



How can you support the Black community and the cause of Black liberation? Educate yourself. Pay Black artists for their work. Prioritize listening to Black voices. And you can perform all three of those actions by doing something you already love to do.

Read.

Read Black authors. If you have the extra money, buy their books. If you don't, ask your library to do it for you. Pay them for their work, talk about their ideas, examine your own prejudices, and above all, listen to their voices.

Black romance authors are writing joy in the midst of pain, and they will never give up on happily ever after for their characters on the page and for their friends, their families, and themselves. It's up to all of us to help make those dreams a reality.

We know that what we choose to read and buy matters, and we're committing to reading, purchasing, and recommending Black romance this year and every year. As we get to know more and more authors, expect more and more lists! Here are a few of our favorite authors to get you started.

**Beverly Jenkins** is the queen of Black historical romance, and she's had a profound influence on the generations of writers and readers who have followed her. She's an extremely prolific writer of both historical and contemporary romance, but she's best-known for her exhaustively researched historical and Western romances. Here are just a few:

- The LeVeq Family series
  - Through the Storm (1998)
  - Winds of the Storm (2006)
  - Captured (2009)
  - Rebel (2019) - February 2020 book selection
- Destiny series
  - Destiny's Embrace (2013)
  - Destiny's Surrender (2013)
  - Destiny's Captive (2014)
- Old West series:
  - Forbidden (2016)

- Breathless (2017)
- Tempest (2018)
- Standalones:
  - Night Song (1994)
  - Indigo (1996)
  - Topaz (1997)

If Beverly Jenkins is the queen of Black historical romance, **Alyssa Cole** is her princess - and not just in theory! Her books are peopled with smart, brave heroines who will stop at nothing to make the world a better place.

- The Loyal League series (historical)
  - An Extraordinary Union (2017)
  - A Hope Divided (2017)
  - An Unconditional Freedom (2019)
- The Reluctant Royals series (contemporary)
  - A Princess in Theory (2018)
  - A Duke by Default (2018)
  - A Prince on Paper (2019)
  - Once Ghosted, Twice Shy (2019)
  - Can't Escape Love (2019)
- The novellas! (historical)
  - That Could Be Enough (from Hamilton's Battalion) (2018)
  - Be Not Afraid (2016)
  - Let Us Dream (2017)
  - Let It Shine (2016)
  - Agnes Moor's Wild Knight (2014)
- The Runaway Royals series (contemporary)
  - How To Catch A Queen (forthcoming, December 2020)
- Off the Grid (contemporary/postapocalyptic)
  - Radio Silence (2015)
  - Signal Boost (2015)
  - Mixed Signals (2015)

**Lindsay Evans** is known for her sweet and sensual contemporary Black romance and erotica. Her *A Delicate Affair*, set at the turn of the 20th century, kicks off the series *Decades: A Journey of African American Romance*, in which each decade of the 20th century is the setting for each book by a different Black author. The series is a great way to get to know some new-to-you authors!

- Miami Strong series
  - Bare Pleasures (2016)
  - The Pleasure of His Company (2017)

- Her Perfect Pleasure (2018)
- Decades: A Journey of African American Romance series (multiple authors)
  - A Delicate Affair

**Rebekah Weatherspoon** is a favorite here at A Bookish Affair. She created the dreamiest and most delicious cinnamon roll hero EVER (or at least in SES's humble opinion.)

- The Loose Ends series
  - Rafe: A Buff Male Nanny (2018)
  - Xen: A Marriage of Inconvenience (2019)
- Cowboys of California series
  - A Cowboy to Remember (2020)
  - If the Boot Fits (forthcoming - Fall 2020)
- Beards and Bondage series
  - Haven (2017)
  - Sanctuary (2017)
  - Harbor (2020)

An unapologetic lover of happy endings, **Adriana Herrera** writes sexy and diverse romance, and she's beloved for her *Dreamers* series. Herrera is a social worker by day and her characters are often champions of social and racial justice.

- Dreamers series
  - American Dreamer (2019)
  - American Fairytale (2019)
  - American Love Story (2019)
  - American Sweethearts (2020)
  - American Christmas (2020)
- Standalones
  - Mangos and Mistletoe (2019)
  - Finding Joy (2020)
  - Here To Stay (2020)

Known for her inspirational stories, **Piper Huguley** writes sweet yet unflinching historical romance. Her series tackle subjects such as the Great Migration and a young couple trying to found a Black college in the South just after the Civil War.

- Migrations of the Heart
  - A Virtuous Ruby (2015)
  - A Most Precious Pearl (2015)
  - A Treasure of Gold (2015)
  - A Champion's Heart (2016)

- Home to Milford College
  - The Lawyer's Luck (2014)
  - The Preacher's Promise (2014)
  - The Mayor's Mission (2014)
  - The Representative's Revolt (2015)

**Talia Hibbert** is another favorite here at A Bookish Affair -- our May selection, *Get A Life, Chloe Brown*, was deemed flawless by Shandy. She writes with incredible sensitivity, pitch perfect language, dynamic supporting characters, and relatable heroines and heroes.

