

READING and WRITING in the

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A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

NEWSLETTER

THIS MONTH:



FEATURE:

Maxine Allison needs a chance at redemption. Can she get it? SHOULD she?!

This month we get a newsletter subscriber exclusive look at THE REDEMPTION OF MAXINE ALLISON prologue.

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Also:

Gratuitous! How far is TOO far?!

Page 3

MELANIN: A Novel Turns one year old this month and we're celebrating with a BIG announcement!

Page 13

For August we have a Word Search and the answer key to last month's Crossword Puzzle!

News and Information about Completed and Upcoming Projects and MORE!



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WELCOME BACK!

It’s AUGUST!

The year has passed the halfway point and great things are happening! I’m working on several projects at once (as I tend to do), and each project is more exciting than the next. I have short stories that are about to come out, not the least of which is the LONG AWAITED first installment of *Tales of the Monkey’s Paw*! I’m also hard at work on the second Paradigm Void book, *Further Journeys into the Paradigm Void*. The first book is presently still being edited but will be available to the public very soon. I will be following that up with *The Redemption of Maxine Allison: A Novella*. That story is written and presently going through the editorial process as well, but you can get a sneak peek at the prologue in this issue (yet another perk of being a subscriber to the newsletter). So, as I said at the beginning, there are big things coming up and I’m extremely excited to be bringing them to you and to get your feedback! Feedback@iyapoyapa.com is ALWAYS open...

Iyapo Yapa



And What of the CARGO? Is here!

“Kylah Mbaye of the Zahnoka people, lay as silently and still as she could, halfheartedly petitioning the ancestors that at least for one night she would not be spirited away and taken above deck to endure yet another in a procession of endless rapes. Another woman would have long ago given in to despair--but Kylah--in the face of such crushing odds against her and her people within the bowels of this floating nightmare, knew that eventually, this voyage would not end well... for her captors.” And so it began. AND WHAT OF THE CARGO? is a tale of love and hate, tears and triumph, suspense and horror that leads to an unimaginable conclusion.

“The Atlantic crossing, or “Middle Passage,” as it was called by European slavers, was notorious for the number of deaths incurred, averaging in the vicinity of 15-20%”

— Walter Rodney. How Europe Underdeveloped Africa

Much is rightly said and written about the enslavement and fates of Afrikans who were kidnapped from their homeland and transported to the Americas and other lands along the Middle Passage. Absent however is an expanded examination of the fate of those who did not make it through the journey. Whether victims of an inability to survive the unimaginable environment in which they were forced to occupy, or due to murders while attempting to revolt, or by simply jumping overboard, choosing death as a better alternative to chattel enslavement.

What of those ancestors in the depths of the oceans, and what of their souls and spirits. Or to put it bluntly—what of the CARGO?

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Gratuitous? How far is TOO far?!

I've heard it said, when talking about crossing lines: "You can't know where the line is until you cross it." That may or may not be true, but I do think about it sometimes as I'm writing. When it comes to sex and violence especially, how much is too much? How far is too far? When does it cross over from being a necessary component of a story that moves it forward to being *gratuitous*.

Before we go any further let's define terms.

According to Vocabulary.com

Gratuitous means:

/grə'tuədəs/ /grə'tuɪtɪs/

"Without cause" or "unnecessary." Telling ridiculous jokes at a somber occasion would be a display of gratuitous humor.

Gratuitous can be used to refer to something that's unnecessary and mildly annoying.

I gather from this that even something necessary, such as violence in a crime story can cross the line into becoming unnecessary or excessive—depending on the story.

Could the sex in a novel that dubs itself to be "erotica" be necessary, but at some point, become unnecessarily excessive? I guess anything's possible.

I remember the first time I watched the series *Spartacus* on Showtime. Though one of my guilty pleasures, the show, in my opinion, was most definitely excessive and way over the top when it came to the violence and sex. I would comment to my best friend (who would join me in trying to dig out the series' deeper meaning during lengthy conversations) that to me the show was a bunch of graphic sex and violence with a thin hint of a story to hold it together as it vacillated between the two.

There again, was the sex and violence gratuitous?

Perhaps. But just because those elements might be over the top, is that necessarily a bad thing? Does it depend on the subject matter and the purpose of the show, movie or written piece? I think that, just as with nearly everything, it boils down to a matter of taste. Even with my own work, I have presented things to people and given "trigger warnings" only to have them come back and tell me how mild or non-triggering the work was. By the same token I have presented things I knew may have been on the rough side, but that I in no way thought there would be anything triggering about it.

