



## **Jane**

*Michelle N. Onuorah*

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**Jane** Michelle N. Onuorah

Orphaned.

Neglected.

Hurt and abused.

Jane Daugherty has survived what can only be described as the childhood from hell. After years of mental, physical, and sexual abuse, she has become a fiercely independent young woman - closed off from human connection. Unable to trust people or in their ability to be kind, she has vowed to build a new life for herself so that she never has to rely on others again. At 24-years-old, she is fulfilling this vow, successfully working as the youngest tenure-track professor at the University of New York.

Brilliant and remarkably accomplished, Jane's life takes an unexpected turn when she is reunited with the childhood friend she protected in foster care. Alexa Masterson introduces Jane to the family that adopted her, a family that includes her older brother, Aiden Masterson. Instantly drawn to each other, Aiden and Jane embark on a relationship that will either destroy them both or shape them into the man and woman they were always meant to be. Can what started as lust transform into love? And what will bring about the transformation that they ultimately need?

**\*\*Please note there is occasional cursing, mild violence, and unapologetic references to sexuality and spirituality within this work of fiction. Reader discretion is advised.\*\***

## Jane Details

Date : Published February 6th 2015 by MNO Media, LLC

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Author : Michelle N. Onuorah

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Genre : Romance, Interracial Romance

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## **From Reader Review Jane for online ebook**

### **Mspraise50 says**

This is my second book by this author. I was again fortunate to receive an ARC of this book. This is the same author who wrote Remember Me which was an incredible love story.

This is Jane and Aiden's story and I am absolutely in love with this couple. This story is more sensual than erotic and has Christian themes.

Jane has suffered a traumatic childhood surviving all kinds of abuse. She manages to become successful in her career as a professor despite all that she has been through. Jane is independent and self-sufficient but she is lonely behind that wall she has erected around her heart to protect herself from others. Jane has trust issues with good cause. Jane can come across as hard, cold and insensitive but she is far from that.

Jane meets Aiden through Alexa who was once her foster sister. Aiden's family is wealthy and adopts Alexa and Jane and Alexa lose contact.

Jane and Aiden are attracted to each other and start a relationship together. Jane is not your typical woman and I enjoyed her character. In this relationship Jane manages to contain her feelings and Aiden is the one who is very sensitive in the relationship. Aiden repeatedly hurts Jane unknowingly because Jane has not totally opened up to him about what has happened to her in the past. This makes for a roller-coaster of a ride with their emotions.

The role reversal in this book with Jane coming across as emotionless and Aiden being really emotional really appealed to me, I found this to be a powerful theme in the book. I loved this story even more than Remember Me. I am totally drawn to stories where the power of love conquers all.

This story had me totally engrossed and is absolutely a page turner. I would highly recommend this truly deep love story!

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### **The Book Junkie Reads . . . says**

There is no denying this is a five star rendering. JANE by Michelle N. Onuorah will capture you with its intriguing interracial romance of a young woman that has all the reasons in the world to turn her back on the world that has done nothing much but orphan her, neglect her, and abuse her. At 24 years of age, Jane augherty has had a young life filled with neglect and abuse (mental, physical, and sexual). This young lady has not allowed her past to dictate her future. She works hard to keep her life together and pursue her goal to be the youngest professor on track for tenure at the University of New York.

Life changes for her when she sees her old foster care 'little sister', Alexa. Alexa was the world to Jane. Jane was Alexa's protector. Now today she is a look back into her past. Alexa introduces Jane to her brother, Aiden, she gained when she was adopted out of the foster care system. The sparks fly when Jane and Aiden meet. Their world collides with only time being the tell-tell if their lust filled encounter will turn into much more. More of what can make their (Jane & Aiden's) lives what was meant to happen.

Onuorah provides a read that gives you a woman's story, her life (good, bad, a little in between), her sexuality, sensuality, and her spirituality. In there she also provides us with a man, Aiden, that adds more to the story. Onuorah writing allows you to feel the hurt, pain, loss, confusion, lust, joy, sensuality, spirituality of love and lust. She also makes it easy to relate to the trial of young Jane's life as it was and what it will evolve to be.

I found this to be a beautiful interracial romance that is about more than just the sex of a lust filled encounter. It grows and becomes so much more. I find Aiden to be more the beta hero to Jane's alpha heroine. Aiden provides the warmth and sensitivity in places where Jane is a bit cool and distant.

