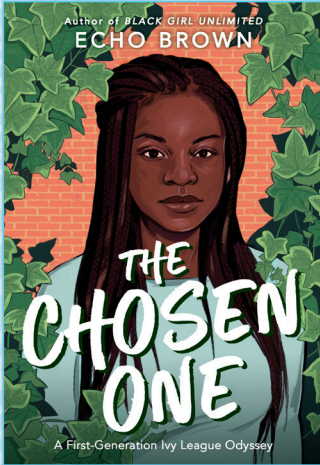


THE CHOSEN ONE

ECHO
BROWN



Book Club Pick

ABOUT THE BOOK:

There are many watchers and they are always white.

That's the first thing Echo notices as she settles into Dartmouth College. Despite graduating high school in Cleveland as valedictorian, Echo immediately struggles to keep up in demanding classes. Dartmouth made many promises it couldn't keep. The campus is not a rainbow-colored utopia where education lifts every voice. Nor is it a paradise of ideas, an incubator of inclusivity, or even an exciting dating scene. But it might be a portal to different dimensions of time and space—only accessible if Echo accepts her calling as a Chosen One and takes charge of her future by healing her past. This remarkable challenge demands vulnerability, humility, and the conviction to ask for help without sacrificing self-worth.

In mesmerizing personal narrative and magical realism, Echo Brown confronts mental illness, grief, racism, love, friendship, ambition, self-worth, and belonging as they steer the fates of first-generation college students on Dartmouth's campus. *The Chosen One* is an unforgettable coming-of-age story that bravely unpacks the double-edged college transition—as both catalyst for old wounds and a fresh start.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. As one of the few Black students, Echo goes into her freshman year at Dartmouth feeling watched and judged by her peers. How does Echo try to combat the constant staring? How effective is her way of doing things?
2. Who are the Defiance to Echo, and why do you think they are portrayed as archetypes of people in the Black community?
3. Why is Echo so adamant about finding her white Prince Charming? What does her desperation to be romantically accepted by a white person mean for her own perceptions of her self-worth?
4. Echo constantly struggles with the belief that she doesn't belong anywhere and can never really be herself. In what aspects of her life do you see her using performance as a form of survival? What is the emotional toll on Echo of always portraying the opposite of what she's feeling or thinking?
5. Discuss Echo's relationship with Christianity. In what ways does she distance herself from religious belief? Do you think her standpoint on it changes by the end of the book?
6. What sorts of pressures does Echo feel as a first-generation college student? Why does she feel she cannot share what she has been going through at Dartmouth with her family back in Cleveland?
7. How does Echo's attitude towards seeking help shift? How does asking for help make you stronger? In what ways does Echo change when she opens herself up to help and support from others?
8. "So much sorrow and despair, with roots that go all the way down to the bottom of time. A line, a matrix of generational pain. A legacy of suffering. Inescapable" (p. 186). This passage is speaking to generational trauma, meaning the pain inflicted on Echo's family in previous generations can have lasting impacts on current ones. View the outline on page 187 and discuss how the tragedies of those that came before Echo have manifested in Echo's own life.
9. Echo's story emphasizes the importance of growth and healing, whether through professional therapy or portal travel to alternate universes. How do these practices spark change within Echo, and what other examples of healing practices does she attempt throughout the book?
10. How would you define Echo's character development throughout the story? Do you believe she has fully unlocked her authentic self?