That's what I get for thinking!

Even as I'm writing this, I don't know what the answer the answer is. I only know that it is a question, but at the end of the day, there actually may not be an answer. I have just recently become aware of a genre called "extreme horror" and to those I've heard describe it, it is exactly what it sounds like.

Extreme!

So, the question becomes, if someone produces something in that genre, is it still considered gratuitous? How can it be if that form of excessive violence and/or horror is a necessary component of the work and without it, it wouldn't be—well—EXTREME?!

Could the sex in a novel that dubs itself to be "erotica" be necessary, but at some point, become unnecessarily excessive? I guess anything's possible.

All of that said, I'm thinking along these lines because I had to debate with myself a bit before selecting the prologue to *The Redemption of Maxine Allison* as the sneak peek for this month.

The problem wasn't with the story itself. I'm quite proud of the work, just as I am with everything I write and offer to our people. The issue is with the extreme scene of domestic violence that marks the beginning of the story and sets the stage for the rest of what is to play out. I didn't know whether I should have used it this month or not. I eventually concluded that this is my work, and it is for the upcoming novella which is presently in the editing stage.

I think that people who write gratuitous scenes know that they are and that is their intention for whatever reason. Some I believe, do it strictly for shock value, but I wrote the scene the way I did because I felt it was necessary to write it as I did.

Domestic violence is brutal, horrifying, soul crushing, humiliating, vile and ugly in the most profound terms, and for me, to describe it in any way short of that would be not only disingenuous but insulting in its way to anyone who has either been a witness to it or a victim of it.

To that end, when I write violence (and domestic violence in particular), I present it in all of its debased disgusting "glory" to whatever degree I am able.

So, all of that said, I present you with the prologue to the upcoming novella *The Redemption of Maxine Allison*. Coming soon after the release of *Paradigm Void*.



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THE REDEMPTION of MAXINE ALLISON

~a sneak peek~

White.

All brides want to wear it on their wedding day.

A tribute to their purity.

Maxine Allison-Davidson thought back to a wedding she attended as the guest of her best friend Carla Sharpe. In her mind she could still see the bride as she walked down the aisle – maiden name Janice Mason, who became Janice Stafford, now moments away from becoming Janice Lucas, then eventually Janice Stafford again, finally to rest as Janice Glassman. The bride tried her hardest to look somehow regal but fell just short as she strode toward her future ex-husband, Miles Lucas.

Janice wore a flowing white wedding gown with a train that was at least twice as long as she was tall. Adorned in all white, bouquet in hand, veil faced and peacock proud, she supposed herself to be the very epitome of the purity and virtue she sought to project.

Maxine, or “Max”, as she was called affectionately by those who knew her, wasn’t a close friend of Janice. She was at the wedding because Carla had asked her if she wanted to attend as her guest. However, Maxine did know something of young Janice Stafford’s dubious reputation. Maxine watched, as everyone else did, while the blushing bride walked past. Maxine, with an elbow, nudged Carla lightly on her side.

“Hey Carla.” Maxine whispered out the corner of her mouth.

“What?”

“What’s the difference between Janice and Mount Everest?”

“What?”

“Every man in America ain’t been on **top** of Mount Everest.”

Max had developed, in Sunday School and church, a talent for clowning around and then having gotten everyone laughing, she could stand or sit stone faced as if she were perfectly innocent. Throwing a rock, and quickly hiding her hand behind her back as it were.

The punch line of Max’s joke caught Carla by surprise, and she burst into laughter, quickly trying to cover her mouth, but too late. Not before more than a few people turned toward her to briefly shoot a look of puzzlement, or disapproval.

Janice didn’t seem to notice any of this however, she continued to step down the center isle to the tempo of the wedding march and bask in the glow of her mock purity.

Maxine’s wedding, four months after Janice’s was nowhere close to as extravagant as Janice’s—**any** of them.

Her wedding was a small affair with only a handful of witnesses. There was no family on Maxine’s side because she had none. No mother, no father, no siblings. Even her best friend Carla had not shown up for the wedding because she was so dead set against the union. Likewise,

there was no family of Peter Davidson, the groom. Judge Bradley Davidson and his wife Karen, promptly cut Peter of their will and disowned him the day after the nuptials. Several acquaintances of Peter’s showed up, along with his best friend Jim, who performed his best man duties.

Maxine wore white that day.

When Maxine Allison became Maxine Allison-Davidson, she was a virgin.