I got so much more than I was expecting from this book. I was expecting a hostility and standoffish young woman and was greeted with something else. I would highly recommend this book to any/everyone looking for a romance with more.

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### **postcrdprincess says**

DISCLOSURE: I was provided a copy of Jane by the Author. I was not paid nor required to write a positive review and the opinions I have expressed are my own.

When I first started reading this book, I had to put it down because I could tell what type of abuse the young girls had been exposed to (without the author being blatant about it), and I wasn't sure if my emotions could handle it (I cry instantly at any type of physical harm to children). A couple of days later I picked up the book back up. I was so glad I did.

The heroine (Jane) suffered so much physical, mental and sexual abuse as a child that it's a wonder she didn't go insane. I think what held her together for so long was the feeling of needing to protect her young foster sister Alexa ("Little One"). It was definitely sad, but a happy moment when Alexa was adopted. We as the reader didn't have to think about further abuse happening to her, but we knew that Jane would now be alone and feeling as if there was no need to go on emotionally.

It was nice to see that as Jane got older, she did something with her life; she became a University Associate Professor. She didn't just lean on the poor me syndrome. She didn't use the excuse that because I was abused I need to live my entire life as a drug addict or alcoholic. I'm not saying that Jane came out of her abusive life without scars (who would?). She was insecure at times, leery of the motives of people that she befriended; if she befriended anyone at all. She was haunted by her past and always afraid to be judged by that past, and yet she was the typical stubborn woman (Yes, we women can definitely be stubborn).

I liked the hero (Aiden). He wasn't presented in the book to me as the gorgeous, wealthy man, riding in on his white horse to save the soul of the emotionally damaged young black female. Aiden had a depth to him. He had flaws and insecurities like any other man. He worked hard, wanted to find love, wanted to be loved, wanted to give love, have purpose and meaning to his life, enjoy life, and at times; as typical men do, put there foot in their mouth (say the wrong things at the wrong time).

The secondary characters helped to give authenticity to this book. No person ever goes through life alone, without someone having an effect on them. Jane had an effect on Alexa and vice versa. The Masterson's (Alexa's adopted parents) had an effect on Alexa and Jane as well. So to see these secondary characters play a consistent role in this book and not just show up once and disappear, made the book that much more real.

The Author made sure that these characters had depth, and not just a placeholder.

The religious theme in this didn't feel overly done. I didn't feel like the Author was trying to convert anyone to her beliefs. It definitely came across as the natural course these individuals chose to take in their lives, to fulfill whatever they felt was missing from their lives.

For me this book brought out emotion, tears, and joys. I enjoyed this book and it definitely is a keeper. The Author certainly has an amazing way of writing. This book felt like an authentic life story of a woman named Jane. It definitely felt believable. This is the second book that I have read by this Author and without a doubt I would be willing to read others.

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### **Kim says**

Michelle Onuorah's JANE is one of those novels that take you by surprise. It's not my usual genre—I usually avoid novels with too much of a spiritual or inspirational theme because they tend to be too preachy for me. But like her previous novel, Remember Me, JANE tackles big issues like race, social class and spirituality with a light, deft hand.

Jane Daugherty, the main character, of JANE, has led a traumatic life. A victim of physical, sexual and mental abuse, she has learned to rely on no one. While this fierce independence has helped her achieve the position of being the youngest tenure track professor at the university where she teaches, it has also led to her leading an isolated life devoid of any emotional attachments or reliance on others.

Even though I am not a very religious person (in fact, I would say I am completely secular), I appreciated how Michelle took us on Jane's journey of love and self-discovery, on her realization that she needed a spiritual connection to find peace in her life.

This is an uplifting story that will particularly resonate for readers for like inspirational stories. However, any reader who likes stories of change and the power of love will enjoy Michelle Onuorah's JANE.

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### **Mstcat says**

This book right here! So much to say about this beautifully written and heart-wrenching story. Review to come, but wanted to sing its praises right away!

