

NOTES FROM THE CREATORS TO YOUNG READERS

I wrote this story to tell you the truth about the Confederate flag, about where it came from and how it has been used throughout our country's history. I want to help readers understand why it is not merely a symbol of "Southern heritage," but an emblem that makes many people feel anger and fear—and for good reason. I believe in telling kids the truth, even about things that are sad or a little bit scary.

I'm not sure when I was first told to stay away from people who flew or wore the Confederate flag . . . but I'm sure it was by someone who loved me and cared about my safety. What they didn't tell me was why those people could be a danger to me, and that left me confused. It wasn't until I was an adult that I learned just how often the Confederate flag has been used by white supremacists in our country. White supremacists believe white people are better than Black people and other groups, and they believe white people should control our society. I wrote this book because I believe white supremacy is wrong, and that celebrating the symbols associated with it (like Confederate flags and statues) is wrong too.

If human beings can learn to be racist, we can also learn not to be. In fact, your generation could grow up to be the fairest, most inclusive generation our nation has ever seen . . . especially if we adults do our part and tell you more truths about more things.

I wrote *That Flag* to do my part to make humanity better, because I believe in your power to change the world.

–Tameka

I truly believe that America is a country that can soar to the highest heights if we are open and honest about our past.

In *That Flag*, I wanted to illustrate the feelings of hurt and sadness that come with the past and present of the confederate flag, and towards the end of the book, paint visual representations of what society could look like if we are truly serious about addressing and confronting the monster that is racism. It is a monster that I have seen firsthand as a young Black boy growing up in the South, but I also grew up seeing many people who believe in a free and equitable society. This has led me to creating Artivism for a living, with the primary objective of illustrating both the hurt and the hope in this world.

I love to portray the innocence and wisdom of youth because it is often a roadmap of where we should go as a human race, and Keira and Bianca display this so well. To all of you youngsters out there who stand up and speak out for human rights and justice for all, thank you for leading the way to a brighter future. Never let anyone silence your voice.

–Nikkolas