

“Unapologetic fiction spotlighting black teen & new adult experiences while de-centering anti-black racism”

Janee Thompson

Author. Educator. Blogger.

About the Author

-- Overview --

Born and raised in Wisconsin, author, educator, and blogger Janee Thompson pens novels that capture the experiences of Black teens and Black new adults in ways that are raw, relatable, accessible, and unapologetic. These novels transcend notions that leisure reading for Black readers must be about navigating racial stereotypes, overcoming pain caused by anti-black violence, police brutality, or systemic racism. The experiences of Black teens and new adults are multifaceted and dynamic. We deserve to read more of these diverse experiences absent of white supremacy, and Janee is intentional about making these stories known. Her debut novel is *Looking Beyond the Ordinary*.



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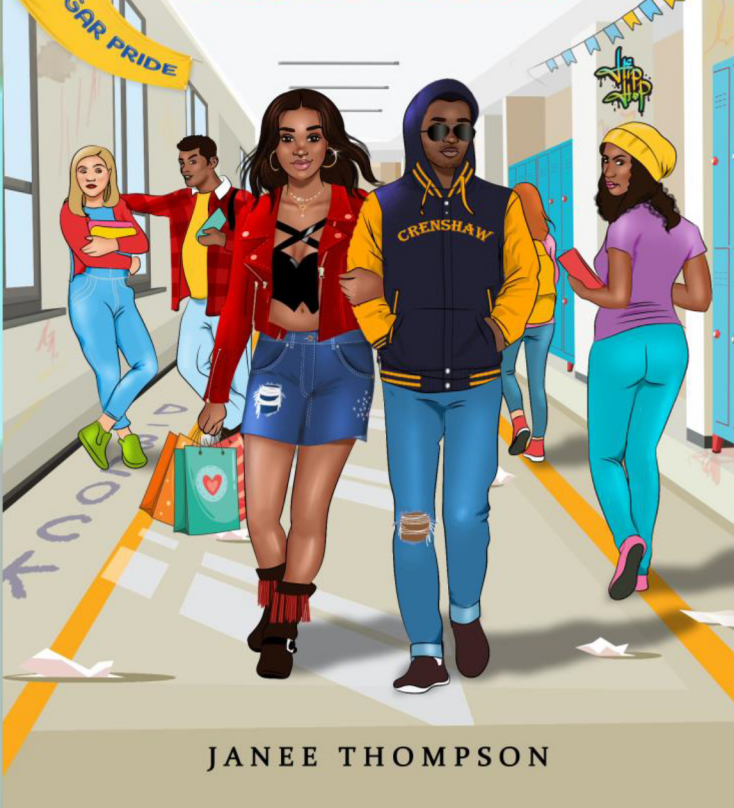
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Looking Beyond the ORDINARY



Looking Beyond the Ordinary

By: Janee' Thompson

Fame, clout, money, and popularity; Jade Williams, a freelance hip hop dancer, has everything any high school senior could want, including the finest, flyest basketball player in school, Mike Harrison. Raised by her rich mother to believe that as long as she has status, money, and the perfect man, her future will always be bright, Jade will do whatever it takes to uphold her mother's expectations. That is, until she becomes curious about a not so ordinary guy, who happens to be the school's most bullied student. The more she feeds her curiosity and gets to know him while planning for life after high school, the more she faces an important decision: choosing a life of pettiness, pride, and popularity, or walking a path towards empathy, compassion, and love.

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Age & Genre: Young Adult (16+)

Available Formats & Price: Print (14.99 USD) e-Book (4.99USD)

DE-SENSATIONALIZING ANTI-BLACK RACISM IN YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

About the Author – Janee' Thompson



JANEE' THOMPSON, an author and educator born and raised in Wisconsin, pens novels that capture the experiences of Black teens and Black new adults in ways that are raw, relatable, accessible, and unapologetic. These novels transcend notions that leisure reading for Black readers must be about navigating racial stereotypes, overcoming pain caused by anti-black violence, police brutality, or systemic racism. The experiences of Black teens and new adults are multifaceted and dynamic. We deserve to read more of these diverse experiences absent of white supremacy, and Janee' is intentional about making these stories known.

