

“the story of my home”

Once upon a time, an author in Washington, D.C., found a great place that needed character. Spoiler alert: There’s a happy ending.



Homeowner
Jason Reynolds

A mid-century bookcase from Chairish shows off rare books—including a signed first edition of *Beloved*—and a rotating display of collected objects.



This piece is by Alim Smith, a self-described Afro-surrealist. Says Jason, “I like the distortion of it.”

the story of my entry

Jason Reynolds tells stories for a living—he’s the best-selling author of more than a dozen young adult novels, and also the coauthor of a recent book about racism. It makes sense, then, that when he went searching for a new home in Washington, D.C., in 2018, one with character and history was important to him. “Many places didn’t have stuff like the old moldings and doorknobs I was looking for,” he says. Then he discovered a 1,054-square-foot row house that was the perfect size and layout. Originally built in 1922, it had been completely renovated. “It was pretty much a clean white box, exactly the opposite of what I wanted,” he says. But he liked the idea of putting his spin on it (naturally), centered around the new and vintage art he collects. He teamed up with Annie Elliott, a designer and former art historian. “We brought in bold colors in just the right places,” says Annie, “along with furnishings that look like they’ve been in the family for generations.” And now, everywhere you look, there’s a tale to tell.

That yellow wall: Jason may wear exclusively black—“so much easier!”—but when Annie suggested painting the two-story gray wall an egg-yolk hue (Sun Valley by Benjamin Moore), he was all in. It brings out the paneling.
Those framed papers: Hung above the rustic-looking table from Urban Outfitters, a frame holds contents from Jason’s grandmother’s wallet, including her first application for a government job and voter registration card. “The right to vote was still fairly new for Black people,” he says. “You can trace a life history in these papers, and the story of her persistence.”

Jason bought this quilt by Bisa Butler when she was an emerging artist; today, her work is exhibited in museums such as the Smithsonian.

A wicker table from Serena & Lily is casual enough for Jason to prop his feet on while he types away.

My mother
Is coming home
From the hospital
Tomorrow

And it has occurred
To me That
Somewhere
Between being bathed
In a Bath tub
Overflowing with
Soapsuds and toy soldiers