* * *

White.

The color of a hospital room.

Cold, lifeless, humorless—

Sterile.

This was the most severe beating Max had received yet. Peter, blonde haired, blue eyed and with a smile that could melt a brick, started out in marriage as the ideal husband. Loving, attentive, and hard working.

Harder working.

Obsessively working.

Eventually, not working at all.

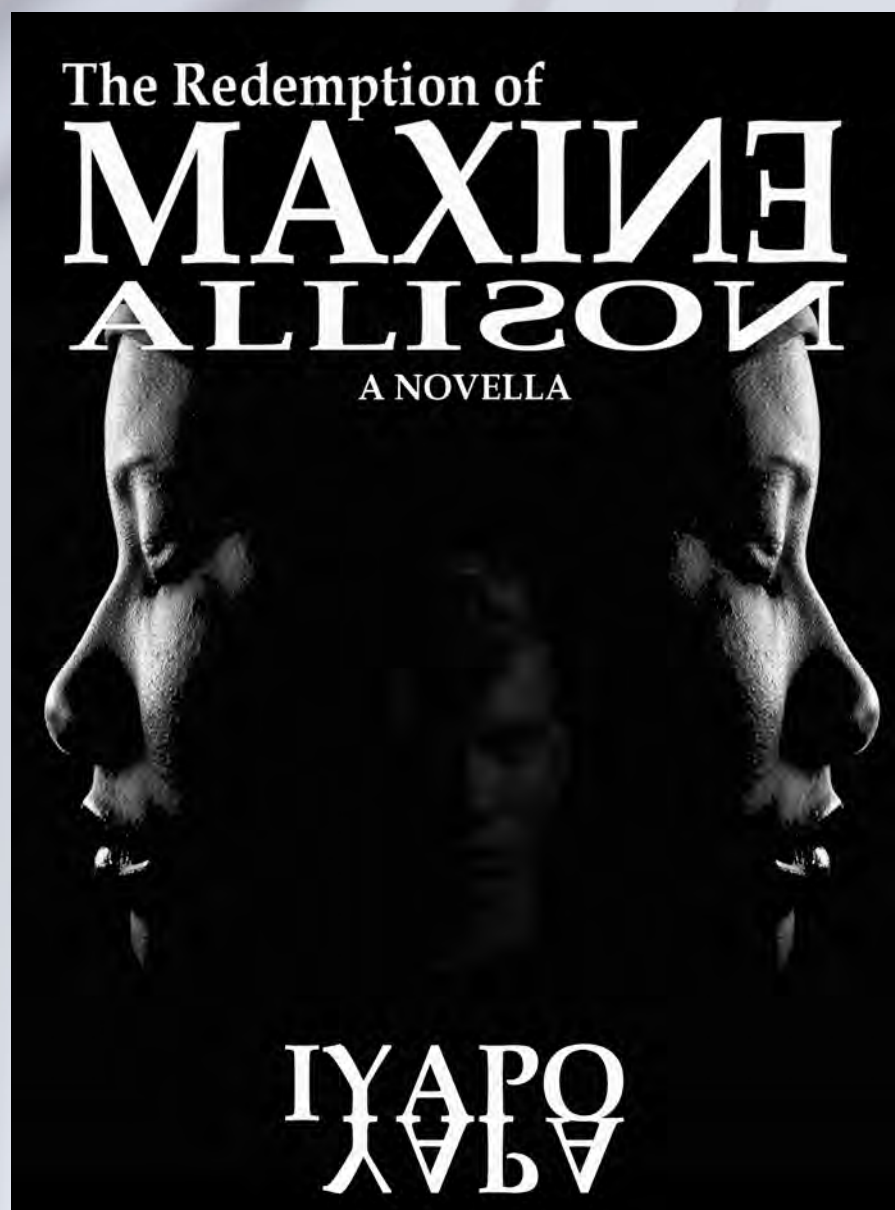
Within three short months of the day Peter was married, the company that employed him no longer had need for the services of an automated systems designer and engineer. All of Peter’s blood, sweat and tears—the grease he used to create the systems now used throughout the company had accomplished its task a little too well, and Peter had in effect programmed himself out of a job. At first the rich young tech-wiz was happy he had been let go. He thought that the situation forced him to do what he was too comfortable to do prior with

his six figure annual earnings. It was about time he struck out on his own and started his **own** company, reaping all the rewards for himself as opposed to sharing it with a bunch of faceless suits who did nothing more than sit on their wealthy asses while everyone else involved did all the work and actually produced the products, but without the workers reaping due reward.

