, Phyllis, and Kimberly, but turns anger to something just as powerful -- the will to prove her doubters wrong. For this she has friends beyond the family she knows -- one ally especially. Plus Malik, Betty's watchful brother, who wants beauty to be there for everyone. Like the sky.

**Born in Sin**, which Keisha tells with straight-forward, often funny frankness, is part gritty drama, part victory lap, and all heart.

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