And Today

I have learned to appreciate her

Seems like sickbeds
Become signals
To selfish sons
Saying

Trouble don't last a ways
Nor do mothers

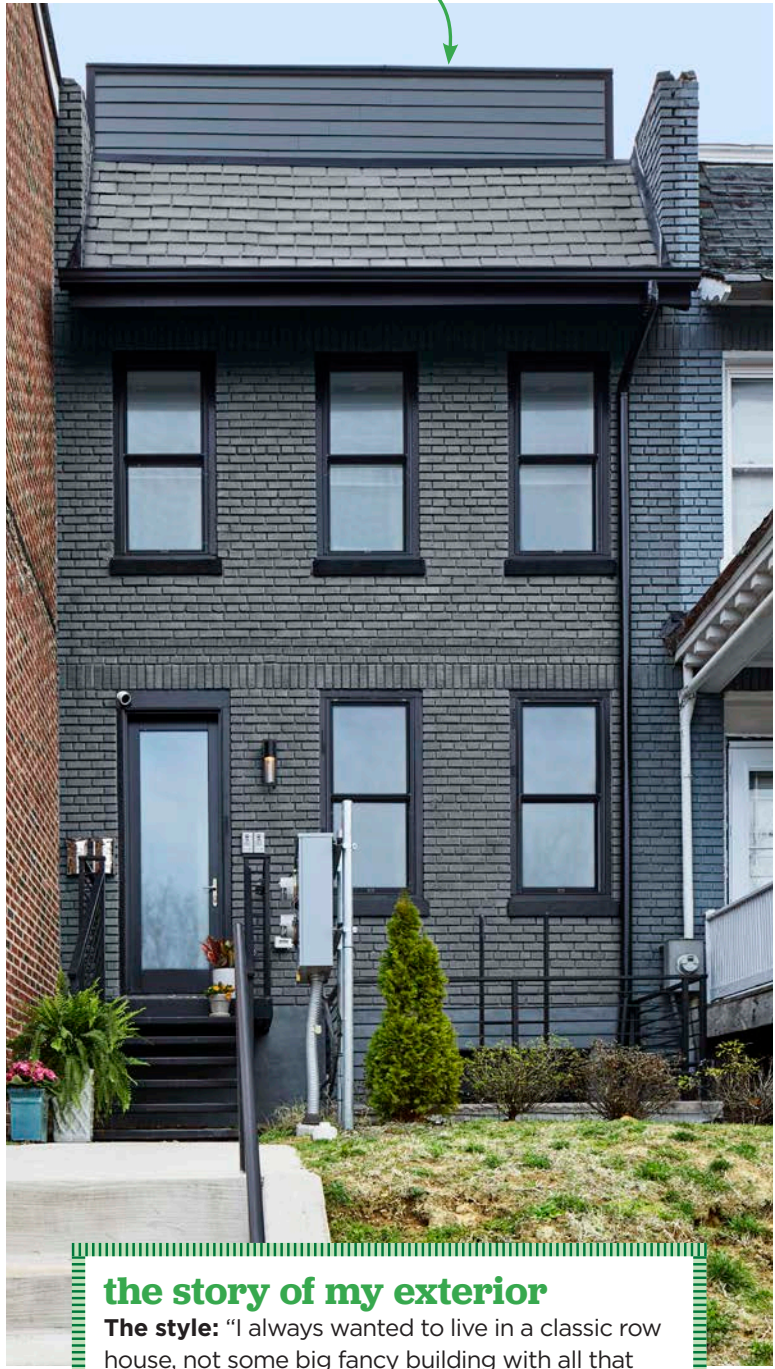
the story of my living room

That sofa: "I've always wanted a couch that looked like an old chesterfield," says Jason, who stalked them for years at antiques fairs before going for this velvet beauty by Article.

Those carved wood mirrors: A mismatched vintage pair reminds Jason of the mix of wood and pattern in his childhood home. "My dad and I have been on a lot of antiquing trips," he says.

The poem on the wall: It's calligraphed on an old door. "My friend Jason Douglas Griffin made it 15 years ago—I wrote the words. It's about my mother coming home from a hospital after getting treatment for cancer."

For a similar shade to the one on the bricks, try Wolf Gray by Benjamin Moore.



the story of my exterior

The style: "I always wanted to live in a classic row house, not some big fancy building with all that glass," says Jason. "I've spent a lot of time in hotels because of work and didn't want to live in one."
The simplicity: "What sets this house apart from others on the block is what it *doesn't* have—no added porch or awning," he says. The deep gray color and black trim also help the home look streamlined and modern.

the story of my kitchen

Those counter stools: It was a tough decision, but Jason and designer Annie ultimately went with this blue quartet by Flash Furniture, bringing brightness.
The fridge: Jason initially wanted to swap the stainless steel fridge for a vintage-y one, but Annie convinced him to keep this, as it's huge and high quality. As he says, "I learned that if it ain't broke..."
The island hooks: Jason added them for his female friends. "Women never want to part with their handbags—or put them on the floor!" he says.



Inspired by early 20th-century lighting, the pendants are from RH.

These jadeite green milk glass knobs are from Etsy store Russo Reproductions.

Grass cloth wallpaper by Phillip Jeffries adds texture and warmth.

Lamps in green and blue by Gallery Lighting, with a chill '70s vibe, dovetail with the room's other strong colors.



the story of my bedroom

That chandelier: Found on Chairish, its wood beads have a quirky, earthy feel that sync with the room. When lit, it casts a beautiful pattern on the wall and ceiling.

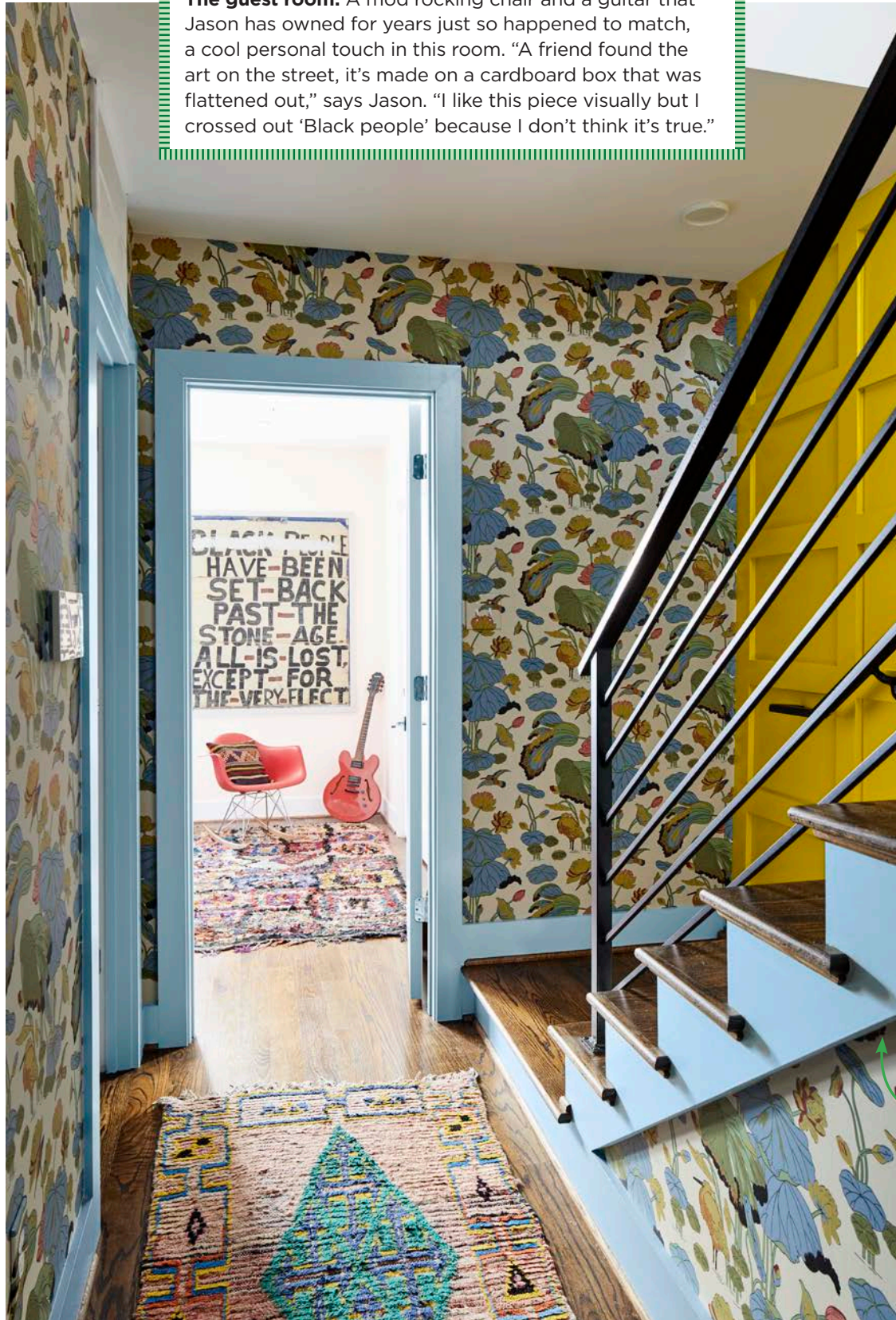
The bed: Jason prefers platform beds, like this CB2 one, for sleekness' sake: "Typical beds take up too much airspace."

