

APPENDIX I

SYNOPSIS OF ANGIE THOMAS' *ON THE COME UP*

Sixteen-year-old Brianna is barely able to concentrate on her ACT practice test: she is waiting for a call from DJ Hype, telling her she can participate in a rap battle in the Ring later. Brianna doesn't receive the call until nearly an hour later. Then at home, she finds her mom, Jay, serving "Popkenchurch," a conglomerate fast-food meal that means something bad happened. Jay won't tell her what. Brianna's Aunt Pooh, a member of the Garden Disciples gang, takes Brianna to the Ring. They skip the line and the bouncers refer to Brianna as "Li'l Law"—a reference to her dad, the famous rapper Lawless, who was murdered by the Crowns gang twelve years ago. Brianna thinks that she'd like to make her own name. When it's Brianna's turn to rap, she goes up against a kid named Milez. He's the son of Supreme, Lawless's old manager. Milez insults Lawless, but Brianna performs so well in the second and third rounds that she wins.

The next day, Brianna discovers in the office that Jay lost her job at their church. When Brianna get home, Brianna angrily walks off to find Aunt Pooh. Aunt Pooh and her best friend, Scrap, comfort Bri, and Pooh shares that Bri has an opportunity to record a song. Brianna doesn't tell Jay that she's going to record a song. At the studio, just as Brianna is ready to start, Aunt Pooh is called away to a drug deal. Feeling alone and angry, Brianna writes a song about the issues that black people face and the stereotypes that they're expected to play into.

That weekend, Jay makes Brianna come to a food giveaway with her. Supreme—who's volunteering at the event—compliments Brianna. Brianna isn't sure she can trust him, but when he mentions that he got local star Dee-Nice a record deal, Brianna asks him to listen to her song. He loves it and asks for the link. Jay interrupts, but Bri feels hopeful—a record deal would lift her family out of poverty. On Christmas, Jay gives Brianna Lawless's old chain. When Aunt Pooh stops by, she takes offense to what Brianna says in her song. She tells Brianna to delete it, but Brianna sends the link to Supreme instead. On the next day at school, Curtis tells her that her song is going viral.

Supreme tells Brianna that her behavior will make her money—it's scary for white parents and therefore, attractive to white teens. He tells Brianna she needs a better manager. At home, Jay finds out about Brianna's song when the school rally ends up on the news. She forbids Brianna from rapping. This makes Brianna so

angry that she agrees to meet with Supreme the instant he texts her. Supreme buys Brianna breakfast and gives her a gift—brand new Timbs—in congratulations for her song going viral. Dee-Nice is there too, and Brianna realizes that Supreme is luring her away from Pooh. When Dee-Nice tells Brianna that he can care for his family thanks to Supreme, Bri agrees to work with Supreme. When Brianna gets home, Jay makes Brianna study for the ACT. When Brianna gets her phone back, she sees that a white reporter started a petition to get her song removed from its online platform.

In the morning, the electricity in her house has been shut off. The next evening, Grandma and Granddaddy stop by. When they learn that the power is off, Grandma accuses Jay of being a bad parent, but Jay insists that she's just poor. Granddaddy gives Jay money for the bill. Then she gets a call from Supreme, telling her she has an interview with DJ Hype over the weekend. On the day of her interview, DJ Hype asks Brianna about whether her song incites violence and is sexist. Brianna angrily refuses to continue the interview. Supreme praises her: she acted like a "ratchet hood rat" and it will help her image. Bri is horrified.

A few days later, Supreme calls to ask Brianna to record a song for a record executive after school. Supreme takes Brianna to the studio. The white executive, James, speaks about Lawless as though he made stupid decisions and as though Brianna isn't there. When Dee-Nice arrives, they tell her that he wrote a song for her. Brianna tries to refuse, but ends up recording it even though it's violent and sexist.

On the other day, Grandma and Granddaddy announce a family dinner after church at their house later. Then Jay tells Brianna and Trey that they're moving in with Grandma and Granddaddy so that Trey can go to grad school. Trey convinces Jay to let Brianna rap, as long as she fires Supreme.

At the Ring the next week, Brianna acts as though she's still on good terms with Supreme but she insists on freestyling instead of performing Dee-Nice's song. Supreme and James walk out. Only a few weeks later, Brianna gets an invitation on Twitter to collaborate on a song with a famous rapper.

APPENDIX II

BIOGRAPHY OF ANGIE THOMAS

Angie Thomas was born, raised, and still resides in Jackson, Mississippi. She is a former teen rapper whose greatest accomplishment was an article about her in Right-On Magazine with a picture included. She holds a BFA in Creative Writing from Belhaven University and an unofficial degree in Hip Hop. She can also still rap if needed. She is a huge hip hop fan and Tupac is her favourite rapper, followed closely by Kendrick Lamar. Her favourite colour is light blue. She is an inaugural winner of the Walter Dean Myers Grant 2015, awarded by We Need Diverse Books. Her award-winning, acclaimed debut novel, *The Hate U Give*, is a #1 New York Times bestseller and major motion picture from Fox 2000, starring Amandla Stenberg and directed by George Tillman, Jr. Her second novel, *On the Come Up*.