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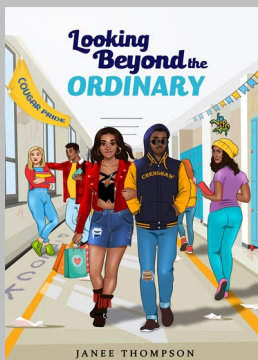
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BOOKS BY JANEЕ

Young Adult



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Looking Beyond the Ordinary

Everything that Glitters Ain't Gold

An unapologetically Black YA Read

Fame, clout, money, and popularity; Jade Williams, a freelance hip hop dancer, has everything any high school senior could want, including the finest, flyest basketball player in school, Mike Harrison. Raised by her rich mother to believe that as long as she has status, money, and the perfect man, her future will always be bright, Jade will do whatever it takes to uphold her mother's expectations. That is, until she becomes curious about a not so ordinary guy, who happens to be the school's most bullied student. The more she feeds her curiosity and gets to know him while planning for life after high school, the more she realizes she faces an important decision: choosing a life of pettiness, pride, and popularity, or walking a path towards empathy, compassion, and love.

About the Author

Janee Thompson has been writing books and fanfiction since she was twelve years old and would have never thought she'd actually become an author! Janee grew up in Southeastern Wisconsin. She is a middle school educator and graduated with a BS in Elementary Education with minors in English and Creative Writing. She also holds a Masters' in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis. Janee is a lover of all things Black! She is either currently reading or shopping for clothes online!

Looking Beyond the Ordinary Press Release



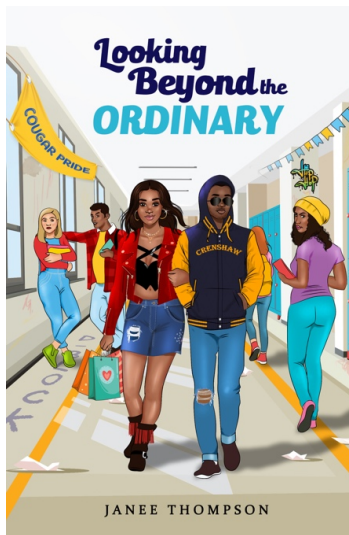
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

De-sensationalizing Racism in Diverse YA Books

Experiences of Love & Growth Among Ordinary Black Teens

Madison, WI, April 1, 2020 — Police brutality. Gun Violence. Mass incarceration. Falsely accused for a crime not committed. Trying to feel accepted for existing while Black. Sound familiar? These are common themes when reading and discussing books that have strong Black characters in the contemporary Young Adult genre today. These topics dominate the conversation amongst Black teens in classrooms, movie theatres, and at dinner tables. However, it's time that we expand our ideas of Blackness in literature – we *can* and *do* exist outside of the command of white supremacy. Whiteness does not consume our daily lives. There is room for stories of simply being a flawed young adult going through the rites of passage of falling in love, breaking from their parents' authority, realizing their wrongdoings, maintaining friendships, and navigating the road to adulthood... all while being unapologetically Black.



Looking Beyond the Ordinary does just that. It tells the very complex stories of two Black high school seniors, Jade Williams and Jarell Hendricks, who come from very different walks of life with even starker differences in their outlook on how to live. Yet, their worlds merge together by external forces, pushing them to re-evaluate and prioritize what is important in their lives – and ultimately, to notice what had largely gone missing in their familial and peer relationships. These two characters never have to worry about their Blackness – they just are, and it is never questioned. They are immersed in a world of those who look like them, and yes, these pockets of pure Blackness does exist in many places. This intentional absence of systemic whiteness and the pressure of the white gaze laced between the prose allows for the nuances in Jade and Jarell’s story to come full throttle, gripping the emotions and hearts of the reader. A diverse perspective in Black literature we all deserve to read.

To purchase a copy of Looking Beyond the Ordinary, head to [Amazon](#) or [Barnes and Noble](#).

Janee’ Thompson is an educator, author, and blogger, with her debut novel Looking Beyond the Ordinary set to publish April 1, 2020. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education with minors in English and Creative Writing. She also has a Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis. She is currently shopping for clothes online, baking cookies, or playing videogames on the Xbox if she isn’t reading or writing.

Looking Beyond the ORDINARY



JANEE THOMPSON

Prologue

Growing up, my momma taught me to never settle for less. In her world, complacency was weakness. Complacency was death.

It was the only household rule I had. Bring home Fs? Forget it. Dress like a bum? Disowned. Fragile? She ain't raise a weak ass bitch. And I, for sure, couldn't bring home a low life. I might as well write my own obituary. She lived this way herself and would be damned if she was dethroned by anyone.

Would be damned if I was dethroned, either. By anyone.

Image was everything. If it meant shitting on everyone to maintain my image, then so be it. Many people at school called me snob, siddity, uptight, and whatever other name they could call me except what I truly was – the flyest bitch in the school. But I didn't care. Sure, I was all those things they called me.

And? I earned my reputation. Periodt!

