

REELY RYLEE

The Novel

The Truth Beneath Black Excellence

Ayesha T. Edwards

WE ARE ROYALTY. Point Blank. Born, bred, AND buttered. Our beauty is in our strength, grace and intelligence. We have class. And if that means we're in a class by ourselves then so be it for we know what it's like to live like Kings, Queens, Princes and Princesses though we've since endured being treated AS IF we are "less than". You see, we know who we are, and we know where we came from. We are creative. We are dynamic. Dynamically so. Yes we are. We have style. We have vision. We have every ounce of what it means to rock our world with elegance and flare. Man, woman, child. We are all created equal to the arena and bring our own unique gifts. We are world changers. We can play the game. WE CAN WIN. We are the rule. We are the future. You don't understand my that balance, gentleness, grace, and respect are not mutually exclusive. We are a team. We are a mission and becomes a success. No, we don't lose. THAT's why we're still fighting. Ensuring that our voices are heard. That is done and justice is delivered. Yes, we fight the good fight. In faith. In peace. In solidarity. In knowing who we are and who not to be. We lift up others and ourselves. There's no tearing down in this climb except the barriers that prevent us from being who we were created to be, have what we know we should have as we maximize our potential with every beat of our hearts, taken breaths, uttered words, executed actions. We draw from the tools of our trade within us and we lead with love and integrity. No eye for an eye, no tooth for tooth. We don't need to shed blood though that has been the way we are treated. With liberty and justice for some, we will continue to kneel, in prayer, against being knee-d because THAT's how we fight our battles. THAT's how we win. And, THAT's just it, Ladies & Gentlemen! THAT's our legacy and THAT's

The Truth Beneath Black Excellence.

The Workbook

Reely Rylee

UNITED



Ayesha T. Edwards

Target Audience

Primary

- **Age:** 13 to age 18
- **Group:** People of all races, socio-economic statuses, religions, sexual orientation
- **Situation:** Activism, Creativity, Love, Forgiveness, Introspection, Relationship Building, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Proactivity, Racism

Secondary

- **Age:** Adults
- **Group:** People of all races, socio-economic statuses, religions, sexual orientation
- **Situation:** Issues of Division, Hatred, Lack of Success

Book Hook

Dedicated to humanity, Reely Rylee: The Truth Beneath Black Excellence hits the ground running with developmental transitions and accelerates full speed into the conversations necessary for perspective and heart transformations with regards to race, equity and justice. With unrelenting confrontation, her group of friends face their own prejudices and privileges while connecting deeply with the injustices faced by Blacks. They collectively concoct an unimaginable plan that flips the script and rewrites the future of Blacks around the world.

Summary

Still full of her Sixth Grade innocence, Seventh Grade at her new Boarding School overwhelmed her life with many unexpected surprises. What was supposed to be a simple “tell me about your summer” catch up with her brother and his friends turns into a heated current issues discussion, history lesson, challenge to look at the color of their hearts and a choice to fix themselves and a broken, biased system. Convicted in their paradigm shift, they creatively, intelligently and voraciously pursue their goal to actualize the justice and reparations that have been long overdue in this world.

Chapter Titles

A to Transition

A Time to Wake Up

A Time to Be Taught

A Time to Reflect

A Time to Write the Vision

A Time to Act & Be Relentless

A Time to Unify

A Time to for Everything to be the way it Should!

What's YOUR Story?

Sample Pages - Excerpts from pp. 12-15

Instead of complaining about being stuck at home with each other, we made the best of each other. With working from home and online learning, our days were just as busy. And, without even trying, we added on a few segments to our repertoire of daily shenanigans and performance sets. Our favorite pastime was our 10PM Huddle. Mom didn't have to wonder where her children were when she tuned in to Channel 7 news, and if we hadn't yet discovered our individual comedic inclinations, Tiffany Haddish **had** better not **dish** out any more laughs. Late night jokes and putting in bids for what we were going to eat each night of the week brought us closer together than ever - an opportunity that needed to be seized to make it through what we didn't know was coming...