Review Update:

I'm very excited that I've had the opportunity to read Jane by Michelle N. Onuorah. So far this is my early contender in the book to beat category. Out of the gate I'm recommending Jane, and I'll explain why in just a few. While I have so many things to say, I'll need to start this review off by pointing out a few important things that may or may not be deal breakers for future/potential readers. This book tackles some pretty heavy issues about child abuse and rape. While there are no real scenes portraying these things, it's referenced so reader beware. Another thing that I'd like to point out is that spirituality and God play an important part in the book. This isn't a warning, because frankly there's nothing to "warn" anyone about. While there is a definite message, the book doesn't preach or judge. I urge you not to let this stop you from picking up Jane

and reading it. You'll be happy that you did.

We first meet Jane as a teenager in foster care. She's planned and executed a small birthday celebration for her younger foster "sister" Alexa. The two are undeniably close and love each other dearly. It's quickly obvious that Jane goes out of her way to look out for and protect Alexa, and that there is something amiss in the foster care home in which they live. Although Jane loves Alexa, she's anxious and wishes for her quick adoption. When her wish comes true, Jane is left alone in an inconceivably hellish existence waiting to be free of the system. The story fast forwards to Jane as an adult. She's 24, yet extremely focused and mature. She is also a young professor at the University of New York. She's worked hard to get herself where she is and as the youngest tenure track professor at the university, she has plans to secure her future. It's here that she is reacquainted with Alexa. Despite Jane's hesitancy to get close to Alexa, the two develop a friendship. Alexa's life became one of wealth and privilege after being adopted, but she never forgot all that Jane did for her. As she attempts to include Jane in her life, she introduces her to her brother Aiden. Aiden is impressed and attracted to Jane and only wants to get to know her better despite her efforts to keep a distance. The story takes us along on Jane's journey as she reunites with her "sister," develops feelings for Aiden and his family, copes with the demons of her past, and struggles to hold on to all that she's struggled to achieve.

There are so many aspects of this book that I liked, so it's hard to cover them all without giving away any true spoilers. However, if I were to list the top things that I liked they would be:

- The feeling of realism. Actions and reactions, both positive and negative felt authentic. Here is a book that didn't need to fabricate melodramatic responses or behaviors.
- This isn't a book that attempts to tell a story in 100 pages or less. The author gives herself room to create characters that have layers. Because of its length the book allows the reader to see and experience something that feels complete.
- I liked Jane's character, a lot. She's gone through a heckuva lot in her life and although she didn't come out of it unscathed, she came out a fighter. Jane the adult is nobody's victim. Her past has forged her, and in some ways it has stilted her as well. She isn't a shrinking violet or a woman that rages at the world. I imagine that this is a difficult thing for writers - creating a character that comes from a dark background, who isn't so ruined by it that it turns her into an extreme.
- At times I didn't like Jane. That sounds bad considering Jane's history, but it makes sense. Things that happened to her would give her moments of being abrupt, cold, and plain difficult to like. Like I said I loved the character, and for the most part I liked Jane's personality, but there were moments where she felt unlikable. This is great writing, because even in those moments I still cared about her and wasn't washing my hands of the character. I mean really. In real life we have moments where we love someone but just don't like them very much for one reason or another...
- I didn't know what to think about Alexa at first. Honestly, I thought she was going to be the weak link in the story. The overly bubbly, let me compensate for being adopted, perfect girl. While she was some of those things, she was also a lot more complicated and deep than all of that as well. A big kudos to the author for this character!
- The relationship between Jane and Alexa was just as important as the one between Jane and Aiden. These women had true, deep love for one another. Alexa honestly never forgot Jane and has her back always.
- Alexa's adoptive parents have more than just a passing role here. They're genuine people who love their kids and extend that affection to Jane. I love how the father is also fleshed out and the dynamic that develops with Jane.
- Definitely I like Aiden. He's a great character who has a whole lot of depth and growth. You love this guy even though he has a tendency to not think before he speaks. His like and attraction for Jane develops into a deep love and a desire to be more. He's interesting because he's definitely privileged and has been his entire life. He has no real frame of reference when it comes to someone like Jane. That doesn't make him a bad person, but it does make for a character that can grow and mature.

-Last, but not least, there's the relationship between Jane and Aiden. This is no smooth road to happiness. Nope. This is a bumpy journey and yes, spirituality plays a part in straightening things up. Like I said before, there are no manufactured conflicts here, just hurdles you would expect considering all things.

