

NEW YORK TIMES YA BESTSELLER

THE HATE U GIVE

ANGIE THOMAS

**"Sometimes you
can do
everything
right and
things will still
go wrong. The
key is to never
stop doing
right."**

ADAPTED INTO
THE 2018 FILM

*"A book that's
taken the world by
storm"*

**"When fiction
bears witness
to reality"**

ON THE SAME PAGE

AUGUST 2022

DISCLAIMER!!

Hello and welcome aboard to the reflections of the August voyages! The fact that you have clicked on this link proves that you are intrigued and we will squander no time. Just for a quick introduction- 'We' are On The Same Page, a literature association that began in August and are presenting to you the findings of our monthly readathons (a reading marathon) . Consisting of members who share a dying passion for ink on paper. If you truly believe that literature isn't a field which may be of interest to you, you can keep scrolling, and it was nice knowing you!

But if, even the most minute muscle in your body is gravitating you to know more, join us on this adventure. Together we can cherish and enrich our love for reading and build a bond with books that can never be severed.

For most introverts out there who are reading this, I think we can agree that when it comes to the August monsoon weather, there is nothing in the world that can stop us from curling up with a blanket and binge-reading an enticing thriller while listening to the pitter-patter of the rain.

The gloomy aesthetic of the month was all the volunteers needed to pick a sensational thriller that has been a New York Times bestseller and been converted into a motion picture, streaming on all OTT platforms. Relevant for today's generation and dealing with the Black Lives Matter movement. We present-
The Hate U Give.

SPOILER FREE!!

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighbourhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death made a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a gangster. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr.

But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

Barring the audience Thomas aimed this book to be read by, I do believe one must read it at least once in their life. Whenever reading articles and stories about the Black Lives Matter, especially during the movement earlier in the pandemic, there were parts of me which didn't completely comprehend the situation completely. It always felt like the media were only covering an individual's struggle and omitting the rest. They never mentioned the injustices that existed at the teenage stages as well. This book provides a lens into that style and livelihood. It deals with conflicts relevant for this day and is enlightening for all those sheltered and living in an illusion.

SPOILER REVIEW

The Hate U Give explores the relationship between race and identity. It is a coming of age novel by Angie Thomas and revolves around Starr, a black 16 year old girl living in a small black neighbourhood. Ever since attending Williamson Prep, a primarily white school, Starr feels out of place in the Garden Heights social scene. During the course of the night, she reconnects with her childhood friend, Khalil and there are sudden gunshots from a gang fight interrupt the party, and Khalil offers to take Starr home. Soon after, a white police officer with the badge number “115” pulls them over. The officer demands the teenager to step outside the vehicle and immediately begins a vigorous and aggressive search, on no consolidated grounds. Starr, frozen in shock and fear, reaches out to grab her phone from the dashboard and Khalil helps her. In the midst of the process a hairbrush slips out of Khalil’s hands and the cop, suspicious, takes his gun and shoots Khalil.

For days after Starr continues to have nightmares and is unsettled in school, as memories of Khalil’s death interrupt her thoughts and she realises her friends don’t understand. At the urging of her uncle Carlos, a police officer, Starr goes into the police station after school with her mother, Lisa, to testify about Khalil’s shooting. Starr realises that the officers are asking more questions about whether Khalil was a troublemaker than about the night of the shooting. She then realises the true reason for her being given this opportunity and experiences a wave of anxiety as she battles wanting to get justice, or be silent as she had done before.

SPOILER REVIEW... CONTINUED

It was a perfect example of how biased and censored the media can be. Throughout the story, the author's mother repeats the words, "Don't let them put words in your mouth, you have a brain. Speak for yourself". Not considering the fact that Starr is merely a teenager and the reason for her presence is justice not to be reminded of a traumatising experience. The officials at the station are grilling her to find any offence on Khalil and dismiss the case. Throughout the interrogation process the people grill the poor girl to her breaking point, merciless and all favouring the officer in the wrong. Who claims he saw something wrong and so took the shot, even after searching. Without even a moment of hesitation, the media talks about how a 'thug' was put to rest for suspicious activity, putting the officer in the clear. They don't consider the other lens.