...Say WHAT? Eight minutes and forty-six seconds is how long a police officer had his knee on George Floyd's neck? Eight minutes and forty-six seconds out of four hundred "free" years of flagrant racism manifested personally. I was taught that as a man thinks in his heart, so is he. Was that eight minutes and forty six seconds a little snapshot of what was pulsating inside? I'd like to argue - absolutely! No one in their right, loving mind would think to do such a nefarious thing. Then they claimed it was seven minutes and forty-six seconds. Oh bloody murder! Two seconds of a knee on a neck is two seconds too much. It doesn't take my short twelve years on earth to figure that out. But then again, when one of the greatest countries in the world is led by some who don't see the need to advocate for equality, what do we expect others who feel the same way to do?

George Floyd's death was unnecessary, but it surely hasn't been without revelation and purpose. As with anything else, we may have been at different places regarding our awareness, feelings and responses to the rampant racism that governs our country. Some of us may have been living in a bubble not really giving much thought or action to it. Many of us have been tirelessly confronting it individually on a daily basis while others stand on the frontlines everytime another Black person falls prey to the pounce of racist law enforcement officers. Wherever we were, 2020 has helped to peel the scales off of our eyes and our country is now crying out for that change that's been cooking in a Crockpot for far too long.

One good “check” assumed bad results in a prolonged knee on the neck.

A bag of skittle and an Arizona iced tea was just enough reason needed to kill a young, Black teen!

**Running the opposite direction with no indication of attack, again, the perfect trigger to shoot a young,
Black father in his back!**

Damn if we do, damn if we don't, but I can't help but think of my three Black brothers and all the Black males in this world everytime I wake up to one of these reports. It could be any one of them. Or any one of us. Afterall, Black females are killed at the hands of police officers too, and year after year the list continues to lengthen.

Sample Pages - Excerpts from pp. 32-36

On Saturday morning, Alex and Spencer had planned to wake up early. They didn't say a word about it until Caleb and I went out for a walk and saw them...

... "So then what...should I safely assume it's an affinity group? Segregation Relations?"

"CJ, why do you always have to take things so far?"

"Alex, why your forefathers had to take my people so far...out of their own land, across the seas, onto a foreign land to work for free...why...tell me why...Alexander the Great?"

"See what I mean..."

"No, I don't see what you mean. I don't see what you see. I don't see what you think I'm doing that's so wrong. And, I don't see how you can even begin to think you're right with your narrow minded thinking. You're obviously seeing things from your limited perspective, and you don't seem to even want to empathize with how Blacks feel. When you put up such a defense, it makes me question how you really feel about me. In case you never noticed, I AM BLACK, Alex. I'm proud of my dark skin, proud of the elasticity of my hair and proud of my strength as a young Black man who has an even brighter future ahead of me."...

...Facing the truth is not an easy feat, and when friendships hinge on the outcome of these heavy conversations, some people will quickly choose to back out for fear of what will be exposed.

“Having Black friends and family members does not exempt anyone from having racist views. That’s a common misconception that needs to be addressed, Man. I’ve watched my mom experience so many different racist situations it’s not even funny. And you know what the worst is? When her friends say that they’re not racist because they have Black friends. That’s like saying I can’t be homophobic because I have gay friends. Alex, I tell you, we’ve been best friends for four years. We’ve had most of the same classes. We play the same sports. We’re tight like rope and close like Chris and Greg, remember “Everybody Hates Chris?” I never thought anything could divide us and I ain’t gon lie, I’m beginning to question who you are in a major way.”

“Maybe I need to learn more about you, CJ. I honestly can’t say that I understand why you feel this way. Truth be told, I’m not even aware of some of the things that you’re talking about, but I just don’t want you to judge me for not knowing.”