- The Brown Sister romances
  - Get a Life, Chloe Brown (2019)
  - Take a Hint, Dani Brown (2020)
- Ravenswood
  - A Girl Like Her (2018)
  - Damaged Goods (2018)
  - Untouchable (2018)
  - That Kind of Guy (2019)
- Just for Him
  - Bad for the Boss (2017)
  - Undone by the Ex-Con (2018)
  - Sweet on the Greek (2018)
  - Work For It (2019)
- Standalones
  - The Princess Trap (2018)
  - Wanna Bet? (2018)

**Kwana Jackson**, a longtime advocate for diversity and equality in romance, has written several series under the name K.M. Jackson, while her latest release, *Real Men Knit*, is published under the name Kwana Jackson. *Real Men Knit* has been getting a lot of buzz, and Shannon loved it!

- Sugar Lake series (as K.M. Jackson)
  - As Good As the First Time (2018)
  - Too Sweet To Be Good (2019)
- Unconventional Brides series (as K.M. Jackson)
  - Insert Groom Here (2016)
  - To Me I Wed (2017)
  - The Betting Vow (2017)
- Creative Hearts series (as Kwana Jackson)
  - Real Men Knit (2020)

Inspired by her marriage to a former NFL player, **Alexa Martin's** books are THE place where sports and romance meet. Smart, sexy, and with a keen commentary on the sport-entertainment business for Black athletes.

- The Playbook Series
  - Intercepted (2018)
  - Fumbled (2019)
  - Blitzed (2019)
  - Snapped (2020)

Self-appointed author of “sexy academic romances” **Charish Reid** writes romance that celebrates Black women who deserve their happily ever after. Her latest novel is about a sexy university professor and a hot librarian. We are already lining up to check this one out!

- The Write Escape (2019)
- Hearts on Hold (2020)

According to her website, **Jayce Ellis** is all about giving “Black folks everywhere all the Happy Ever Afters they can stand.” Sounds pretty great to us! She writes contemporary LGBTQ+ romance with humor, heart, and sparkle.

- The High Rise series
  - Jeremiah (2020)
  - Andre (2020)
- Standalones
  - Alex's Law (2016)
  - The Carpenter's Prince (2019)

**Kennedy Ryan** writes for “women from all walks of life, empowering them and placing them firmly at the center of each story and in charge of their own destinies.” Talk about a Queen Move! Her series include the following (these are just a few of her many works!):

- Standalone
  - Queen Move (2020)
- The Grip series
  - Flow (2017)
  - Grip (2017)
  - Still (2017)
- The Hoops series
  - Long Shot (2018)
  - Block Shot (2018)

- Hook Shot (2019)
- The All the King's Men Duet
  - The Kingmaker (2019)
  - The Rebel King (2019)

**Therese Beharrie** writes diverse contemporary romances, and author KJ Charles calls her a “master of the close-study romance.” She’s the author of many Harlequin category romances and a few standalones as well! Here are a few titles to get you started:

- The Conveniently Wed, Royally Bound series
  - United by Their Royal Baby (2017)
  - Falling for His Convenient Queen (2018)
- The One Day to Forever series
  - A Wedding One Christmas (2018)
  - One Day to Fall (2019)
  - One Last Chance (2020)
- The Billionaires for Heiresses series
  - Second Chance with Her Billionaire (2019)
  - From Heiress to Mum (2019)

**Rebel Carter** writes historical romance because her ancestors deserved better, and she gives them her very best in the diverse, inclusive Gold Sky series. If you’re feeling pessimistic, take a little trip to Gold Sky, where a New York society girl can become a mail-order bride...to TWO handsome husbands. The love just gets bigger from there!

- The Gold Sky series
  - Heart and Hand (2019)
  - Hearth and Home (2019)
  - Honor and Desire (2020)
  - Three to Love (2020)
  - Leather and Lace (2020)

**Vanessa Riley** is a self-described Regency fanatic who writes impeccably researched, action-packed romances that center faith, love, and the Black experience in Regency England and beyond. Check out her website for fun extras, such as images of Regency fashion and a dictionary of Regency slang!

- The Rogues and Remarkable Women series
  - A Duke, a Lady, and a Baby (2020)
- The Advertisements for Love series
  - The Bittersweet Bride (2017)
  - The Bashful Bride (2018)

- The Butterfly Bride (2018)
- The Bewildered Bride (2019)

We'll wind up this installment of the list with the author who inspired us to think about a romance book club dedicated to diverse stories: **Jasmine Guillory**! She has taken the rom-com scene by storm. Her wildly popular books have introduced many readers to the genre, and they absolutely live up to the hype.

- The Wedding Date series
  - The Wedding Date (2018)
  - The Proposal (2018)
  - The Wedding Party (2019)
  - Royal Holiday (2019)
  - Party of Two (2020)

*A Bookish Affair, LOPL's romance book club, meets monthly to discuss the diverse, inclusive world of romance novels. This list was compiled by Shannon (ssedell@lakeoswego.city) and Shandy (sdickinson@lakeoswego.city).*