The yellow art: It's by Mexican artist Artemio. When you look closely, you see it's not empty—a few Spanish words are spelled out in itty-bitty pasta letters. "They roughly translate to, 'I am thinking of the people I have forgotten,'" says Jason.

the story of my hallway

That wallpaper: Annie has described the GP & J Baker wallpaper as “old-grannyish floral”—right up Jason’s alley. “My mother made bold choices—my home is basically a modern version of hers,” he says.

The guest room: A mod rocking chair and a guitar that Jason has owned for years just so happened to match, a cool personal touch in this room. “A friend found the art on the street, it’s made on a cardboard box that was flattened out,” says Jason. “I like this piece visually but I crossed out ‘Black people’ because I don’t think it’s true.”



The light blue trim (Sheer Romance by Benjamin Moore) coordinates with the print's petals.

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A glass desk with slim legs from West Elm keeps this little room light and airy.

the story of my office

That cabinet: The blue metal IKEA cabinet holds a treasure trove: “It has every single manuscript I’ve ever completed, with revision marks from my editor,” says Jason. “We’re old-school.”

Those framed jeans: Before Jason became a successful author, he managed a Rag & Bone store in New York City. After repeatedly mending his favorite employee-discount purchase, he gave the jeans a space of honor. Says Jason, “It’s a reminder of how far I’ve come.”

now get the look



sconce
Cartwright 11"-tall metal sconce in antique brass finish, \$100, lampsplus.com



pillows

From left: Selva 18" x 18" wool pillow, \$135, the-citizenry.com; Sadza Triangles 18" x 18" cotton pillow in Madagascar coral, \$48, mbare.com



wallpaper

GP & J Baker Nympheus wallpaper in original, \$137.50 per roll, decoratorsbest.com



coffeemaker

Smeg coffeemaker in pastel green, \$200, williams-sonoma.com



side table

Nero 25"H x 19"-diameter marble and brass-finished-aluminum table in white, \$269, crateandbarrel.com



clock

Muji 3½"W x 3¼"D x 8"H plastic cuckoo clock, \$79, store.moma.org



lamp

Brushstroke 22½"-tall ceramic and Lucite lamp in yellow, \$525, janabek.com



rocking chair

Corrigan Studio Ducks polypropylene, metal, and wood rocking chair in red, \$140, wayfair.com



typewriter

Royal Classic 4½" x 13¼" typewriter in mint, \$217, bestbuy.com



rug

Safavieh Amsterdam AMS-108 3' x 5' polypropylene rug in terracotta, \$69, rugs-direct.com



vase

Imax Cecila 13¼"-tall ceramic vase, \$29, riverbendhome.com



sofa

Sven 88"-wide velvet and wood sofa in grass green, \$1,399, article.com



elephant

2"W x 5½"D x 4"H mango wood and brass elephant, \$30, crateandbarrel.com

counter stool

Dovercliff 24"-tall steel stool in glossy blue, \$71, allmodern.com