What Peter **hadn’t** counted on was that Cyberscope, his former employer, would take all of his systems automation schemes and breakthroughs and patent them, thus, not only cheating him out of any residual income, but making it so no other company would need the kind of systems automations he was offering. Cyberscope had billions of dollars to invest in R&D as well as marketing and distribution. So, by the time Peter approached companies with his pitches and ideas, they seemed like outdated, pale imitations of what Cyberscope already offered and had in place. He soon became known in the industry as a come-lately when it came to his own creation.

In time Max could see that Peter was becoming more bitter with each passing day. He blamed big corporations for their indifference and thievery for his problems. He blamed a society that didn’t value workers and innovators anymore. He blamed the job market for making him obsolete virtually overnight, and finally—

he blamed Maxine.



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Scott blamed Max because he felt that it was due to her existence that he had debts and responsibilities; thank God she'd managed not to have gotten knocked up—at least that was something. He blamed Max because *he* had to support and feed two adults. If he hadn't married her, he could have maintained the standard of living to which he had become accustomed to with little or no work just by having Daddy and Mommy pick up his slack instead of totally cutting him off because he had married a Black woman. Ultimately, he could have looked forward to inheriting his part of their multi-million-dollar fortune and becoming an 'idle rich' part of the trust fund baby crowd.

Even if he **did** want to work and make his own way, at least he could have gone back to school on his parent's dime and become something marketable, and used their old boy network connections in business and government to garner some kind of obscenely high pay/no work position like the rest of his peers who were now living lives of ease, most of them going into government and sucking on the public tit for the rest of their lives without ever having done any real work, especially any work for the public that supposedly put them there for the purpose of representing them.

But no.

Peter all but missed **that** gravy train. He was forced to take chicken feed **EXTREMELY** high work **EXTREMELY** low pay jobs he considered far beneath him. Jobs that he would not have even given a second thought to when he was in high school.

And it was all **HER** fault.

That nigger.

Through Maxine's work as a successful graphic artist, and the money brought in by Peter (which often served only to keep the neighborhood bar and a couple neighborhood coke dealers in business), they managed to hold on to one of the cars, the house, and a few of their toys. To the neighbors, the Davidsons seemed to be doing about as well as they ever were before Peter's meteoric downward spiral into oblivion. But it was an illusion kept intact by Maxine's income, credit cards and the perpetual war between "Peter and Paul" when bills came due.

Davidson still went out to socialize—what else was he going to do? At first, he did so in vain attempts to make connections and get something *rolling*. In time, he asked his wife not to appear with him as he felt her Black face standing next to him was a hindrance to the opening of many of the doors upon which he was knocking.

With the way things had been between them of late, Maxine was only too happy to oblige. She went out with him less and less and finally, not at all. She preferred to stay home and do her work, anyway, sometimes scoring a big contract that would almost get them on their feet.

Until Peter drank and snorted it away.

Peter would go to the parties of his "high society" so-called friends, as he sought to make contacts or find an opening that would put him back into the game. He would spin yarns about all the new projects he was working on and the headway he was making in the tech industry. Initially,

the uninitiated believed Peter, because he knew the jargon, and he knew how much of it was solid and how much was bullshit. He could project the "right" image. Until, of course, men and women who actually **were** still actively working in the tech industry and operating at its highest levels started hearing about Davidson's stories. In short order his machinations became fodder for behind the back whispers, sneers and jokes.

It took a little while, but inevitably Davidson caught wind of the fact he had become a laughingstock. Amazingly, that did not cause him to withdraw from the society parties and industry gatherings he was still able to attend.

Though disowned and disinherited from his parents, that little family detail was not common knowledge. So even at the bottom, as long as he could—in large part due to Maxine's work—keep up an air of success and respectability with expensive clothes and their luxury car (that was always one month from being repossessed), he was still recognized as the powerful "Judge Davidson's son". This gave him a pass into the kind of circles that by rights should have been closed and locked tight to him long ago. So, Peter continued going to various gatherings and parties knowing that he had been outed, but no longer for the reasons he originally attended.

When Willie Sutton was asked why he robbed banks, his reply was, "Because that's where the money is."

So was Peter's reason for attending the swanky gatherings. Not because the connections were there—though that would be the case for someone who was considered a player—but because that's where the free top shelf booze and high-grade drugs were. Initially, when attending the soirees, Peter would be what one would classify as a social drinker and only a casual user of recreational drugs, but after his fall from the top his drinking seemed to grow in direct proportion to his frustration—which was an enormous ratio.