Sample Pages - Excerpts from pp. 96-98

“I can’t say I feel the same way, but I definitely appreciate you sharing something so personal with us. Reading your mother’s letter definitely has me thinking about my own thoughts and actions, but I don’t know if it’s necessary for me to explore what my forefathers did or didn’t do.” Alex asserted.

“I can understand that, Alex, and I definitely appreciate your deep reflection, Clare. To be honest I was more worried about what Clare would think because of what I found out, but I think we’re in a better place than we were yesterday.” Caleb reassured us.

That’s what I’m talking about. Whoever said change needs to take place overnight? Well, technically here, it did like I kind of wished, and we’re heading in the right direction. If we multiply this first step each day going forward, there’s no telling where we will be by the General Election in November. I think we will realize the governmental shift that we so desperately need in our country right now that’s four years overdue. That’s when it struck me on how to address Alex’s feelings. “Hey Alex...mind if I push your feelings a little bit?”

“Go for it!”

“When you go to a doctor for anything whether it’s your pediatrician or orthopedist when you injure yourself during sports, do they just start treating you for what they’re able to observe in that moment?”

“Nooo!” He said quite emphatically...

...“So, what do they do?” I gently nudged.

“They ask questions, they check to see if I’ve ever had any similar or different injuries and if it’s the pediatrician, they want to know what runs in my family.” He quickly responded.

“Well, why do you think they ask those questions?”

“To learn more about my family history to see how those things might affect me.”

“Alex...? I said rhetorically

“What?” He asked.

“You just found the answer to your own concerns. Knowing your history helps you to better understand your present situation and make informed decisions about your future. Not until you face what your forefathers did will you be able to make strides toward putting your mark on changing the world. I know it hurts and like Mom said in her letter to Caleb, that’s the hard part of the process. It’s going to hurt, but if we do this together I think we’ll all be okay.”...

...“I actually like the sound of that. Check this out: why don’t we do our own research on one aspect of History, then spend our Friday evening sharing what we learned. Right here by the pit.” Saira joined in.

“I’ll bring the snacks.” Caleb added. “Oatmeal Belvitas and Iced Tea.”

“Nah...we’ll pass on that,” Alex refused. “Why don’t I order pizza and wings.”

“Sounds better to me. Caleb can keep his Vitas and Sugar Water.” I hammered in. Going at it has always been our thing so having a team for clapbacks wasn’t a bad idea after all.

Sample Pages - Excerpts from pp. 106-141

Clare proudly stood up and made her way to the center.

“Good Evening,

It is with Great pleasure that I bring to you the History of Black People. The first of their kind. Black people had a life before they were enslaved and brought to America. Africa had a very rich history with many cultures and over eight hundred languages, and is credited for major developments in architecture, engineering, mathematics, medicine and complex political structures. Africa was more advanced in these areas and continued to flourish without much involvement with other continents. They thrived in the areas of art and technology, and produced quality items in bronze, gold, ivory and terracotta. Kingdoms such as Benin, Great Zimbabwe, Kongo, Kush, Mali and Timbuktu superseded other great civilizations well before the 1500s, and they participated in significant trade with several parts of Asia, including China and India, until it was interrupted by European interests.

...But that wasn't the end. They continued on their quest, making their peaceful presence known in Chicago and Detroit, and when a raid by Detroit police resulted in catastrophic riots, President Johnson sanctioned the Kerner Commission to investigate the cause. It was found that the riots were caused by racial discrimination and obvious economic differences between Whites and Blacks. And here comes one of my favorite parts y'all.

“What's that?” I heard Caleb yell out. He knew what it was, and I bet he was thrilled when he saw me get up to share about the Civil Rights Movement. If I could be a real life Black Panther, I would...but man...I miss Chadwick already.....