There isn't much that I disliked about Jane. If anything, I felt like she went through too much in her life. Things just didn't have a habit of going right for her, and for a bit there I felt overwhelmed for her. But then that's life isn't it? For some people things never seem to go wrong, and for others they can't seem to catch a break. I hate that there are people who always have bad things happen in their lives. They exist. Unfortunately, those bad things often end up taking their lives. It could have happened to Jane. Yes, this is a fictional character, but life is stranger than fiction and my heart aches for knowing that somewhere there's a Jane who's life didn't turn out as well as the title character here.

### My Final Thoughts

Jane is a wonderfully written book that firmly sets Michelle N. Onuorah at the top of my list of favorite authors. Her books are a lovely mix of spirituality and romance that appeals to me. Yes, there are messages in her story. But she doesn't preach at her readers. She incorporates it into heart-wrenching tales of people that feel more human than fictional. Take a chance and read Jane. I believe there are very few people who will walk away disappointed. I surely didn't.

\*I received a copy of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review\*

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### Meka♥books says

\*\*\*SOME SPOILERS\*\*\*

\*\*\*UPDATE- Jane's silence regarding abuse\*\*\*

The sole item that attracted me to **Jane** was the author, Michelle Onuorah. After reading her multi-layer and sincere Remember Me, I quickly became a fan of her writing style which has proven to be cathartic and healing for me.

**Jane** raises a multitude of questions. Can two women raised in the same abusive foster home who once viewed each other as sisters rekindle a childhood friendship nine years later? Is a renewed friendship possible with the interference of jealousy and tormented recollections of the past? Can an emotionally detached individual find healing in a renewed friendship? One aspect of **Jane** deals with only one woman officially being adopted and making it out of the system, while the other had to wait to turn 18 to find her way and place in society without the assistance of family and friends. This storyline touched emotions I actively live and continually work through as I have also been haunted by past transgressions of abuse. I empathized with title character Jane's complex and contradictory feelings: strong and independent one minute vulnerable the next, gentle in the morning, closed off by the afternoon or the next day. **Jane** is not an immediate love story but a persistent battle of comforts and breaking walls down. **Jane** is a great read that will explore the above questions and so much more. It is also a gut wrenching book of the psychological effects of abuse (view spoiler), social proprieties, and hardships. It is a realistic look of acceptance and healing; a spectacular account of overcoming strife. It's a love story laced with Biblical references- the love for God and for others too.

Jane and Alexa are both shocked to see one another when Alexa strolls into Jane's *Race and Ethnicity in*

*American Literature* course late one day. It is at this juncture a renewed bond is formed; slightly hesitant on Jane's part but, a bond all the same. It is also the first time Jane is introduced to Alexa's older brother Aiden with whom Jane eventually becomes romantically involved. As children, Jane was a pseudo parent for Alexa although a child herself. To the best of her ability, Jane would protect Alexa from all abuse their foster father shelled out. She always made sure Alexa received birthday presents, had meals, and as much of a *normal* childhood as she could.

"...If it wasn't for you, I would probably be on the streets somewhere strung out on drugs." Jane shook her head. "Your parents rescued you, not me." Alexa disagreed. "They changed my life, of course. But they didn't stand in the gap between me and that monster. They didn't give me medicine when I ran a fever. They didn't do everything in their power to give me a normal childhood until a placement could be found. *You* did that, Jane. *You*. You always had my back, even at the expense of yours. I'll never forget that. I want you to know that I have your back too. I love you."

What I loved about this book are the characters. Since meeting back up with Jane, Alexa has always looked out for Jane no matter what. She represents spiritual stability, a voice of reason, and honesty due to her Christian beliefs. Alexa knows how to give Jane advice without making her uncomfortable. Alexa and Aiden's parents care for Jane as one of their own children which gives Jane a feeling of family and belonging.

"Regardless of what happens between you and my son, I want you to know that I consider you to be one of my own. We didn't know about you at the time we adopted Alexa. Had we known, you would have been adopted right alongside her."

Jane and Aiden's relationship is an interesting one. Aiden has never met anyone intriguing, distracting, and infuriating all at the same time. The one thing he knows is that Jane is the love of his life and he will stop at nothing to make her see they belong to together. The reversal of roles between Jane and Aiden emotionally and sexually add an attention-grabbing dimension to the couple's relationship leading to struggles.

Somehow in the area of sex, Jane was the stereotypical detached male and he was the clingy woman who wanted more.