It was during that time, the beatings started.

The first time was a slap across the face.

Peter vehemently apologized to Maxine the following morning when he'd sobered up. He swore to God that it would never happen again.

God must have been **very** disappointed because it wasn't long before it happened again.

Slaps became closed fist hits.

And again.

Close fist hits became kicks.

The beatings growing in intensity and duration.

And again.

Kicks became, assaults with whatever was within arm's reach.

Maxine told Peter she wasn't going to live like this and no longer wanted to be with him. She demanded a divorce.

Peter vowed he would kill her if she tried to leave or divorce him, and Maxine knew he meant every syllable of what he said.

Part of the Keepin' it a BUCK HORROR/SUSPENCE Series!



And don't forget to check out the original Keepin' It a BUCK Series featuring tales of
Theoretical Ebon Fiction!

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Maxine was an only child and both her parents had died in a car wreck when she was in college. She found herself in the precarious position of having no living relatives, no one close to her, having been estranged for several years, from her best friend Carla (with whom Maxine had all but cut off contact, no longer answering Carla's phone calls, or responding to texts), she had no connections to speak of except her husband. And his friends. All of whom were white and seemed either to snub her outright, or to be overly friendly to her while either seeking to be "white saviors" to her or spend a great deal of time (and take great pleasure in) being micro aggressive. She had no one really to whom she could turn.

So, she stayed.

Now she was in a hospital room.

The cover story: She was going down to the laundry room when she lost her footing and fell down a flight of stairs. The miracle wasn't that she survived. The miracle was that she sustained so many injuries falling down a flight of stairs that consisted of one step that is the single step to the slightly sunken laundry room in her home, off the kitchen.

Maxine didn't care. No one could know that but her and her husband.

She was just glad to be somewhere safe for the time being. Somewhere she didn't have to worry about being beaten. Somewhere she could lie in bed and not have to worry about being suddenly awakened by her panties being torn off of her at 2:30 in the morning, and feeling the helplessness of unwelcome weight on top of her, and a violent intrusion into her body she absolutely did not want, that came with the smell of cigarettes and alcohol, topped off with rants containing so many racial epithets that it would make a gathering of Klan members cringe.

At least here, she was safe.

White.

The color of pain.

Quick, relentless, sudden pain.

This is not the hospital.

What was she thinking?

She was remembering the **last** time she was in the hospital.

She is **not** safe! She feels the blows—

Again!

PAIN!

Pain caused by repeated kicks to her ribs and closed fist punches to the back of her head, her back, and anything else on her body that was left exposed.

Maxine didn't remember when or how she ended up in the corner, on the kitchen floor. If not for the ugly yellow and brown flower pattern of the linoleum, (a design she had hated from the moment she moved into the house but never got around to doing anything about), she wouldn't have known whether she was in the kitchen, laundry room or bathroom.

Whenever Peter attacked her—all became instinct.

All became survival.

Cover the vitals.

Headfirst.

Roll yourself into a ball like an armadillo.

Protect the stomach.

The ribs.

The heart.

The lungs.

Then pray to God, he doesn't kick you in the kidneys.

Maxine experienced the vibration of a dull thud inside her head that originated on the outside of it. She knows he is hitting her on the back of the head. He is striking her just below where she's doing her best to cover. Fingers interlocking, holding together her hands as well as she can while still curling in a ball on the floor. She pulls her knees tighter to her chest shrinking as small as she can make herself. She feels a sudden kick to her butt. The force of it causes her to lurch forward hitting the top of her head hard against the cabinet beneath the sink.

Memories.

"Do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife?"

"You lousy whore!"

"To love, honor, and cherish—"

"I hate your dumb useless ass ... YOU FUCKED UP MY LIFE!"

"For as long as you both shall live?"

"I'll kill you, you fuckin' nigger bitch!!!"

White.

The color of her **husband**.

Slowly Maxine's mind comes back to the present. She no longer feels fists and feet on her body. She does hear something though. The sound starts out distorted, but there is no mistaking it.

Laughter.

Maxine hears Peter laughing at her. Perhaps he is laughing at the way she looked, when her head plowed into the kitchen cabinet.

At least she had married a man with a sense of humor.

Maxine turns her head up from the floor—sluggishly—to see exactly where Peter was standing. Slowly, ever so slowly Maxine looks up, still hunched over, but exposing what was still—with the exception of several bruises and actively swelling knots—an exceptionally beautiful face.

