

NEXT CHAPTER

Spotlight LYDIA



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PRESENTED BY BLACK ODYSSEY MEDIA
INTERVIEWED BY CHARDAI POWELL

Chardai: Hey, Lydia! I am so excited to speak with you for our Next Chapter series. Tell me, what is your very first memory of falling in love with books?

Lydia: Oooo, I would say elementary school because we used to have the summer reading challenges. I wanted to pick a series so I wouldn't have to think about what books I wanted to read next. I picked up the Percy Jackson series. My grandma is really big on literature, so she would tell me to read a certain number of chapters a day, and she would tell me to highlight the words I didn't know. I would have to grab the dictionary because I couldn't use Google.

Chardai: Oh, wait, hold on, I love that! So you would pick a series because... I'm thinking about the children that come into the bookstore. I'm going to note that for the future. Okay, so when do you feel the safest or most comfortable when you're reading?

Lydia: I'll say late nights, decompressing after work. I'm able to shower right after work, and my whole day disappears. All that matters right now is this moment to be able to breathe and escape into this book.

Chardai: Night owl over here too! So, something I love about your content is how you support libraries and are big on your book hauls. Can you walk us through how you've incorporated that into your content?



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LIBRARY

Lydia: When I was starting off, I did not know about Hoopla and Libby, so that's why I shout from the rooftops about them. When I started off, I was trying to get books from Audible all the time, and it's like... I loved reading, but... I saw this one creator talking about, "You're not a hot girl if you don't have a library card," and I was like, "I want to be a hot girl!" I wanted to support these authors in other ways that retail stores might not have.

Chardai: Yes! Please go out to your libraries! Now, I know this is going to be tough, but if readers associated you with two or three authors or books, who or what would they be?

Lydia: *Luca* by Grey Huffington, *Saving Sunflower* by Rae Lyse, and probably Aubree Pynn!

Chardai: Those are exactly the authors that I think of for you! Switching gears a little bit, what is a book that has altered your brain chemistry?

Lydia: The *Soul Series* by Gabriela Ge. That stamped in me that everybody deserves to be loved, and there is always going to be someone out there who knows how to love you the way you deserve to be loved.

Chardai: What I would give to read that series again! Hands down, a series I constantly recommend. What would you say is your reason behind content creating?

Lydia: I feel like I just want to see everybody Black win, and that goes for readers and authors. I want people to be educated and have these books to relate to. The more Black authors we have, the more people will be receptive to reading.

