

On the Come Up

By Author, Angie Thomas

Reviewed by: Tanya, 14

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Brianna Jordan lives in Garden Heights, but goes to school in Midtown. Why? Her mom, a recovering drug addict, wants her to get the best education possible, to succeed. But what does Brianna want to do? Rap, rap, and rap some more. Living in Garden Heights, with a dead father, and a mother and brother with low-paying jobs, life is definitely tough for Bri and her family. After facing noticeable discrimination at school, undergoing a traumatic incident, and facing the hardships of being an African American girl, Bri has to decide what she is really passionate about, and if rapping for money and popularity is what is ultimately going to be her family's savior. She *also* has to deal with rocky friendships and relationships, family grudges, and the effects of her father's legacy, as she discovers who she is, and who she wants to be.

This book was truly amazing! This book addressed numerous issues surrounding African Americans and the troubles many of them face, including poverty, discrimination, abuse, etc. I loved how there were both serious, emotional moments, as well as funny and relatable scenes. This book was very hard to close, and the ending came as a surprise! I loved Bri's personality, being kind, thoughtful and funny, as well as sarcastic, confident and powerful. The book also included all of her rap songs, which I found really fun to read and imagine her singing them in my head.

I would recommend this book to high schoolers due to the fact that it deals with some touchy topics, and that it includes a lot of explicit language. I would also recommend this book to people who love rap or hip hop, due to the numerous references to both styles of music. This is such a fun, inspirational, motivational, and captivating book! One thing I love about this book is how it's real, it doesn't portray Brianna as a perfect African American girl who confidently stands up and protests without any doubts. It portrays her as a girl still figuring her life out, making it an even more relatable and powerful book.

Recommended Titles:

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

Drums, Girls + Dangerous Pie by Jordan Sonnenblick

Curveball, The Year I Lost My Grip by Jordan Sonnenblick