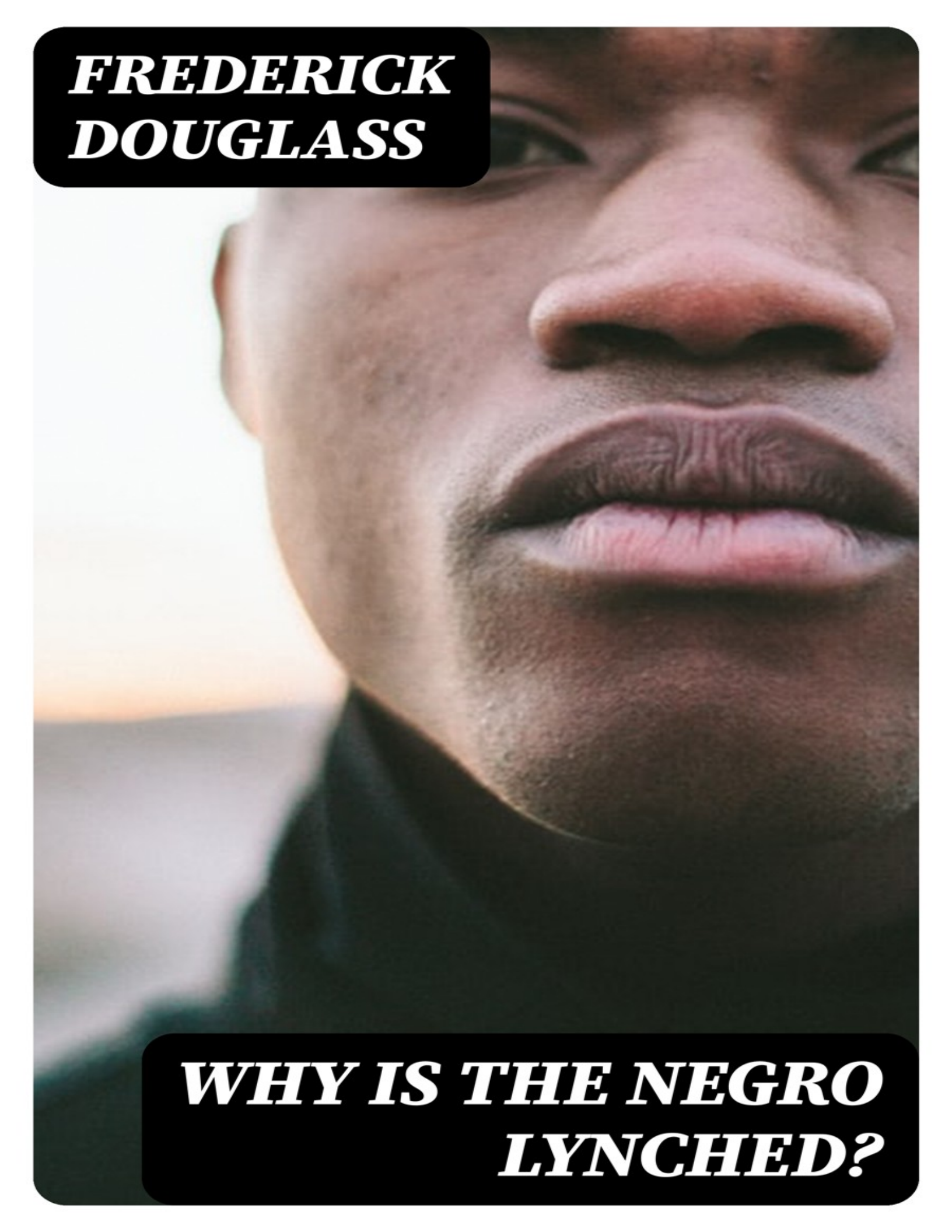


A close-up, low-angle portrait of Frederick Douglass, focusing on his nose, mouth, and chin. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly upwards. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

***FREDERICK  
DOUGLASS***

***WHY IS THE NEGRO  
LYNCHED?***

**Frederick Douglass**

# **Why is the Negro Lynched?**

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Contact: [DigiCat@okpublishing.info](mailto:DigiCat@okpublishing.info)



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## **THE AFRO-AMERICAN PEOPLE INDICTED ON A NEW CHARGE. INTRODUCTORY—THE WRITER'S CLAIM TO BE HEARD.[A]**

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I PROPOSE to give you a coloured man's view of the so-called "Negro Problem." We have had the Southern white man's view of this subject at large in the press, in the pulpit and on the platform. He has spoken in the pride of his power and to willing ears. Coloured by his peculiar environments, his version has been presented with abundant repetition, with startling emphasis, and with every advantage to his side of the question. We have also had the Northern white man's view of the subject, tempered by his distance from the scene and by his different, if not his higher, civilization.

This quality and quantity of evidence, may be considered by some men as all sufficient upon which to found an intelligent judgment of the whole matter in controversy, and, therefore, it may be thought my testimony is not needed. But experience has taught us that it is sometimes wise and necessary to have more than two witnesses to bring out the whole truth. Especially is this the case where one of such witnesses has a powerful motive for suppressing or distorting the facts, as in this case. I therefore insist upon my right to take the witness stand and give my version of

this Southern question, and though it shall widely differ from that of both the North and South, I shall submit the same to the candid judgment of all who hear me in full confidence that it will be received as true, by honest men and women of both sections of this Republic.

There is one thing, however, in which I think we must all agree at the start. It is that this so-called but mis-called Negro problem is one of the most important and urgent subjects that can now engage public attention. Its solution is, and ought to be, the serious business of the best American wisdom and statesmanship. For it involves the honour or dishonour, the glory or shame, the happiness or misery, of the whole American people. It not only touches the good name and fame of the Republic, but its highest moral welfare and its permanent safety. The evil with which it confronts us is coupled with a peril at once great and increasing, and one which should be removed, if it can be, without delay.

## **EPIDEMIC OF MOB-LAW.**

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The presence of eight millions of people in any section of this country, constituting an aggrieved class, smarting under terrible wrongs, denied the exercise of the commonest rights of humanity, and regarded by the ruling class of that section as outside of the government, outside of the law, outside of society, having nothing in common with the people with whom they live, the sport of mob violence and murder, is not only a disgrace and a scandal to that particular section, but a menace to the peace and