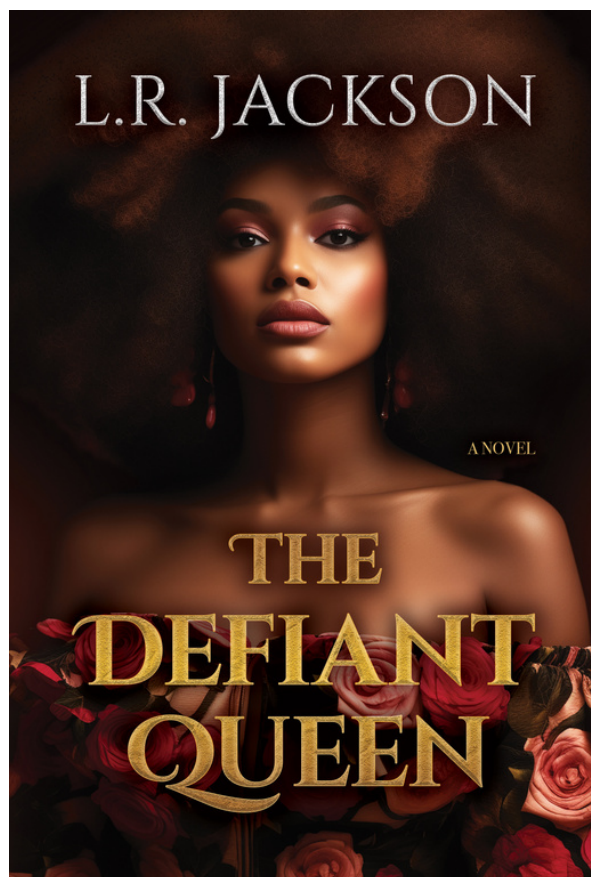
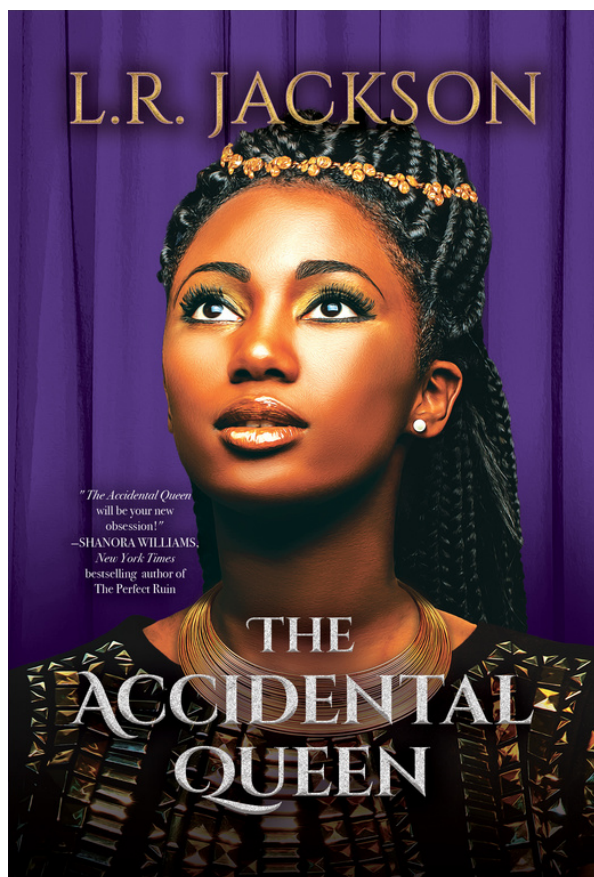
Chardai: We're literally rooting for everyone Black. And speaking of that, who are some Black content creators you want to give your flowers to?

Lydia: I love all the girls, but I'll say my go-tos are Darcy (@dj.is.reading), LJ (@pinnedpages), and Castina (@castinareads).

Chardai: S/o to the girls! And you are always supporting others, so what is an interaction with another creator that has stuck with you to this day?

Lydia: Ironically, it's from the BRBF brunch. This beautiful young lady named Kierra came to my brunch last minute, and she was new to the content space, so I introduced her around. After the brunch, she sent me a DM thanking me and told me she would cherish that moment forever because it was her first authors' brunch. I tried not to cry, but that still makes me emotional.

Chardai: Look how far you've come from your first post in 2023. What would present-day Lydia tell that version of yourself?



Lydia: I would just say, “Keep being authentically you.” I would sometimes think, “Oh, maybe I need to put on makeup for my videos so people will be more engaged,” but I realized that’s not me. That’s not my thing. I would say, “Be confident in what you’re doing and keep doing it.”

Chardai: Yes, Lydia! I love talking to you. To end this chapter, what is a Black Odyssey Media title you would recommend, or one that’s on your TBR?

Lydia: I would say a low-key one that people don’t really know about is *The Accidental Queen* by L.R. Jackson. That book was too good!

Chardai: Lydia, thank you so much for your time, girl! We can’t wait to see what you do next! Be sure to connect with Lydia’s Why (@babes_readbooks)



Chardai Powell is a writer and digital storyteller who believes in the power of Black stories told with care. She is the Social Media Manager at Black Odyssey Media and a former lead bookseller known for uplifting Black indie authors and creating meaningful literary events. She is the founder of Dear Black Love, a community-driven event brand celebrating Black love and creativity, and is committed to using media as a tool for connection, visibility, and joy.



www.blackodyssey.net or www.blackodysseymedia.com

@iamblackodyssey



creativeaffairs@blackodyssey.net