



# MONDAY'S NOT COMING

BY TIFFANY D. JACKSON

## ABOUT THE BOOK

Monday Charles is missing, and only Claudia seems to notice. Claudia and Monday have always been inseparable—more sisters than friends. So when Monday doesn't turn up for the first day of school, Claudia's worried.

When she doesn't show for the second day, or second week, Claudia knows that something is wrong. Monday wouldn't just leave her to endure tests and bullies alone. Not after last year's rumors and not with her grades on the line. Now Claudia needs her best—and only—friend more than ever. But Monday's mother refuses to give Claudia a straight answer, and Monday's sister April is even less help.

As Claudia digs deeper into her friend's disappearance, she discovers that no one seems to remember the last time they saw Monday. How can a teenage girl just vanish without anyone noticing that she's gone?

## QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

- How does Claudia characterize Washington, DC, throughout the novel? What does DC sound like to Claudia? What is go-go music? What is its importance to the city of DC? Claudia's daddy says that go-go is part of their culture. Whose culture is he talking about? What is the music of the place that you grew up in? Is it part of your culture? Why or why not?
- How is the Ed Borough Complex where Monday lives described in the novel? What are residents protesting? What is gentrification? How is the Ed Borough Complex being affected by gentrification? Have you witnessed gentrification take place where you live? Who has it hurt? Who has it benefited?
- Early in the novel, Claudia's mother and Mrs. Charles have a conversation about someone they suspect is being abused and get the community involved to address it. What inspires Mrs. Charles to do something? What do you think prevents people from speaking up about Monday's and August's disappearances?
- Have you ever felt something was wrong but didn't say anything about it? What kept you from saying or doing something?
- On page 191, Claudia overhears her dad talking about Monday. How do the different adults in Claudia's life justify the disappearance of her best friend? Why don't they do anything? Why does no one listen to Claudia? Does it have anything to do with her identity, age, or race? Do you feel listened to? Why or why not?
- Claudia's dad says she was born to "light up this world" (pg. 219). How does Claudia shed light on Monday's absence and force people to pay attention? What do you think you were you meant to do in this world? Do you have people in your life that believe in you? How does having someone who believes in you make it more possible for you to live the life you imagine for yourself?
- When Claudia goes to the police station looking for her friend, she sees a wall of photos of missing girls that "all looked like

Monday” (pg. 166). What does she mean by this? Does Detective Carson take Claudia seriously when she says her friend is missing? Why or why not? What does Monday’s race, where she lives, and her socioeconomic status have to do with the way her disappearance is treated by authorities?

- Why are the chapters in the book titled “The Before” and “The After”? What is the before? What is the after? What do the words “linear” and “non-linear” mean when applied to storytelling? Why do you think the author choose to structure the book nonlinearly?
- What brings media attention to Monday and her family? How is Monday treated differently after she is found than when she was alive? Why does April call it “bogus” (page 390)?
- Claudia has dyslexia and struggles with reading and writing in school. How does she go for so long without being diagnosed? How do her principal and teachers react when they find out? What does her mother think about her school’s reaction? Later in the book, Ms. Valente says schools care about scores more than students (pg. 163). Do you think that’s true at your school? Why or why not? How does this way of teaching affect Claudia? What about Monday? What about you?
- What is Claudia and April’s relationship? How does Claudia feel when her new friends are making fun of April? How does April treat Claudia? What does April mean when she says “I never had a . . . *you* growing up” (pg. 393)?

What does Claudia represent to April? And to Monday?

- On page 279, Claudia describes dance as “a sanctuary”. What is it about dance that makes her feel safe and good? How has Claudia and Monday’s friendship been a sanctuary for both of them? What had it protected them from? How did they keep one another safe? Do you have someone or something in your life that feels like a refuge to you?
- On page 421, a question is posed “who’s really responsible for your well-being—your family, the government, or your community?” Who do you think was supposed to be looking out for Monday? How does Monday’s race, gender, and socioeconomic status impact who is worried about her? What do you think this book is saying about the way similar events are handled in real life?
- What importance is Michael to Claudia? What drives the people in Claudia’s life to ask Michael to look out for her? How does Michael help Claudia come to terms with what happened to Monday? What do you think about their relationship?
- Claudia’s mothers insists on Claudia leaving “breadcrumbs” whenever she’s out on her own. Why do you think that her mother tells her to do that? What breadcrumbs does Claudia leave? Who does she leave them for?

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**TIFFANY D. JACKSON** is the critically acclaimed author of YA novels including the NAACP Image Award–nominated *Allegedly*; *Monday’s Not Coming*, a Walter Dean Myers Honor Book and John Steptoe New Talent Award winner; and *Let Me Hear a Rhyme*. A TV professional by day, novelist by night, she received her bachelor of arts in film from Howard University and her master of arts in media studies from the New School. A Brooklyn native, she is a lover of naps, cookie dough, and beaches, currently residing in the borough she loves, most likely multitasking. You can visit her online at [www.writeinbk.com](http://www.writeinbk.com).

