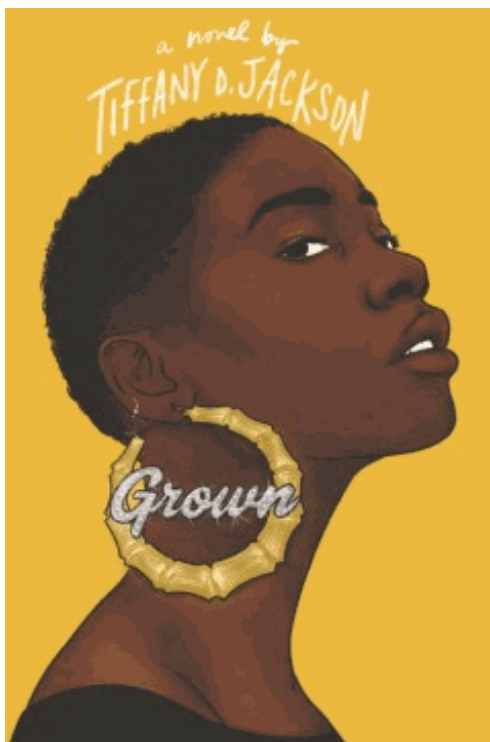


GROWN



Young Adult

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CONTENT WARNING

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Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities including sexual assault; sexual nudity; profanity and derogatory terms; violence; alcohol and drug use and abuse; references to racism.

3 /5

Minor Restricted
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
10	<p>When I awake, I am eye-level with a puddle of beet juice soaked into the carpet, soft fibers cushioning my cheek. The beet juice is dark, thin, dried sticky between my fingers.</p> <p>...I roll over, spine unforgiving, and struggle to my feet, knees wobbling, pain shooting stars through my skull. Out of the one eye that isn't swollen, everything is a bright blur.</p> <p>...My jaw is an unhinged door. I lick blood off my bottom lip, relish the metal taste and take in the room.</p> <p>There's blood everywhere.</p> <p>No, not blood. Beet juice. Or maybe cranberry. Thinned barbecue sauce. But no, not blood. Blood means more than I can comprehend.</p> <p>The beet-juice stains are all around his penthouse—on the cream sofa, the satin curtains, the ivory dining table, splatters on the ceiling . . . I even managed to spill some beet juice down my tank top and jeans.</p> <p>...The thought of his inevitable reaction produces more terror than the blood surrounding me.</p> <p>Sorry, not blood. Beet juice.</p> <p>...A bloody handprint glides across the wall toward the bedroom, the door wide open.</p> <p>Korey is slumped facedown, hanging off the bed . . . body covered in beet juice. Flaming words are stuck in my esophagus, but my body is frozen, rooted to the floor. If I move . . . if he catches me . . . he'll kill me.</p>
14	<p>I hate when chlorine slips through the crevices and I end up with red eyes like I've been smoking a blunt. Not that I'd know what that's like. But being one of ten black students in the entire school...the stupid assumption would be too easy.</p>
72	<p>In that moment, my heart hits the panic button. I'm alone with this drunk asshole.</p> <p>...He looks at the bed then back at me. My blood stiffens.</p> <p>"Creighton..." I quiver. "Don't."</p> <p>He tries to curl around me, kissing my neck.</p> <p>"I ain't trying to do nothing. I just wanna talk."</p>
75	<p>"You're in shock," he says, leading me to the sofa. "Come. Sit. Drink this."</p> <p>He eases a glass of clear liquid into my hand that doesn't smell a thing like water. I don't resist, even though I know I shouldn't be drinking. But there are lots of things I shouldn't be doing right now.</p> <p>I take a sip, then another.</p>
76	<p>"Boys be like that, you know? Be mad thirsty to get some buns."</p> <p>..."And I didn't lead him on or nothing, if that's what you're thinking."</p> <p>"Why would I think that?"</p> <p>"Sometimes...that's what people think. That a girl wanted it."</p>
77	<p>"Besides, don't see what dudes get out of drugging and forcing themselves on chicks. I like my ladies awake and enjoying themselves. I don't know- maybe I'm different."</p>
81	<p>With a few strokes, I'm playing. But the way his chest lies against my back, sandwiching me into the keyboard, my fingers trip up.</p>

