



AUTHOR'S NOTE

On the day my son, Christopher Sebastian, was born, he became the center of my universe. Sun-kissed skin, dreamy brown eyes, and a gentle “coo” that could turn me into a human puddle. Ever since his birth, it has been my greatest wish to hold him in the space of first steps, first words, first books. But time waits for no one.

As Christopher grew, so grew my own fears as a mother. I wanted to keep my little boy shielded from the cruelties of the world. But whenever I would turn on the news, I would see the same story line repeated as countless young Black men and women were taken away too soon.

In my son's early years, it was easy to avoid discussing the injustices against people of color. But soon, the questions came: Why did they assassinate Dr. King? Why won't you let me play with my Nerf guns outside? Time was up.

I knew I needed to have The Big Talk with my son. The one where I tell him that while there are many nice people in the world, not everyone is. And that sometimes people will treat others unfairly because of their skin color, race, or religion.

I wrote *All Because You Matter* to provide parents with a starting point for conversations about the racial climate in our country today. These are issues that should be discussed in all families, of all backgrounds, if we are to raise empathetic future leaders.

I also wrote this book to remind all children, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, that no matter where they come from, they matter. That the people who came before them, and the work that they did to secure the life we have today, matters. Because of this, our children must continue that work and carry themselves with pride, even when they experience moments in which they are made to feel unimportant.

I will not raise Christopher to walk in fear. And while I don't have the answers for how we can “fix” racial injustice, I can begin with this book — a loving tribute to the greatness that lives within my beautiful, brown-hued, brown-eyed boy and within all children, of all colors, everywhere . . . YOU MATTER!