Something else I liked is although Jane has *woe is me* moments (in the form of thoughts) and feelings of not being good enough, she doesn't begrudge Alexa's life and happiness. I mean in the grand scheme of things Jane is truly blessed and successful in her own right. She is a young African American woman who was dealt a rotten hand from the moment she was born until she made a way for herself. During these trying times she managed to keep her grades and school work up earning her a master degree at age 22 obtaining a position as a professor at an university that placed her on the tenure track. I would say that is not only impressive but a job well done!

As much as I adored this read, there were a few misses in the plot for me. With every disgusting mistreatment Jane endured at the hands of her foster father she never once let on to the horrific abuse to Alexa or a school official- she silently suffered the harm. I was a bit disappointed in Jane's rationale. It saddened me she had enough spirit to protect Alexa but not herself but part of me understands too. (view spoiler) Another mishap for me was the weight given to Jane's eating habits.(view spoiler) I felt unnecessary time was spent on this and could have been resolved quickly. A simple explanation could have been offered up to people to avoid the stares and unsolicited advice about her eating propensities. Lastly, there were several irritating things characters repetitively did or said that irked me but it did not take away from the overall moral and themes of the book.



The roller coaster ride of emotions this book takes you on is jarring. I sighed, cringed, cried, and laughed. With Jane's history she has to make the difficult decision to continue on the same path she's become accustomed to, or let others help her. When she lets walls down and believes the people she let in betrayed her, does she revert back to the closed up individual? Well, you have to read the book to find out. I will say the colorblind love Jane receives from Alexa's family is what she needs and is nothing short of touching.

I admire how author, Michelle Onuorah believes in her Christian faith and unapologetically interjects Biblical references in her books. I am a Believer who struggles with the day to day life of Christian living in a secular world. Reading books like this and Remember Me reaffirm my beliefs and make me think about my life as a whole and what path I'm on. I appreciate the relatable scenarios in the author's storytelling and hope people do not shy away from reading her work due to the religious tones. Like Remember Me, at no point in **Jane** did I feel the writing was preachy. The references merely added to the complexities of the characters and showed growth. **Jane** is a beautiful story of how God, love, and trust can help overcome someone's emotional/sexual detachments and learn how to fully spread your wings and live life with a peaceful state of mind.

**Jane** gets 5 stars for an inspiring true to life story and the theme. For me, the theme was everything is in God's hands. If you love angst filled storylines combined with a Christian backdrop ending with a HEA, **Jane** is for you.

\*\*\*I received a free copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review\*\*\*

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### **Patricia says**

4.5

First time reading anything from this author, and reading christian romance. It didn't start off as one . It eventually turned into one. But that how life is. Anywho I enjoyed and will read from this author again.

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### **★Codie Abibliophobic ★ says**

Wow, coming soon.

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### **Kim says**

Michelle Onuorah's JANE is one of those novels that take you by surprise. It's not my usual genre—I usually avoid novels with too much of a spiritual or inspirational theme because they tend to be too preachy for me. But like her previous novel, Remember Me, JANE tackles big issues like race, social class and spirituality with a light, deft hand.

Jane Daugherty, the main character, of JANE, has led a traumatic life. A victim of physical, sexual and mental abuse, she has learned to rely on no one. While this fierce independence has helped her achieve the position of being the youngest tenure track professor at the university where she teaches, it has also led to her leading an isolated life devoid of any emotional attachments or reliance on others.

Even though I am not a very religious person (in fact, I would say I am completely secular), I appreciated how Michelle took us on Jane's journey of love and self-discovery, on her realization that she needed a spiritual connection to find peace in her life.

This is an uplifting story that will particularly resonate for readers for like inspirational stories. However, any reader who likes stories of change and the power of love will enjoy Michelle Onuorah's JANE.

Note: the author provided me with a copy of her book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Karen's Bookshelf says**

Jane has had a difficult life full of instability, neglect, and abuse. In spite of all that she went through, nothing stood in the way of her making a better life for herself. When she meets Aiden, they both feel attracted to each other, but because of Jane's history she finds it hard to let others get close to her. Aiden wants to get to know her better, he just has to convince Jane to give them a chance. This was a great love story that takes you on a very emotional ride. Jane and Aiden's love story teaches you that any relationship worth having is worth fighting for. I loved it!

