

Dear Justyce

Nic Stone

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Dear Justyce is the amazing sequel to *Dear Martin*. Quan, now in a youth detention center, writes letters addressed to Justyce about his experiences with the law and the American juvenile justice system. The two boys had grown up together in Wynwood Heights. Through their letters, Quan details his struggle to earn his diploma and questions the differences between their lives. While Justyce is a prelaw student at Yale, LaQuan is serving time for the alleged murder of a police officer.

The two boys form a close bond together as Quan reflects on how to end the cycle of oppression he faces and his previous actions as an adolescent. Of course, he didn't make the best of choices growing up, but he was combating life with his father in prison, his mother's abusive boyfriend, and poverty. Life's odds were always stacked against him. Quan was with friends when an interaction with the police went terribly wrong. A police officer was dead and Quan's memory was cloudy, which made him guilty in the eyes of the law. Was he capable of killing someone? Should he be in prison?

Unlike *Dear Martin*, this book is about a young POC teen who has never had opportunities to succeed. It is a moving, heart-breaking story shedding light on the systematic racism in our country, especially in the law and justice system. It portrays traumatic family relationships, the dangerous stereotypes that result in people of color being accosted, and how our prejudice can falsely accuse African Americans of crimes they did not commit. This novel includes some laughs, but is mostly a raw narrative of alienation, loneliness, confusion, and plight.

This book is an excellent standalone, so don't be offput to read *Dear Justyce* because it is a sequel. Without having ever heard of *Dear Martin*, you will be able to easily understand the novel. The author uses different fonts and poetry to display all sorts of emotion throughout. Quan's honesty and vulnerability draws readers in and makes readers empathize for him. This book is great for young teens and adults, as it makes you examine your own prejudices and makes you want to become an activist for the rights of people of color. It does include mature topics, so I recommend this book for ages fourteen and up.

Recommended Titles:

The Hate You Give by Angie Thomas

Dear Martin by Nic Stone

Concrete Rose by Angie Thomas

All American Boys by Brendan Kiely

On the Come Up by Angie Thomas