

my name is
ANXIETY

THE BOOK CLUB



WEEK ONE: THE BREAKDOWN

...WHAT DID WE JUST DIVE IN TO?

Let's discuss.

You are about to receive an exclusive, behind-the-scenes look of the author's break-down of what we just read—eighty-six pages total, chapters 1-5.

You ready?

Scroll through the next couple of pages to see why each chapter was so significant.

And, check out our exclusive book club pages to watch each chapter broken down LIVE with Ayana Symone and other readers.

Now?

Let's dive in together.

ALL BOOK CLUB CONTENT AVAILABLE AT
AYANASYMONE.COM UNDER "BOOK CLUB" TAB

LET'S
BREAK IT
DOWN:

WEEK ONE: CHAPTERS 1 - 5
JANUARY 15TH, 2023 - JANUARY 21ST, 2023

WHAT'S THE SIGNIFICANCE? CHAPTERS 1 - 5

Whether you've realized it or not, reader, there was a common theme running rampant within the first five chapters of *My Name is Anxiety*.

You may have caught it.

You may have missed it.

Lucky for you, we can find out together.

The one theme embedded within chapters one through five—the message that sets the rest of the story up?

Family.

Did you notice?

Let's break it down...

CHAPTER ONE

***The first time we see the main character anxious is when they think about their *family*.**

"My mother, obviously,' I begin, 'my sisters, niece and nephew, my aunts, grandparents,—' I begin to trail off. 'My uncle.'" — page 4

***Our first look inside Drea's *family* reveals them to be broken, chaotic, and divided.**

"Her dad—my tío—and my dad had a huge falling out," she explains. 'She probably hates my dad more than I do. Which, by the way, we should probably keep it down.'" — page 5

***It's not a coincidence that the main character compares Drea to her father this early in the story.**

"She looks just like her father right now, the way I usually see him when I come over—a pile of beer cans at the foot of his chair, head tilted up, mouth agape, with an overwhelming stench of alcohol. Drea looks no different." — pages 8-9

But,
wait!

There's more...

CHAPTER TWO

Our first look inside the main character's *family* is their interaction with their panic-stricken mother.

"And, there stands my mother in the middle of it all—in her pink, matted bathrobe and strands of her black hair unraveling out of her teal rollers—a horrified look on her face. It's a look that says her family is coming to town in just two days, and they have every reason to judge her if this dinner isn't perfect. It reminds me that nothing good has ever come from our family holidays. Our next reunion is only forty-eight hours away." —
page 12

**The main character and their mother
both are anxious about *family*.**

"Thanksgiving is more than just dinner. It's Mom's annual chance to prove herself worthy. Her whole side of the family is rich—too rich. Every holiday we reunite, they never forget to remind us. Not that we need reminded." — page 14

CHAPTER TWO

***The next character introduced in the story is part of Drea's *family*.**

She laughs, teasingly. “Relax,” she assures me, briefly setting her hand on top of mine. “I’m just letting you know that I invited my cousin, Cecelia, to hang with us today. Is that cool?”

“Uh, uh—” I stammer.

“Believe me, she’s cool. You’ll like her.” And, then she gets out of the car before me, not knowing if I can believe her or not.

— page 19-20

***The story behind Chico's restaurant is rooted in *family*.**

"I get out and follow her inside, passing through the same narrow hallway where Chico keeps all of his family photos. Drea told me a little about him before and his obsession with his two dead parents. They died trying to get their whole family across the border. Chico is the only one who survived the trip. He ended up traveling with several other immigrants, and they all became family once they got here. The whole story is told through every photo hanging there—from the earliest picture Chico could find of himself at the age of three all the way up until the family he’s built today." — page 20

CHAPTER TWO

***Luna's reading of the main character all led back to the character's family.**

"Your family,' is the first thing Luna finally says. I jump slightly at the sound of her voice. 'You get it from your family.'"

— page 32

***Luna's reading also hints at the long, unknown history of the main character's family.**

"Oh yes,' she hums away, dismissing my disobedience. 'All of it.' Then, she closes her eyes and breathes in deeply.

'Boy,' she lets out. 'What a history.'" — page 32

On to
Chapter
Four...

CHAPTER FOUR

***The next anxiety attack the main character has is about *family*.**

"How could I do that to my mother, leaving her to die so pitifully—over a dumb Thanksgiving dinner? And, how will I explain that to our family at Thanksgiving? How will I explain that I was the last one to see her alive and did nothing to save her when I saw her lying there this morning?"

— page 37, chapter 3

***The main character wakes up to more panic about *family*.**

""When do you think they'll arrive?' she asks me, faintly. My chest tightens. 'When do I think *who* will arrive?' She looks at me pathetically. 'The *family*,' she growls. My stomach turns with doom. 'The *family* is coming today?' I choke. 'Why?'" — page 41

***NOTE the sudden change in atmosphere when it turns out the family isn't coming yet on pages 42 and 43.**

CHAPTER FOUR

***The first time we see Drea triggered is when they begin talking about her mother —her *family*.**

"In all the years I've known Drea, I've learned one thing: Talking about her mother is off limits.

All I know about her is that she left. With no explanation, no communication, her mom just...left. After Drea told me that, she asked that I never bring it up again."

— page 46

***Drea's pain is more visible after the main character invites her to stay with their *family*.**

"I mean, you can spend Thanksgiving with my family if you'd like," I say gently, standing in my driveway, peering at her through the window.

But, this only infuriates her further.

She peels off, leaving me feeling stupid for bringing it up.

— page 48

Last, but not least...

CHAPTER FIVE:

THANKSGIVING DAY

CHAPTER FIVE is littered with family drama, tension, arguments, painful memories, and panic, demonstrated through differences of class, a wide range of ethnicities, differences in political opinions, and the representation of each generation—leaving the main character to have their wildest anxiety attack on pages 85 and 86.

The chapter speaks for itself.

The
significance
of it all?

A person's family, family's history, and upbringing / how they were raised plays a huge role in what they later struggle with in life. Consider the first five chapters of *My Name is Anxiety* as an invitation to reflect on yours... and the next set of chapters as an invitation to reflect on even more.

Let's dive in deeper.

Stay tuned.