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### **Monique says**

I'm at the 80% mark with this book. But it's a struggle to finish. It had potential, but the pacing took a hard left, and the story began to drag. It's still, dragging. Lots of religious commentary is stifling the narrative. It's too heavy-handed at times.

Full review to come (whenever I finish). For now, my rating stands at a 2.9

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### **MsKingsPens says**

I thoroughly enjoyed this book, I finished it in less than a day and I couldn't wait to put it down... I'll get to why in a little later. Jane is extremely well written and full of uncomfortable moments. When we meet the title character, she is on to the outside world an over achieving phenom. On the inside, however, she is on auto pilot. Over worked, in physical and mental pain, and in need of an intervention in the worst way. Through a series of events she meets up with a woman she once loved like a sister, Alexa. Their friendship and kinship is renewed and starts Jane down a path that ultimately changes her life forever. She begins a whirlwind, minefield of a romance with Alexa's adopted brother Aiden and develops a friendship with their parents. The way I am explaining it feels overly simple... it's not but Michelle N. Onuorah does a great job of showing how seemingly innocuous actions can add up to momentous change. They all get help from a likely but unlikely source: God. Very little in life is really left to chance and by bringing Jane and Alexa back together, God brings Jane and Aiden to Him. They all get an HEA, but they have to earn it. Boy, do they have to earn it.

The romance was so much fun. The dichotomy between Jane and Aiden was interesting in that men are so rarely shown as emotional- that is emotion not tied to anger and lust- or introspective in romantic fiction.

Him being the one constantly looking for reassurance and her being the stoic, hard to read one was used to show their personalities in a surprisingly effective way. I not only understood why they fell in love but I understood why it might not have worked out. Aiden was passionate and determined. He spoke before thinking and was naive. Jane was strong and honest. She was also closed off and stubborn. Without a little divine intervention, these two would never have stayed the course.

The friendship between Alexa and Jane also added to my enjoyment of this book. Alexa's loyalty to and unwavering love for Jane (and vice versa) was a balm at times. They both got by with a little help from their best friend. Rare in romance and so, so necessary.

Having written all of that, Jane was a difficult read for me. First, I usually avoid super angst books and I have grown weary of physical/sexual abuse as a way to give female characters depth. I can accept both when well written because every good romance needs tension and sex crimes are unfortunately something that a large number of women will have to deal with at some point in their lives. Romance is escapism and the slow reveal of Jane's past abuse was nearly visceral for me. Second, I have a good deal of history with the U.S. Foster Care system. I have known some excellent and horrid Foster parents. The things that Jane experienced are not the norm, but I can say with a heavy heart they could and do happen. While I would read this again, it will be a long while.

Touchy subject but I have to add... From the disclaimer you know the book deals with spirituality. Onuorah is unabashedly a Christian (love that!). I like that her stories can reflect her beliefs without every character becoming a lemming and them being forced to live in some Utopian sing-a-long. This book is full of what I would call home truths that I appreciate, but I think it might end up mistaken as judge-y. I don't see that as her intention and I think a non believer can enjoy this book without feeling collection plate pressure, lol.

Jane is a five star, worth my time read. I am glad I read it and I look forward to the author continuing to share her talent and creativity with the world!

I received an ARC to read and review. As always, that promised nothing but my time!

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### **Debbie Hughes says**

Let me state that I requested to read this book in exchange for an honest review....Having said this, when I read the synopsis for the story I was intrigued. I couldn't wait to read this book.

I loved this story. I could not stop reading. I am not what I would call a strong Christian I do however have faith. Watching these two find their way was a wonderful emotional ride. I shed tears of joy and experienced heart break and love. The use of scripture in "real life" terms should help all see God's plan.

Great job Michelle Onuorah! Loved your book! Thank you for reminding me what it's all about!

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### **Savannah- Quad Motherin' Book Readin' Diva says**

**\*\*I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review\*\*** Since I don't do any other kind, this was an easy exchange!

OK, so I enjoyed this book:) Well written and thankfully none of the utter foolishness that trips my IR trigger. Very few cons, but I'll list the pro/con breakdown to be thorough.

PRO's:

FINALLY, an author has the guts to write a romantic story that isn't afraid of both sexual realism AND spirituality. I have found it horribly small minded that romantic fiction authors in general seem to believe that the moment a person expresses any type of faith, they become asexual. That's not true in life, and I see no reason why sex and spirituality can't exist in fiction. Believers are human beings. It was nice to see this depicted in an honest light.

