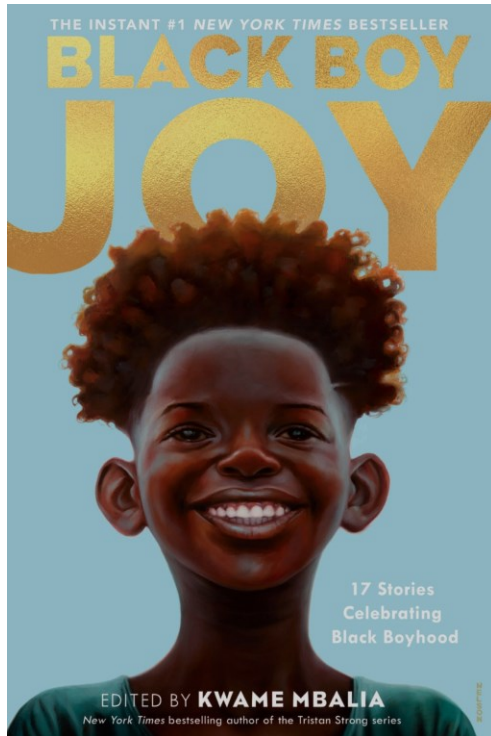


BLACK BOY JOY



Book Summary:

An anthology of short stories featuring young black boys.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains alcohol use; alternate gender ideologies; alternate sexualities; and controversial social and racial commentary.

Juvenile

Edited by Kwame Mbalia

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2 /5

Teen Guidance
BookLooks Review Rating

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19	Cornell leaned forward, trying to read some—black lives matter; love is love—when Carter reminded them he was in the room.
32	<p>“It was. Coolest thing ever. Look. When I was growing up you didn’t see a lot of us in the pictures. Then, in the 1970s, Black filmmakers decided enough of that, we gon’ be the stars of our own movies, and they made a bunch where we were detectives, and kung fu masters, and even vampires!”</p> <p>“Vampires?” That sounded even cooler.</p> <p>“Now, some of them movies were better than others, but people who name stuff named them all ‘blaxploitation’ films. And, for my money, Shaft was king of the blaxploitation bunch. Way better than them Captain Spider-Hulks y’all mess with. Such a shame you never really got to know your grandma. On our first date she picked the movie. Shaft in Africa.”</p> <p>Cornell perked. “He’s a king from Africa? Like Black Panther?”</p> <p>“We all are!”</p>
69	<p>“Von, baby.” G’Ma’s hands grab my shoulders. She gently twists me until we’re face to face.</p> <p>“You won’t fail anyone.”</p> <p>“Yes, I will.” I sniff hard. “Because I like boys and if I don’t win, then Dad will—”</p> <p>...G’Ma frowns. “Baby, you liking boys ain’t got nothing to do with how much this world is gonna love you. When I had a girlfriend—”</p> <p>I gasp, my legs turning to jelly. “G’Ma, you had a what?”</p> <p>Her whole face glows, those stars in her eyes exploding. “Yes, baby. I dated a wonderful girl in college.” She opens Facebook on her phone, then shows me some pictures of her and another girl, hugging and smiling. G’Ma looks at her the way I look at Noah sometimes. “I love boys and girls, Von. Understand?”</p> <p>I nod.</p> <p>“Before Papa, there was Liana. I didn’t tell anyone about her for a long time ‘cause I thought no one would understand or love me. In my day, things were different.</p> <p>...“I don’t love you any less because you like boys just like I don’t love G’Ma any less for who she’s loved.”</p>
111	<p>T laughs. “Fair enough.</p> <p>You’re my second best friend, as well.</p> <p>Laila’s my best friend.”</p> <p>But I think: How can her girlfriend be her best friend as well?</p> <p>So I ask: “How can your girlfriend be your best friend as well?”</p> <p>T smiles. “I guess I’m just really lucky.”</p> <p>“Were Mom and Dad best friends?” I ask.</p> <p>“Definitely,” says T as she throws her arms around me.</p>
115	If Dylan were to write a poem about his sister, Tabitha, he might mention oat milk and a plant-based diet, her pink mirror with the gold bumblebee on it, her big gold hoop earrings, her being a Beyoncé fan, her having a girlfriend who is also her best friend.
190	<p>“I’m not sure if I’m ready to tell them I’m nonbinary. My dad isn’t very big on words, you know.”</p> <p>...“Always,” said Janet. Then she muttered under her breath, “And your daddy is fine.”</p>
193	“Listen,” Janet said, “you were best dressed in elementary school. You’re going to be best dressed at the end of this year. Probably best dressed in high school and at the Emmys one day. The only thing now is if you are best dressed as a ‘he’ or a ‘they.’ ”

Page	Content
194	"You already told us you were gay years ago. Wait, you dating girls now???"
196	And yeah, he had felt supported after naming his sexuality, but this was different. This was heavier.
198	<p>"Your uncle Frank isn't really your dad's brother."</p> <p>Malcolm's eyes got big as quarters at that. "What??"</p> <p>"When your dad was fifteen, he and Frank were best friends. Back during that time, Frank was what you would refer to as 'soft.' I think the word they used back then was 'sissy.' Well, one day, Frank's father found out that he was gay. He hurt Frank pretty badly. Your dad always knew about Frank but never cared. So when Frank came to him, your dad brought him back to the house and asked if Frank could stay with us. Of course I took him in without a second thought, and the two have remained best friends ever since."</p>
199	<p>Malcolm turned and let Big Nanny take a look at him. Then he took in a deep breath and finally said the words:</p> <p>"Big Nanny. I am nonbinary. My pronouns are no longer 'he' and 'him.' I would like to be referred to as 'they' and 'them.' "</p> <p>"Well, all right! Seems to me like you got it down. Now you gonna have to explain to me what non... that word you said fully means, but I think I get what you're putting down!"</p>
202	"My name is Malcolm Jamal Jennings. Today I am thirteen years old. I am nonbinary. My pronouns going forward are 'they' and 'them.' "
269	<p>"You want what?" It's my tenth trip.</p> <p>"Just ah drink, little little," he pleads, rubbing his thumb and forefinger together.</p> <p>"They won't let me have a drink."</p> <p>"Then sneak it nah. Do so, and I leave you be."</p> <p>I sigh. It's late. I'm tired. And the birthday party is now a full fete, for adults only.</p> <p>"Fine. But that's it!"</p> <p>I sneak downstairs and back up with a bottle of rum that's near empty. The Jab grins. He pours a bit into the cap, offering it.</p> <p>"Come nah, take ah little drink."</p> <p>"I can't."</p> <p>"Why?"</p> <p>"I'm ten?"</p> <p>"But it sweet, sweet," he purrs. "Take ah taste."</p> <p>I bite my lip. Taking the cap, I sniff and make a face. People drink this? I push it back.</p> <p>"No thanks."</p> <p>The Jab shrugs. He tilts the bottle back and gulps—shivering to make his chains rattle.</p>
272	My parents don't suspect me of anything. But they found the empty rum bottle in my room. And that didn't go well.