I was a freelance hip-hop dancer, making my way into music videos, shows, concerts, movies, and other gigs that would bring in some hefty pocket change for a seventeen-year-old like me. I wasn't living off mommy like most people at school who begged their parents for money because they couldn't get what they wanted off pitiful ass McDonald's money. Do you know my momma would look upside my head like I was crazy if I even stepped a foot in McDonald's? You would never catch me in nobody's corporation uniform. As my momma would say, "You own; you don't get owned."

--BACK--

When it came to boys, I got who I wanted, when I wanted.

Listen. I wasn't even model material. I had a plain face and few curves. Not that wide-hipped, big-butt, no-waist, but big-boobs kinda chick you see on Instagram. I was about five-foot-seven and never wore make up. Didn't need to.

My hair was shoulder length, parted down the middle, and always worn straight. Never in a style. But what made me so attractive, especially to older guys, was that I was better than a lot of other seventeen-year-old girls. I was always competing with myself because there wasn't competition. Of course, there were some guys who couldn't handle someone like me. I didn't care. I didn't want them anyway.

Speaking of guys, no one would ever catch me dating someone who wasn't on my level. Like my momma said, "Without looks, style, intelligence, and money, he is worthless." There was nothing nor anyone that could prove me different or wrong. I got the best guy at school because I was the best choice.

Now see, I might have high standards and crazy ways of thinking, but one thing is for sure: I have a heart. A big one. That's something my momma didn't have.

It was the one and only thing I had but was unable to show. I didn't know how to show it. I had a lot of heart to give. It was just a matter of finding someone out of the ordinary, someone special who would accept me for me, and most definitely my momma.

Meet Janee Thompson

Author Janee' Thompson writes realistic Young Adult and New Adult novels that capture the unique experiences of young Black men and women taking it day by day through their own personal struggles. While many popular novels for this target audience focus on racial tension and navigating racial oppression through a youthful perspective, Janee' intentionally creates masterpieces that de-sensationalizes racial trauma and focuses solely on characters' individuality amid their Blackness. This is what makes Janee' a unique writer within these genres — experiences of Black oppression rears its ugly head every day. We shouldn't be subjected to read about it. We are more than our oppression.



Janee's reason and passion for writing lies in building empathy and seeing her imaginative characters go through transformation and personal growth. Although her writing is strictly for entertainment for ages 15+, she does tackle serious issues such as friendship, bullying, sex and sexuality, mental health, homophobia, falling in love, and family dynamics within the Black culture in hopes that the reader will grow with the characters, too.

Janee' grew up in Southeastern Wisconsin and she is a K-8 educator. She has a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with minors in English and Creative Writing. She also has a Master's degree in K-12 Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis. She has won several career and community awards such as the Early Educator Award, City-County Humanitarian Award, and is a PEOPLE Program Scholar.

In her personal life, she has a handsome husband and she loves shopping, singing, playing basketball, and of course, writing. She is a staunch advocate for children's success, racial equity, and any and everything Black.

Frequently Asked Questions

What inspires you to write & what inspires your story ideas?

My inspiration comes from writing stories about topics that don't get much attention within the Black literary world. I am also inspired to write about situations and people I don't necessarily understand in reality in order to build my own capacity for empathy and understanding of others.

I have all kinds of songs/artists on my writing playlist! It really depends on the kind of chapter/scene I'm creating. If I am writing an emotional scene, you can definitely expect to hear some moody R&B from Floetry all the way down to Sonder. If I'm writing something a little romantic/racy, some Trey Songz or Janet Jackson will do! If someone is arguing or fighting? Oh. We Knuckin' & Buckin' with Crime Mob or Boosie!

What is on your writer's song playlist?

Why do you enjoy writing YA and NA novels?

There's just something unique about the coming of age experience and the newness of certain situations in the lives of teens that can't be captured in adulthood, which makes for some dramatic conflicts and fun writing for YA! The same with the New Adult genre. The newness of adulthood makes for some exciting decision making within the characters that aren't always the brightest decisions. Which, in turn, creates some spicy plots and drama, drama, drama!

Absolutely. The best advice I could give is to BE YOU! Tell your story how YOU want to tell it, no matter what people might think or what people might say. If they don't like it, that means your story isn't for them. There are so many other people out there who want to read your story with the voice you offer. Which means I am also advocating for self-publishing and being in complete control over your own voice and your own creativity! Be in command and control!

Do you have any advice for young writers?

