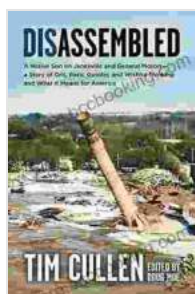


# Native Son on Janesville and General Motors: A Story of Grit, Race, Gender, and the American Dream

In the annals of American literature, few works have captured the complexities of race, class, and the pursuit of the American Dream as profoundly as Richard Wright's seminal novel, "Native Son."



## Disassembled: A Native Son on Janesville and General Motors – a Story of Grit, Race, Gender and Wishful Thinking and What it Means for America by Leigh L. Thompson

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1487 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 204 pages  
Lending : Enabled



Published in 1940, "Native Son" tells the story of Bigger Thomas, a young black man living in the poverty-stricken South Side of Chicago. Bigger's life is a constant struggle against the suffocating forces of racism and economic inequality. When he accidentally kills a white woman, his fate becomes a tragic exploration of the consequences of a life lived in the shadows of fear and injustice.

In 1951, "Native Son" was adapted into a powerful film by Elia Kazan, starring Sidney Poitier as Bigger Thomas. The film was a critical and commercial success, earning Poitier an Academy Award nomination for his unforgettable performance.

In 2019, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Katori Hall adapted "Native Son" for the stage. Hall's adaptation premiered at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, directed by Tony Award winner Leonard Foglia. The production received rave reviews, with critics praising Hall's unflinching exploration of race and violence in contemporary America.

### **The Janesville Story**

In 2019, General Motors announced the closure of its Janesville, Wisconsin plant, resulting in the loss of over 1,300 jobs. The closure sent shockwaves through the Janesville community, which had relied on the plant for generations.

In response to the plant closure, a group of Janesville residents came together to create the Janesville Economic Development Corporation (JEDC). The JEDC's mission is to create new jobs and opportunities for the people of Janesville.

The JEDC has partnered with a number of organizations, including the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, to develop new programs and initiatives to support economic development. One of these initiatives is the Janesville Promise Zone, which is a federally designated area that receives priority access to federal funding for community development projects.

### **Grit, Race, Gender, and the American Dream**

"Native Son" on Janesville and General Motors is a story of grit, race, gender, and the American Dream. It is a story that resonates deeply with the challenges and aspirations of our present day.

The people of Janesville are demonstrating extraordinary grit in the face of adversity. They are working together to create a new future for their community, one that is more inclusive and prosperous for all.

The story of "Native Son" on Janesville is also a story about race and gender. The challenges faced by Bigger Thomas are all too familiar to many people of color in America today. The film adaptation of "Native Son" was groundbreaking in its time for its unflinching portrayal of police brutality and racial violence.

The stage adaptation of "Native Son" by Katori Hall brings these issues into the 21st century, exploring the ways in which race and gender continue to intersect and shape our lives.

Ultimately, "Native Son" on Janesville and General Motors is a story about the American Dream. It is a story about the struggles and sacrifices that people have made in pursuit of a better life for themselves and their families.

"Native Son" on Janesville and General Motors is a powerful story that has resonated with readers, viewers, and theatergoers for generations. It is a story that speaks to the human condition, and it is a story that continues to challenge and inspire us today.

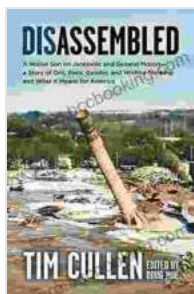
In the face of adversity, the people of Janesville are showing us what it means to have grit. They are working together to create a new future for

their community, one that is more inclusive and prosperous for all.

The story of "Native Son" on Janesville and General Motors is a story that deserves to be told and retold. It is a story that has the power to change hearts and minds, and it is a story that can help us to build a better future for all.

### Image Credits:

- Native Son on Janesville by Goodman Theatre
- General Motors by GM Heritage Center



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