

LIME
BRILLIANT
BOOKS



BOOKS

INTERVIEW 60 SECONDS WITH...

Juleus Ghunta

Meet the inspiring Caribbean poet and author striving to help young people overcome childhood adversity

Q Can you tell us a little about your background? I grew up with three siblings in a single-parent home in rural Jamaica. My childhood was unstable, primarily because of finances. Challenges at home and school made learning difficult. My mother struggled to pay my fare to school but, like *Tata* – the character in my children’s book, *Tata and the Big Bad Bull*, I was determined to go. Mom did her best to fulfil our material needs, but things were tight. Some days I couldn’t afford lunch. I used second-hand textbooks or went without. Because of these challenges, I was subliterate at the age of 12.

Q How did you navigate the journey from your struggles in school to become a poet, author and Chevening Scholar? My situation worsened before it improved. At 14, I was kicked out of home and I lived on my own for three years. Then in 1999 Mike,



a Vietnam vet from Texas, moved to my community and encouraged me to read. Without the interventions of Mike, and others such as JM Green, a Jamaican lecturer whom I met during my time at UWI at Mona, I might not be alive today – and certainly not published in journals and winning scholarships.

Q What do you think others can take from your inspiring story? I hope my journey will inspire discussions about what it means to be ‘successful’. Our societies have largely failed to explore the complex emotional dimensions of success and failure, particularly as it relates to how post-traumatic stress from adverse childhood experiences negatively affects abused children’s brains and immune-system development. I hope to inspire others to be courageous in their efforts to unpack the deepest and scariest aspects of their lives.



3 GREAT READS

Pick up a diverse selection of new Caribbean books for



BLACK LEOPARD, RED WOLF

(RIVERHEAD BOOKS)

BY **MARLON JAMES**

In the stunning first novel in Marlon James’s Dark Star trilogy, myth, fantasy, and history come together to explore what happens when a mercenary is hired to find a missing child. As Tracker follows the boy’s scent, he and his band are set upon by creatures intent on destroying them. As he struggles to survive, Tracker starts to wonder: who really is this boy? Why do so many people want to keep Tracker from finding him? And perhaps the most important questions of all: who is telling the truth and who is lying?



MY TOILET IS BIGGER THAN YOURS

(CREATESPACE) BY **JEAN**

HAWTHORN-DACOSTA

Rosie, a young Jamaican girl, travels to China with her mother. With the help of a new friend, Jia, she explores the country, visiting historic sites, landmarks and tourist attractions, and trying new foods. This beautiful story shows that, although we may look different, we can learn so much from each other and discover how similar we really are.



PLASTERED IN PRETTY

(HOUSE OF NEHESI) BY **NC MARKS**

A pyromaniac burning a new-born, flamboyant vagrants, a rapist landlord, a psychopathic boy and the wilful yet fragile protagonist are all part of this dystopian tale – often disturbing, often funny – that dismantles the ‘Alice in Wonderland syndrome’ in a Caribbean paradise.

* FIND OUT MORE ABOUT JULEUS AND HIS BOOKS, POETRY, AND THE DREAMRIGHT PROJECT AT: JULEUSGHUNTA.COM

PAGE BY **CAROL MITCHELL**, FOUNDER OF CARIBBEANREADS PUBLISHING AND AUTHOR OF THE CARIBBEAN ADVENTURE SERIES, AMONG OTHER CHILDREN’S BOOKS. VISIT WWW.CARIBBEANREADS.COM