Jane, our heroine, was black. She wasn't shove-her-afro-and-bantu-knots down our throats, talk about how dark her skin is on every page, must-have-hips-and-ass black. She was just a black woman who was IDENTIFIABLY black to me. I dig that. I dig that the author allowed our hero/Aiden to appreciate her features but not rhapsodize over her beauty being because it was different. He found her stunning because he found her stunning. Cool.

Our hero/Aiden made me love him despite his inherent lack of alpha badassery. Y'all know I dig my alpha's..the real ones. Aiden was SO beta but he still managed to show strength and determination when/where it was needed. Not every time I wanted him to show it, but he played pretty realistically for me.

Loved Aiden's family, including Jane's childhood foster sister Alexa, the reason Jane was brought into Aiden's orbit to begin with. Kind people who were willing to embrace Jane not only because of her association with Alexa/Aiden.

Loved Jane being ultra intelligent and so very strong. Her experience as an abuse survivor was written well in that the author let us know how far it went in some heart wrenching ways, but she still saved us the blow by blows. I don't need that in my romance. I need to know where my people have come from so I can cheer their HEA as heartily as they deserve. But I do not need to be choking down bile when I read a love story. Jane's issues were understandable and played to how I would imagine an adult abuse survivor would react to an intense romantic relationship.

Finally, I loved that these two went for it..in the beginning, before the invariable pitfalls assaulted them, they just flat went for it. Jane had an initial hesitation, which was understandable. But after accepting the first date, they both fell and fell hard. I always love that in a story. I hate when people deny deny deny for no apparent reason. It's a waste of time and anti-romance as far as I'm concerned.

Now, the CON'S. Short list so I'll be brief:

I didn't like that ultimately it *\*almost\** appeared that the entire problem between these two was about their lack of God in the relationship. Please-keep in mind that that is ALMOST the exact opposite of my real life beliefs LOL. But as I've stated MANY times, I get enough reality in my reality and that's not why I read romance. I'm just saying, there was some unresolved junk that got wrapped in a faith bow the last third of the book. I do believe God works everything out if you put your faith in Him and turn your problems over to Him. But again- when I read a love story, I want to read about the two leads doing the grunt work, blood sweat and tears to make their way to each other. Epiphany's aren't my favorite resolution in romantic fiction and both these folks had them.

I do feel this book was very much 50/50 split- half plain contemporary romance and half Christian romance. I understand the need to NOT label things because readers are so easily dismissive when they think something won't fit in their lane. I went in understanding that this story depicted spirituality and faith, but I will admit I didn't realize to what degree. I do think that's ok seeing as I stated earlier, it was ALSO a contemporary love story. I just think I ended up ok with that because of my personal faith, whereas another reader may not be. So really not so much a con as a caveat

Finally, Jane had moments where I didn't like her lol. Having said that, most romantic heroines do that to me. MOSTLY this was about making a huge deal out of a health issue she had as a result of the early abuse. It was a diagnosis that does not in any way scream "Yo! I was abused as a kid!" but she treated people like they were intruding for noticing instead of learning to deal with the completely normal curiosity people had. To me, that was overplayed. She was so mature in so many other ways, it just didn't make sense to me that she hadn't learned to accept the curiosity, give people the bare bones medical explanation to circumvent the speculation and drama. Instead, she let it make her way too uncomfortable and ultimately lead to multiple moments where it had to be focused on and explained in detail that included the abuse. I get that the mere fact that it was indeed a result of the abuse was a trigger for her But still- she adapted in so many other ways and this was something she literally had no control over. I just wanted her to kind of buck up.

Overall, 4 stars and a VERY solid read. I will happily add other works by this author to my list.

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### **Camille says**

OMG! If you are looking for something different from the BWWM genre THIS IS IT!!!!!!!!!!!!

This is about Jane and Alex "little bit" who we meet in a foster home as young girls. The story cuts to years later when Jane is a professor at a university that Alexander attends. Alexa was adopted from the home leaving Jane behind. Jane once she reconnects with Alexa meets her brother Aiden. That's all I'm gonna say, it's that good. This story was an emotional, and visceral read it was an absolutely beautifully written story and I must say a breath of fresh air. Loved it!!

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