She looks up slowly—

Slowly—

Ever so slowly.

The next pain Maxine experiences is beyond all description.

She feels it on her chin first but the repercussions of it radiate throughout her body, the top of her head, her spine, her gut, her feet all at once. Then another hit that feels like it is on her left arm. Even through the white-hot pain she can hear the sound of the broomstick breaking after Peter delivers the blow.

Max's mouth is wet.

Water?

No, of course not—thick—salty—

Blood.

Something else.

Hard.

Chalky.

Teeth.

Spit them out before you swallow them. You may choke on them. Maxine spits out the single tooth, she at first thought was several, and once again assumes her original position, still spitting and crying. She tries to put herself into a ball once more. She tries to cover her head again, but this time something more is wrong, she can only use her right hand for cover—for some reason her left arm will not respond to her body's call for assistance during a time when it needs "all hands on deck".

Instantly she knows the blow that broke the broom, had likewise broken her left arm.

Her cries are mixed with the sound of some incoherent obscenities and epithets coming from her husband.

"shell... at log and dew dent ober don nher."

What? She rearranges the sentence in her mind.

"hell ... ast log ass yod sent oder dod near."

No, no... that wasn't it. What the hell is he saying?!

She can feel her dress being pulled roughly up to her back and then a fierce pull of her panties.

NO!

That action causes her mind to accurately unscramble what her husband/demon had said.

"Well ... as long as you're bent over down there!"

NO!

Maxine can feel Peter's hand on her back, holding her down, while simultaneously hearing the horrible sound of the brute undoing his belt and unzipping his pants. She knows that she dares not resist him or his brutality will become far worse.

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Were such a thing possible.

“At least you’re good for **this!**” Peter says as he drops his pants and prepares to work his underwear down in order to access his manhood. “You’ve always been a proper bed-wench from the start!”

Maxine closes her eyes and attempts to retreat into a “safe place” in her mind. Pulling everything in, like a turtle into its shell. She closes her eyes and thinks about places where children laughed, birds sang, and the sun shined bright. Green, tranquil places, where there were beaches and waters as blue as the skies that met them at the horizon.

Places that—

Ring, ring.

Peter stops and becomes still.

Ring, ring, riiiiiiiiing.

Peter attempts to dismiss the doorbell, but it refuses to be ignored. Had the neighbors heard something and called the police?

Peter jumps up, pulls up his pants, zips them and straightens them as he adjusts his bloody clothes. Before leaving the kitchen, he looks at the crumpled human being on the floor. “Don’t you move, and don’t you make a fuckin’ sound.” he says before walking out.

As if she could if she wanted to.

Wiping his bloody hands on his thighs he walks to the front door.

Through the sheer drape covering the front door window, Peter could make out a white man who looked kind of young, dressed in dark blue and holding a box and something else in his hand. He could also see a FedEx truck parked down the walkway and on the street in front of the house.

He opened the door.

“Delivery?” the young man said. “It requires a signature.”

“Ok ... thank you,” Peter said as he smiled and used his finger to scribble out a signature.

The FedEx man stood, trying to act like he wasn’t noticing the blood on the man’s hands and clothes as he signed.

“Sorry about that,” Pete said, shrugging, “I was down in the basement in my smoke room, chopping up some venison me and my dad hunted over the weekend. I’m trying to get it cubed and salted up so I can hurry up and throw it in the freezer.”

“Oh! You’re a hunter too!” the young man said becoming very animated. “I know exactly what you’re talking about. When my dad takes me out hunting, he does the same thing. He’s good at hunting it, but not half as good at cooking it as he **thinks** he is ... it always comes out kind of tough and stringy,” he laughed.

Peter smiled. “Tell him he might want to cure it a little longer, and then before he cooks it to make a brine solution and let it soak for no less than twenty-four hours, **minimum.**”

The young man glanced briefly at the signature and handed Peter the package. “Thanks sir, I’ll do that!” He then nodded to the man at the door, turned around and ran back to his still running vehicle.

Peter closed the door slowly as he looked at the small package and the name of the recipient. The package was for Maxine. No doubt some kind of art supplies. He walked back toward the kitchen, tossing the package onto the couch as he passed through the living room. The thought of raping his wife was now distant. This “break in the action” had given him time to calm down from whatever it was that set him off onto this particular berserk rampage. Try as he might, he couldn’t remember for the life of him what had set him off this time.

