

BLACK GIRLS MUST BE MAGIC Reading Group Guide

In this highly anticipated second installment in the *Black Girls Must Die Exhausted* series, Tabitha Walker copes with more of life's challenges and a happy surprise—a baby—with a little help and lots of love from friends old and new.

For Tabitha Walker, her grandmother's old adage, "Black girls must die exhausted" is becoming all too true. Discovering she's pregnant—after she was told she may not be able to have biological children—Tabitha throws herself headfirst into the world of "single mothers by choice." Between her job, doctor's appointments, and preparing for the baby, she's worn out. And that's before her boss at the local news station starts getting complaints from viewers about Tabitha's natural hair.

When an unexpected turn of events draws Marc—her on and off-again ex-boyfriend—back into her world with surprising demands, and the situation at work begins to threaten her livelihood and her identity, Tabitha must make some tough decisions about her and her baby's future. It takes a village to raise a child, and Tabitha turns to the women who have always been there for her.

Bolstered by the fierce support of Ms. Gretchen, her grandmother's best friend, the counsel of her closest friends Laila and Alexis, and the calming presence of her doula Andouele, Tabitha must find a way to navigate motherhood on her own terms. Will she harness the bravery, strength, and self-love she'll need to keep "the village" together, find her voice at work, and settle things with Marc before the baby arrives?



BLACK GIRLS MUST DIE

EXHAUSTED Discussion Questions

1. In the beginning of *Black Girls Must Be Magic*, Tabby is grappling with her decision to become a single mother. Did you agree with her decision? Why or why not?

2. Just as she'd started to get comfortable with her self-expression, Tabby has to deal with comments from viewers about her choice of hairstyle. Can you relate? How have you navigated the perceptions of others in your workplace or school environments? Has the desire to advance influenced your decisions?

3. Andouele gives Tabby her personal view on motherhood and single motherhood in particular. Do you feel like society imposes a perspective on single motherhood?

4. What did you think about Marc's initial reaction to the news from Tabby's doctor visit? Should Tabby trust the "new" Marc?

5. We see a very different Laila in this book, from her noticeable absence as she builds her startup company to her assertion of boundaries for self-care. In the context of their friendship, Tabby struggles with the disappointments that come with Laila finding herself. Can you relate to this? What advice would you give Tabby? What would you say to Laila if you were in Tabby's position?

6. Just as it seems like she's going to get the "fairy tale," Tabby starts to evaluate what it is that she really wants – life beyond the story of what she feels she's supposed to want. What do you think Tabby should do?

7. Alexis has her reasons for considering a return to her marriage. Do you think she should go back to Rob? Do you think Alexis has changed? Do you think Rob has changed? What would you do?

8. Ms. Gretchen gives Tabby encouragement and an idea to find courage on the outside when she can't quite find it on the inside. Do you have a special item or routine that you use when you need a little extra courage? What is it?

9. Tabby's mom has a particular view of how Tabby should present herself and what's "supposed" to be, likely similar to most parents. What do you think of her views and what conversation would you want to have with her if you were Tabby?

10. In this book, Tabby's getting closer to finding her "magic." What do you think that means for her? What's your "magic"? Do you think any of the other characters are getting closer to finding their magic as well?

11. As the characters evolve, whom do you most closely relate to in *Black Girls Must Be Magic*? Tabby, Laila, Alexis, Ms. Gretchen, Mrs. Walker-Williams, or Lisa Sinclair? Someone else?



JAYNE ALLEN'S Author Bio

Jayne Allen is the pen name of Jaunique Sealey, a graduate of Duke University and Harvard Law School. An avid traveler, she speaks three languages and has visited five continents. Drawing from her unique experiences as an attorney and entrepreneur, she crafts transcultural stories that touch upon contemporary women's issues such as workplace and career dynamics, race, fertility, modern relationships and mental health awareness. Her writing echoes her desire to bring both multiculturalism and multidimensionality to a rich and colorful cast of characters inspired by the magic uncovered in everyday life. She calls the Black Girls Must Die Exhausted series "the epitaph of my 30s." A proud native of Detroit, she currently lives in Los Angeles.

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