

THE
MEMORY
LIBRARIAN

AND OTHER STORIES OF
DIRTY COMPUTER

JANELLE
MONÁE



HARPER Voyager

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Summary: "Whoever controls our memories controls the future. Janelle Monáe and an incredible array of talented collaborating creators have written a collection of tales comprising the bold vision and powerful themes that have made Monáe such a compelling and celebrated storyteller. Dirty Computer introduced a world in which thoughts—as a means of self-conception—could be controlled or erased by a select few. And whether human, AI, or other, your life and sentience were dictated by those who'd convinced themselves they had the right to decide your fate. That was until Jane 57821 decided to remember and break free. Expanding from that mythos, these stories fully explore what it's like to live in such a totalitarian existence . . . and what it takes to get out of it. Building off the traditions of speculative writers such as Octavia Butler, Ted Chiang, Becky Chambers, and Nnedi Okorafor—and filled with the artistic genius and powerful themes that have made Monáe a worldwide icon in the first place—*The Memory Librarian* serves readers tales grounded in the human trials of identity expression, technology, and love, but also reaching through to the worlds of memory and time within, and the stakes and power that exist there"— Provided by publisher.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JANELLE MONÁE is widely celebrated as an American singer/songwriter, actress, producer, fashion icon, and futurist whose globally successful career spans over a decade. With her highly theatrical and stylized concept albums, she has garnered eight Grammy nominations and has developed her own label imprint, Wondaland Arts Society. Monáe has also earned great success as an actor, starring in critically acclaimed films, including *Moonlight*, *Hidden Figures*, *Harriet*, *The Glorias*, and the 2020 horror film *Antebellum*. She will star in the highly anticipated sequel *Knives Out 2*. *The Memory Librarian* is her debut book.

ABOUT THE COLLABORATORS

YOHANCA DELGADO is a 2021–2023 Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University. Her writing has appeared in *Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy*, *Nightmare*, *One Story*, *A Public Space*, *The Paris Review*, and elsewhere. She holds an MFA in creative writing from American University, and is a graduate of the Clarion workshop.

EVE L. EWING is an author and a sociologist of education whose research is focused on racism, social inequality, urban policy, and the impact of these forces on American public schools and the lives of young people. Her works include *Ghosts in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side*, the poetry collections *Electric Arches* and *1919*, and the middle-grade text *Maya and the Robot* (illustrated by Christine Almeda). She has written for the Champions series, the Ironheart series, and other Marvel projects. Along with the award-winning author

and poet Nate Marshall, Ewing wrote the play *No Blue Memories: The Life of Gwendolyn Brooks*, commissioned by the Poetry Foundation. Ewing is currently an assistant professor at the University of Chicago Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice and an instructor for the Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project, a visual arts and humanities project that connects teaching artists and scholars to men at Stateville Maximum Security Prison through classes, workshops, and guest lectures.

ALAYA DAWN JOHNSON is the author of seven novels for adults and young adults. Her most recent novel for adults is *Trouble the Saints*, winner of the 2021 World Fantasy Award for Best Novel. Her young adult novel *The Summer Prince* was longlisted for the National Book Award, and *Love Is the Drug* won the Norton Award. Her short stories have appeared in many magazines and anthologies, including *Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy*. She lives in Mexico, where she received a master's degree with honors in Mesoamerican studies at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México for her thesis on pre-Columbian fermented food and its role in the religious-agricultural calendar.

DANNY LORE is a queer black writer/editor raised in Harlem and currently based in the Bronx. Their contemporary speculative fiction and science fiction has been published in *FIYAH*, *PodCastle*, *Fireside*, *Nightlight*, EFNIKS.com, and other venues. Their comics work includes *Queen of Bad Dreams* for Vault Comics, *Quarter Killer* for Comixology, *James Bond* for Dynamite Comics, and *Star Wars Adventures* for IDW Publishing. They have short comics in *Dead Beats* and *The Good Fight*, and have also edited *The Good Fight* anthology and *The Wilds* from Black

Mask comics. Their work is included in the YA prose anthology *A Phoenix First Must Burn* from Viking Books.

SHEREE RENÉE THOMAS's first all-fiction collection, *Nine Bar Blues: Stories from an Ancient Future*, was a best collection finalist for the Locus Awards and the World Fantasy Awards. Her work also appears in *The Big Book of Modern Fantasy* (1945–2010) edited by Ann and Jeff VanderMeer from Vintage Anchor. She is also the author of two multi-genre/hybrid collections, *Sleeping Under the Tree of Life*, longlisted for the 2016 Otherwise Award, and *Shotgun Lullabies*. A Cave Canem Fellow honored with residencies at the Millay Colony for the Arts, VCCA, Bread Loaf Environmental, Blue Mountain, and Art Omi/Ledig House, her stories and poems are widely anthologized and her essays have appeared in venues such as the *New York Times*. Thomas edited the two-volume World Fantasy Award-winning *Dark Matter* (2000, 2004), which first introduced W.E.B. Du Bois's work as science fiction, and coedited the anthology *Trouble the Waters*. She was the first Black author to be honored with the World Fantasy Award since its inception in 1975. She serves as the Associate Editor of the award-winning journal *Obsidian: Literature & Arts in the African Diaspora* and as the Editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, founded in 1949. Thomas was recently honored as a 2020 World Fantasy Award Finalist in the Special Award—Professional category for her contributions to the genre. She lives in Memphis, Tennessee, near a mighty river and a pyramid.