Ultimately it didn’t matter.

Maxine could vaguely hear Peter returning to the kitchen from the front door. The sound of his footsteps were ominous and seemed to be fading into the background—as was her consciousness. She prepared herself for whatever was going to happen when he returned. She attempted to find her safe place, but before she could—

everything went black.

THIS ISN’T THE END BY A LONG SHOT!

The story continues and takes mind bending twists and turns. Maxine seeks redemption from what turned out to be the worst decision of her life—but her husband has other plans. Get ready for:

The Redemption of Maxine Allison coming soon!



If you’re needing to get your **THEORETICAL EBON FICTION (TEF)** fix, **THIS** is the place to go!

PARADIGM VOID is a collection of short stories written by Iyapo Yapa, one of the new leaders in the field of Black Science Fiction and Speculative Fiction. Each story explores possibilities and concepts that were not long ago only within the domain of the standard Sci-Fi reader.

Now, with the insurgence of Black writers of TEF, Iyapo is adding his powerful voice to the chorus, and moving at full speed to work in our people taking control of our narrative!

In *PARADIGM VOID*, Iyapo explores things like:

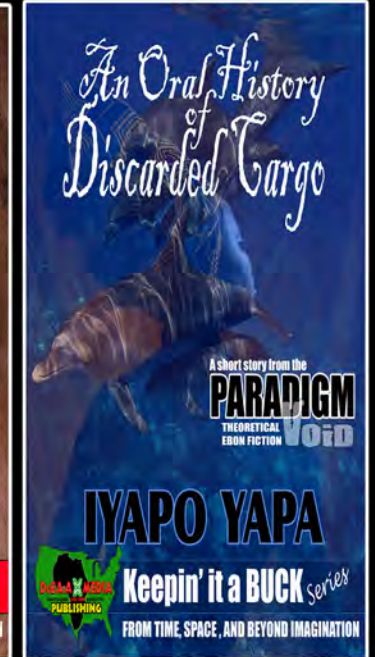
- What if somewhere in the universe numerous alien races observed earth and concluded that there is a faction on the planet that in no way should ever be allowed to reach out beyond the bounds of its own atmosphere?
- What if the universe itself started taking measures to correct and bring balance to itself in terms of justice?
- What if time slowed down nearly to a stop ... but only for YOU?

These possibilities and more are examined in “PARADIGM VOID” a collection of ten short stories in the genre of **THEORETICAL EBON FICTION**.

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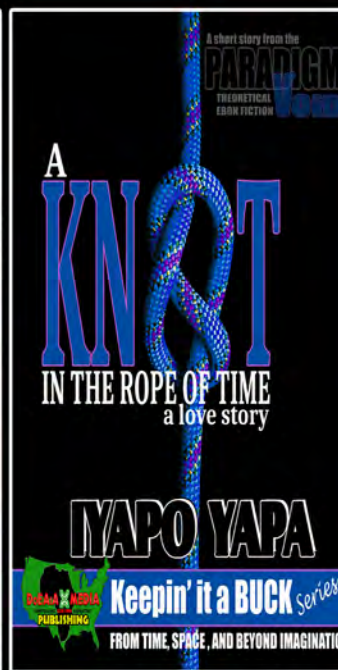


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Click the image to the right to hear a sample, of one of our talking books. Yes, it's still in its rough form, but the story is still fun as all get out! So give it a listen!