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	<p>..."So how do we melt?"</p> <p>"Aight, rules for the studio. One, no one can know what goes down in here. This is where the magic happens, and you can't be giving away our secrets, you feel me? So you can't tell no one, not even your moms."</p> <p>..."Two, we don't just make music in here. We make love, you feel me? So all that uptight shit, you gotta leave at the door and free yourself."</p> <p>"OK."</p> <p>"And you gotta start by shedding some of them layers."</p>
83	<p>"Oh, word! Look at you, knowing even the white-folk classics!"</p> <p>..."My grandma loved white-folk music."</p>
84	<p>"Yo, real talk, if I could have my way, I'd do like a whole cover album of all the great white hits. But...that'll never happen. They'd never let me sing that shit."</p>
97	<p>His head cocks to the side. "Hold up, you ever been with a guy before?"</p> <p>"Like...sexually?"</p> <p>He laughs. "Damn, you make it sound mad...formal. But yeah. Sexually or whatever."</p> <p>..."Ever been kissed?"</p> <p>..."Damn, Bright Eyes, you really don't know nothing. That's good, though. It's better to learn that type of stuff from someone you...trust."</p> <p>I gulp, my heart thumping, heat rising through my chest.</p> <p>"And you know," he starts, eyes on his paper, "maybe you can teach me something."</p>
116	<p>Gab's eyes widen. "Oh God, did you fuck him?"</p> <p>..."...this is so wrong. He's a grown-ass man. He got no business popping up at a girl's school like this."</p>
117	<p>"...boys will say anything to get some ass."</p>
150	<p>He kissing me hard, hands everywhere. I can't catch up. I push away but he grabs my chin, nails digging, and pulls my lips to his.</p> <p>My body freezes as he lays me on the bed.</p> <p>"You're so beautiful, you know that?" he whispers. "I'm sorry I yelled at you, baby. I just can't stand the thought of someone stealing what's mine. You're all I have."</p> <p>...He kisses my neck and more, his body heavy on top of mine. My shirt is gone. So is his. I'm being dragged underwater and can't breathe. The sound of his zipper rips the room apart. That's when he grabs my wrist, leading it down his stomach.</p> <p>...I shoot up. "I do care about you! I really do!"</p> <p>"Then I need you to make me feel good," he says, pushing my hand toward his crotch again. "Don't you want me to be happy? After the way you hurt me last night?"</p> <p>..."Shhhh...relax," he whispers.</p> <p>Then, I give in, and let him lead my hand down his pants, into his boxers.</p> <p>Something slimy flops in my palm.</p> <p>He doesn't kiss my lips. He just grabs my breast, hard, panting, twisting, and it hurts.</p> <p>It. Hurts.</p> <p>Holding back tears, I stare at Flounder, sitting on the dresser, watching us. I don't want him to see me this way. So I squeeze my eyes shut and float away, back to</p>

Page	Content
	<p>the sea, the waves, the seagulls, Grandma... Korey lets out a moan clipped by a slight scream and then "Ah!...That's my good girl."</p>
154	<p>Except, I don't feel happiness. I feel...tired. Exhausted from being woken up in the middle of the night over and over. I feel...used.</p>
155	<p>"Well, we won't have to worry about buying her some new tits," he says. "She go them D's, but we gotta work on that ass." ..."And get her some new panties. Sick of seeing those grandma drawers," Korey says, lifting the elastic around my waist, giving me an instant wedgie. "I want nothing but thongs!"</p>
156	<p>"Drink." Korey's outstretched hand holds a cup of clear liquid. Just like the night he saved me in Jersey. Except the conditions have changed. "I don't really want any." "Think I care what you want? I said drink," he slurs. "Standing around here looking stupid. Embarrassing me." ..."I said drink," he barks. Korey is drunk again, and I think of making a run for my room, where I can at least hide for the night.</p>
158	<p>Tears brimming, I pour myself another glass of vodka.</p>
167	<p>He'd never lock her in her room or force her to have sex in his studio.</p>
185	<p>Guess he beat some level or something. The scene changes, a man with a fro in the dank, messy bedroom with a half-dressed girl. She gives him head. Then they're on the bed, having sex, all controlled by Korey, while fro guy narrates: "I ain't never understood the phrase meaningless sex..."</p>
186	<p>"You know, the first time I had sex," he says, without sparing a glance, "I was fourteen." ...The girl in the video game moans. ...Happened right after I signed to RCA. At a Grammys afterparty. Shorty took me to the coat closet or something. I ain't gonna front, I was SHOOK. Never been with a woman before." The sex scene is awfully long.</p>
191	<p>Korey slaps on a sweet smile. "Yes, ma'am, of course. By the way, she's seventeen. Age of consent in Atlanta, I believe."</p>
203	<p>"Korey!" I scream, diving toward his pillows, and turn on the light. "What the fuck?" Korey roars...as Amber's head pops up from under the covers. ...I back away, noticing a used condom on the floor by the bed.</p>
204	<p>Hear the parties he throws downstairs with at least a hundred people, including strippers. Hear him having sex with Amber...right next door. ...So, I sit beside them, watching what he does to her body. Watching him call her sweetheart and her call him daddy. ..."If I can't have sex with you, I have to have sex with someone else," Korey says, stroking my cheek. "It's your decision to wait, and I respect that. But I'm a man, baby. And a man has needs."</p>