... When I was finished with my narrative, I pulled a President Obama on them. To top it off with chocolate sprinkles, aka Black Gurl Magic, I said, “I’m Reely Rylee and there goes our Black Excellence, Baybeee”, and then...I DROPPED THE MIC. That was the cherry on top. At that point they were all standing to their feet, clapping, cheering, whistling. I wasn’t looking for fame, but I had to put on a SHOW cuz I wanted them to KNOW.

Sometimes, you only get one chance and if that was my one and only chance to share something about our rich history, I wanted the ENTIRE school to know how we were treated, the fight it took for us to get here and at least somebody new to talk about for Black History Month....

...We acknowledge that our communication and anger could have been dealt with better and we pledged to develop a solid plan so children don’t have to go through the same inquiry process to have a positive paradigm shift. Although our emotions had reached unwarranted heights, we were grateful that we landed where we did.

Sample Pages - Excerpts from pp. 154-201

That was eleven going on twelve years ago. Now we're facing another historical election that could bring another highly qualified Black person...a woman at that...into the White House of the United States of America. We needed to make sure that people would actually vote. Not that we were advocating for any particular candidate, but we wanted to send the message out that it's important to exercise your rights based on your beliefs and what you stand for. We stood for peace, love and justice for all so whoever leads with that in mind that's all we were concerned about.

"Well, I don't know if you heard, but some people have been saying, take your "souls to the polls". I think that's definitely appropriate for the more mature crowd. But if that doesn't quite sweeten your tea as you like it, then I suggest **"be a G.O.A.T. and Vote"**.

That was hands down quite an original and I indeed had them cracking up. Just as it came out of my mouth, Caleb tweeted it. Within minutes, it went viral.

"But think about it," I interrupted the hype. "Once the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1957, President Kennedy won the Election in 1960 because of the strong Black voter base. Now I understand why certain people today want to suppress our votes. And it's not to say that all Blacks have the same political beliefs; although many people in government assume that they automatically get our vote while they don't deliver on our cry for justice. Deep down inside they know exactly how much power **we** have, and our goal is to ensure that we know the difference our vote can make. We will not be complacent and allow them to continue to control us.

That's why WE have to continue to educate ourselves and fight for justice. When we don't know better, and when we don't know the truth, we can't hold those in authority accountable to that standard of truth. That's why they wish that we could be uneducated and "unthinking". Not this Rylee Gurl, I'll be a G.O.A.T. in my own little cashmere coat wearing right, and tweet that slogan everyday until the Election...

...Hopefully Mom will allow me to get Twitter and IG now, Caleb. Forty more days. Hmmmm. That makes me wonder...what ever happened to our forty acres and a mule?"

"Our WHAT?"

I had thrown them a curveball. "Forty Acres and a Mule," I repeated quite emphatically. "We don't have time for another major history lesson tonight, but maybe that could be your homework for next time."...

...Somewhere in the recess of my mind, I had forgotten what it was like before there was peace on earth. This was just how I imagined it would be, and I didn't want "Stinking Thinking" to remind me of anything I had laid to rest once we crossed over to the other side. Nothing's ever for naught. That was a statement we often used to encourage ourselves during our fight. I wondered what I would do with this law degree I had earned after higher education became free for people within a certain income bracket as an initiative to level the playing field. We only had Mom's income to report, and that had qualified us for the grant that President Harris had signed when she was sworn into office...

...They used to say, history repeats itself. Now that we're in 2040, it doesn't have the same meaning as it did back then. History never told the full truth so the past had a way of getting in its own way. Matters got worse and when issues were beginning to come to light, they'd just be brushed under the rug. It was a cycle that continued to be repeated, and as we all know everyone has a saying for everything. So, they all kept saying, "History repeats itself". I guess it was a means to their justified end. But today, twenty years later, the only history we ever want to repeat itself is the "baton passing" from generation to generation that memorializes the fact that **every life matters**.

Thank You For Your Support

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Always Remember

Love

is the primary answer
to most of life's issues!!!