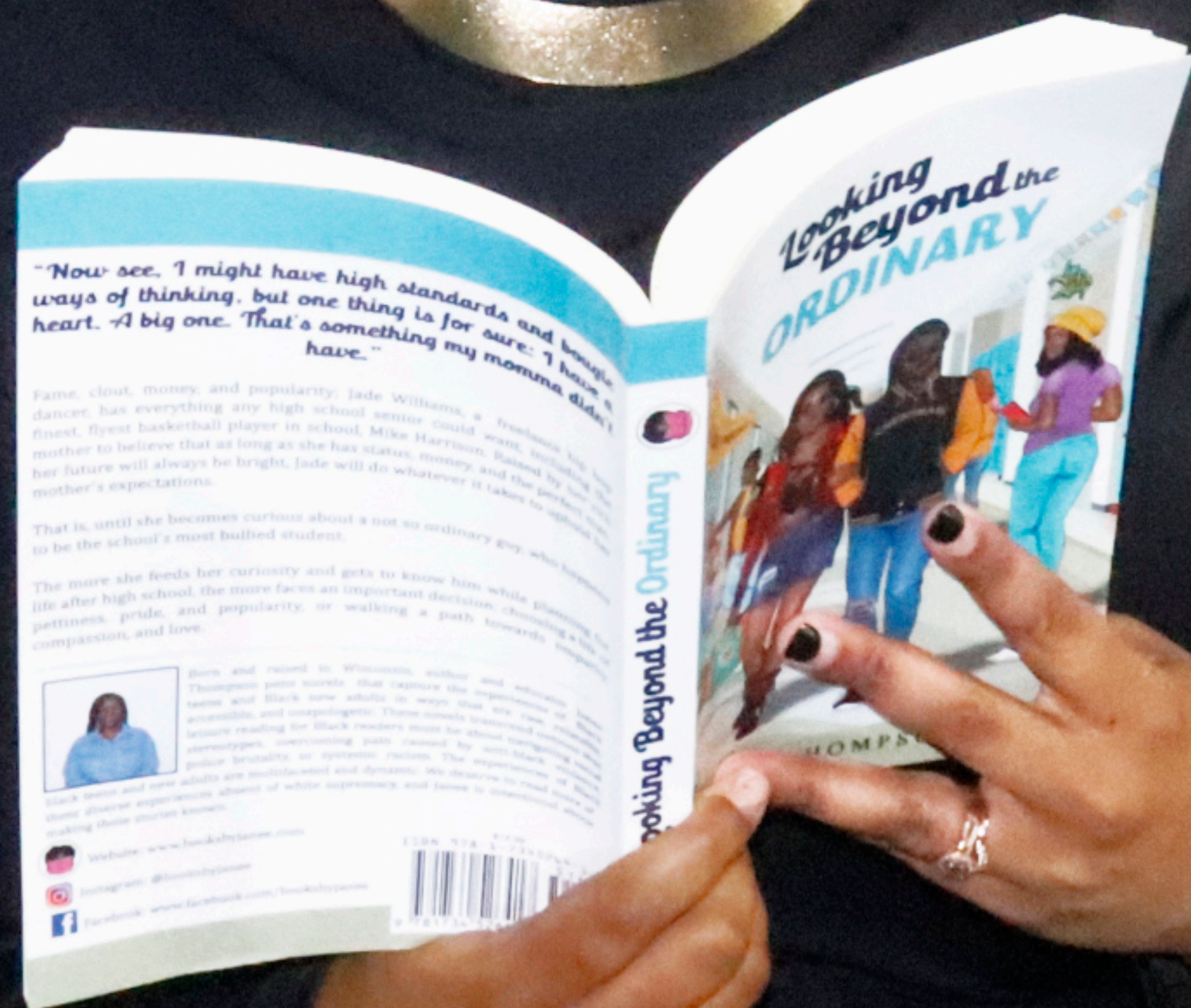
Janee Thompson





Looking
Beyond the
ORDINARY

JANE THOMPSON



"Now see, I might have high standards and ways of thinking, but one thing is for sure: I know my heart. A big one. That's something my momma didn't have."

Fame, clout, money, and popularity: Jada Williams, a freshman dancer, has everything any high school senior could want. She's smart, she's beautiful, and she's got the stats to back it up. Her mother believes that as long as she has status, money, and the love of her friends, her future will always be bright. Jada will do whatever it takes to live up to her mother's expectations.

That is, until she becomes curious about a son no ordinary girl would ever want to be the school's most bullied student.

The more she feeds her curiosity and gets to know him, the more she realizes that life after high school, the more faces an important decision: career, passion, pride, and popularity or walking a path toward self-discovery, compassion, and love.



There and there in Williams' world and Williams' world, there are people who are different, and there are people who are not. There are people who are different, and there are people who are not. There are people who are different, and there are people who are not. There are people who are different, and there are people who are not.

Learn more and see why this book is a must-read for anyone who wants to see the world through a different lens. Visit www.lookingbeyond.com for more information.

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WILLIAMS