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208	"You're fifteen," I gasp. Amber's face falls, eyes darkening.
210	"...There were other girls. All fifteen and sixteen and so on. One girl even tried to kill herself after dealing with Korey."
217	"Shit," he mumbles, taking another shot of vodka.
225	Coming off a high feels exactly like dying.
229	Just dehydration and an addiction to codeine.
254	Derrick bites his fist, seeming torn. "Aight, there's a video...a sex tape. With Korey." ...He stands next to me, pressing play on his phone. It's a blurry video of Korey naked...with a girl in his house...his house in Atlanta...in my old room...naked.
255	Aisha: Some girl in the Danbury chapter said that our chapter is now known as the Porn Hub Squad.
256	Aisha: It was a wig. Sean: Surprised it stayed on the way he was flipping her. Creighton: LMAO! Damn bruh, you wildin right now! Sean: Kid, don't act like you didn't watch it either. Malika: Did you? Creighton: Dude on my soccer team was playing it in the locker room. Malika: And you let him? Sean: You want to see? I got a link.
262	Detective Silverman: So to confirm, you want to report Korey Fields for assault, battery, rape, and...stalking? Am I right?
263	Silverman: And this happened around the time the sex tape surfaced? E. Jones: That's not me in that video. We never had sex. Silverman: Are you sure? You mentioned before that he often drugged you? E. Jones: We...fooled around, I guess you can call it that. But not sex. Fletcher: Oral sex is still considered sex, under the law. Silverman: So you admit you were intimate? E. Jones: Um, yeah. Silverman: Did you perform oral on Mr. Fields? E. Jones: Um, yes. Silverman: And you did so willingly?
272	Silverman: Korey suggested that you may have been the one who leaked the sex video.
282	"Get away from me," I shout, pushing him. Or I thought I shouted. Because next thing I know, my cup drops. My shirt is wet. He strikes me, then again, and the carpet nuzzles to my face the room goes dark.
293	You see her body? Walking around in them tight dresses. She was just tempting him. Another fast ass girl.
295	Yo, don't all-lives-matter this. We ain't saying the other shit ain't wrong either. But we talking about BLACK WOMEN right now. That's it. FOCUS!

Page	Content
296	Yo, Malcolm X said it best, "The most disrespected person in America is the Black woman. The most unprotected person in America is the Black woman. The most neglected person in America is the Black woman."
309	"Can't keep his dick in his pants. Ever."
327	We call on corporations with ties to Corey Fields's estate to insist on protecting and believing black women by proceeding with the investigation into his illegal actions. Together, let's end the devaluing of black girls and women.
333	"Hey, does anyone recognize the girl in the sex tape?" Tessa asks. ...He recorded us having sex, recorded me using the bathroom. ..."He recorded when we had sex with...other women," Tessa says, her voice quivering with shame.
349	Gabriela: Like all the other girls, I was scared. And it's not like you instantly believe us. When we say, 'Hey, I was raped,' you say, 'Are you sure?' Way to make us feel safe, Mr. Officer.

Profanity	Count
Ass	17
Bitch	9
Dick	1
Fuck	23
Piss	4
Nigga	1
Shit	32