The news that the police won't prosecute One-Fifteen leads to days of protests in Garden Heights. One-Fifteen has no reason to think Khalil's hairbrush is actually a gun other than One-Fifteen's presumption that Khalil is violent because he is black. However, the news media and many white characters endorse One-Fifteen's version of events because by protecting him, they protect law enforcement from accusations of racism.

She switches her speech, mannerisms, and behaviours to fit whichever circumstance she finds herself in. After Khalil's shooting, Starr is reluctant to speak about his death for fear that her friends, Hailey and Maya, and Chris will not understand everything that happens in her Garden Heights world. Starr feels simultaneously "too black" to talk about Khalil's life and death

SPOILER REVIEW... CONTINUED

with her school peers, but “too white” at home to stand up for Khalil, especially after Kenya accuses Starr of acting like a white person who thinks herself better than her neighbours. She experiences an identity crisis while coping with the tragedy. She continually blames herself for Khalil’s death and why she never acted on it. My heart empathises for Starr, it must be miserable living life on a boundary (metaphorical). A ‘non-existent’ divide yet you’re too scared to show either side your true self, for the feeling of not being accepted or alienated. The idea that one has to change themselves is one of the core reasons why teenagers experience anxiety and mental health struggles. All an individual really wants in life is to feel like they belong and by creating a false illusion, it doesn’t solve the problem, it just adds fuel to an already unhealthy relationship with yourself.

During this time, Maverick, Starr’s father, explains to her his interpretation of Tupac’s phrase “Thug Life.” It describes a system designed against black communities of a cycle of injustice on the basis of your race. He talks about how it chooses you can the individuals never have a choice but to come to terms with their lifestyle. Maverick’s philosophy explains why, throughout most of the novel, Maverick refuses to move his family from Garden Heights to a safer neighbourhood—he believes they should change their community from the inside, not try and form an illusion that would fray with time. The story is extremely moving and brought me to tears at innumerable points, notably the moment where the Black citizens of that neighbourhood were exposed to the do’s and don’ts during gun violence, from the mere age of 6. The message and theme behind the story of these children provokes thought. It seems so unfair that only a certain section of society should have to experience the ‘roughs’ and be subject to such injustice.

SPOILER REVIEW... CONTINUED

It was in moments like these where I fully understood the grave extent of the situation, to which previously I had little knowledge of. The idea of such violence occurring at young ages, really opens your mind and makes you reconsider the luxuries of your childhood. The fact that these situations are normalised proves how ignorant society can be and the need to spread awareness and act grows.

A few days later, Maverick gets into an argument with the neighbourhood barber, Mr. Lewis. Although the argument is peaceful, two police officers intervene, and when they see Maverick is Starr's father, they push him to the ground and search him. Between this scary event and pressure from Kenya, Starr's friend, she decides that she will no longer be silent. She chooses to testify and does a pro bono where she speaks out on her experience. She ultimately decides that Khalil deserves and needs to be subject to the truth. She testifies before the grand jury.

Almost two months later, the jury announces their decision not to indict One-Fifteen. Starr and some of her friends get caught up in the resulting riots. As she tries to avoid the chaos. The representation of discrimination extending to the privileged section of society is a bold move by Thomas. The author spoke in an interview, "when writing this book I was often worried that it would not be accepted by many, but to my surprise it worked out to anything but that". Discrimination is prevalent and no matter the education, privilege, luxury, colour, caste, there is still a divide.

SPOILER REVIEW... CONTINUED

Starr is confident that the family will rebuild. She swears to continue fighting for justice on behalf of Khalil and all other black people killed at the hands of police.

The plot points are the perfect representation of what happened and has been happening in the smaller parts of the world all this while. It may not have a happy ending, or something even minutely satisfactory but the fact that there was an individual who chose to speak up for the right cause, despite all the other challenges, is what this world needs. This is novel is one of the many books she has written, all fighting for justice against discrimination. It's the opportunity to freely have the ability to express the personal struggles and expose the injustices at all walks of society. I can guarantee that if not at all, at least most people will be able to relate to the journey of the girl. It's a must read and changes the perspective on life. Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, this is a powerful and gripping YA novel about one girl's struggle for justice.

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*With words engraved with love,
On the Same Page*

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