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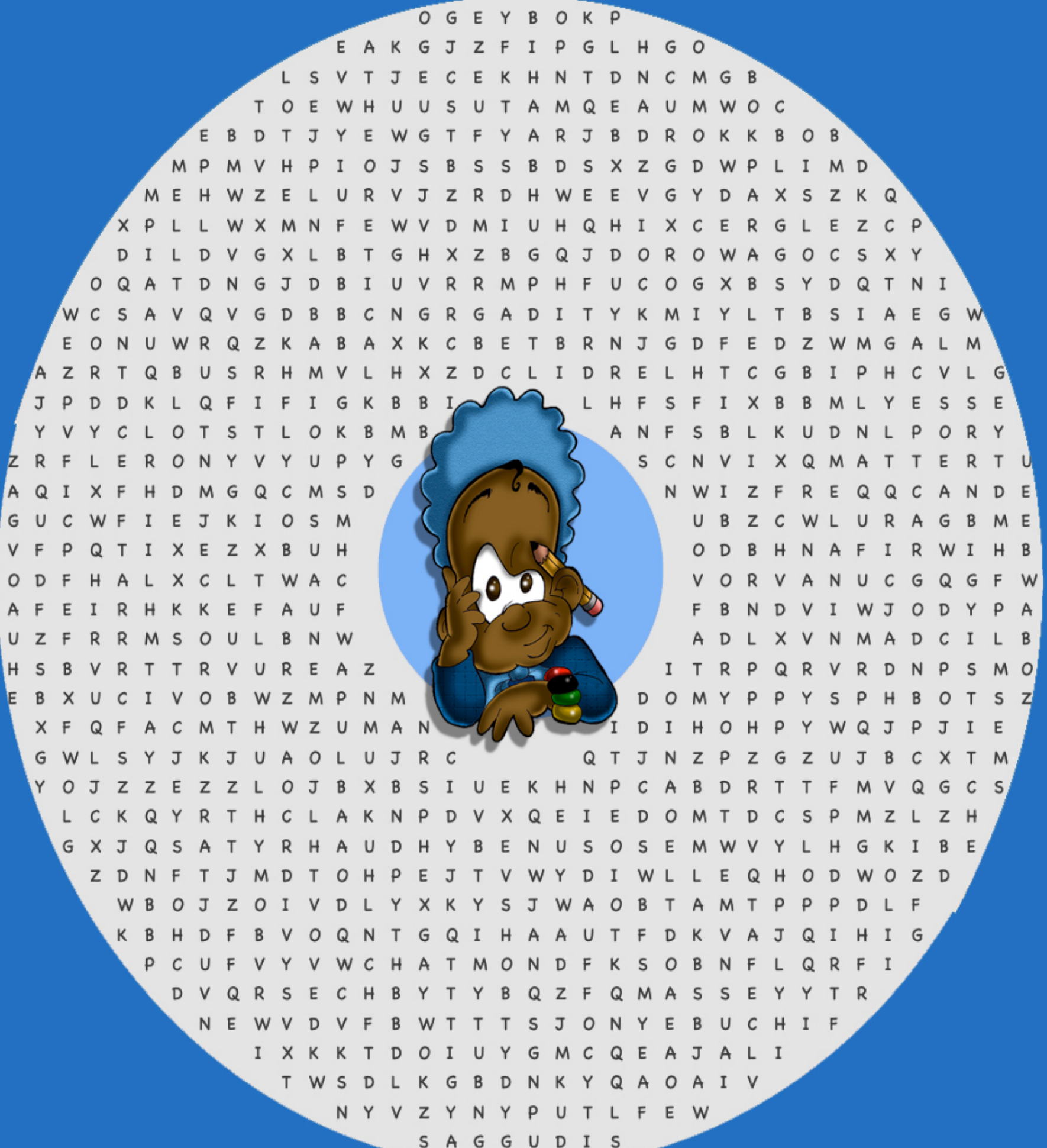
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August Word Search: Theoretical Ebon Fiction (TEF)

This month's word search pertains to THEORETICAL EBON FICTION (TEF). Some of the clues are about authors, some are about their work, some questions have to do with TEF in other media. The answer key to last month's crossword puzzle is at the back of the newsletter, and the answers for this issue's wordsearch, as always, will be in next month's edition of the READING and WRITING in the DARK Newsletter. As always, the words for the word search correlate to the answers to last month's crossword puzzle for those who don't want to go straight to the back for answers and may just need a hint or two. HAVE FUN!

[CLICK ON THE IMAGE BELOW TO DOWNLOAD A PRINTABLE COPY OF THE PUZZLE!](#)



READING and WRITING in the

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WORD SEARCH PUZZLE WORDS

AJALI

CARGO

MELANIN

OJETADE

DORO

TOTUOLA

STITCH

TANANARIVE

PARABLE

BRIGHTNESS

MATTER

CHATMON

MASSEY

ONYEBUCHI

SLOP

COMET

ESTELLE

SOUL

DERRICK

BLOOD

THEORETICAL

THEM

What are readers saying about MELANIN: A NOVEL?

"Melanin is an uncompromising and timely tale of speculative fiction, brimming with thought-provoking ideas and imaginative twists."

- Brandon Massey, award-winning author of *The Quiet Ones* and *Dark Corner*

"Iyapo Yapa has earned a place among the great science fiction writers with Melanin. The plot twists will keep you reading long after midnight. As well the imagery is captivating. Replicating the Black experience, you are drawn into the story as if you are there."

- T.J. Riley, author of *The Path to Brightness*

"The whole world needs to read this book!"

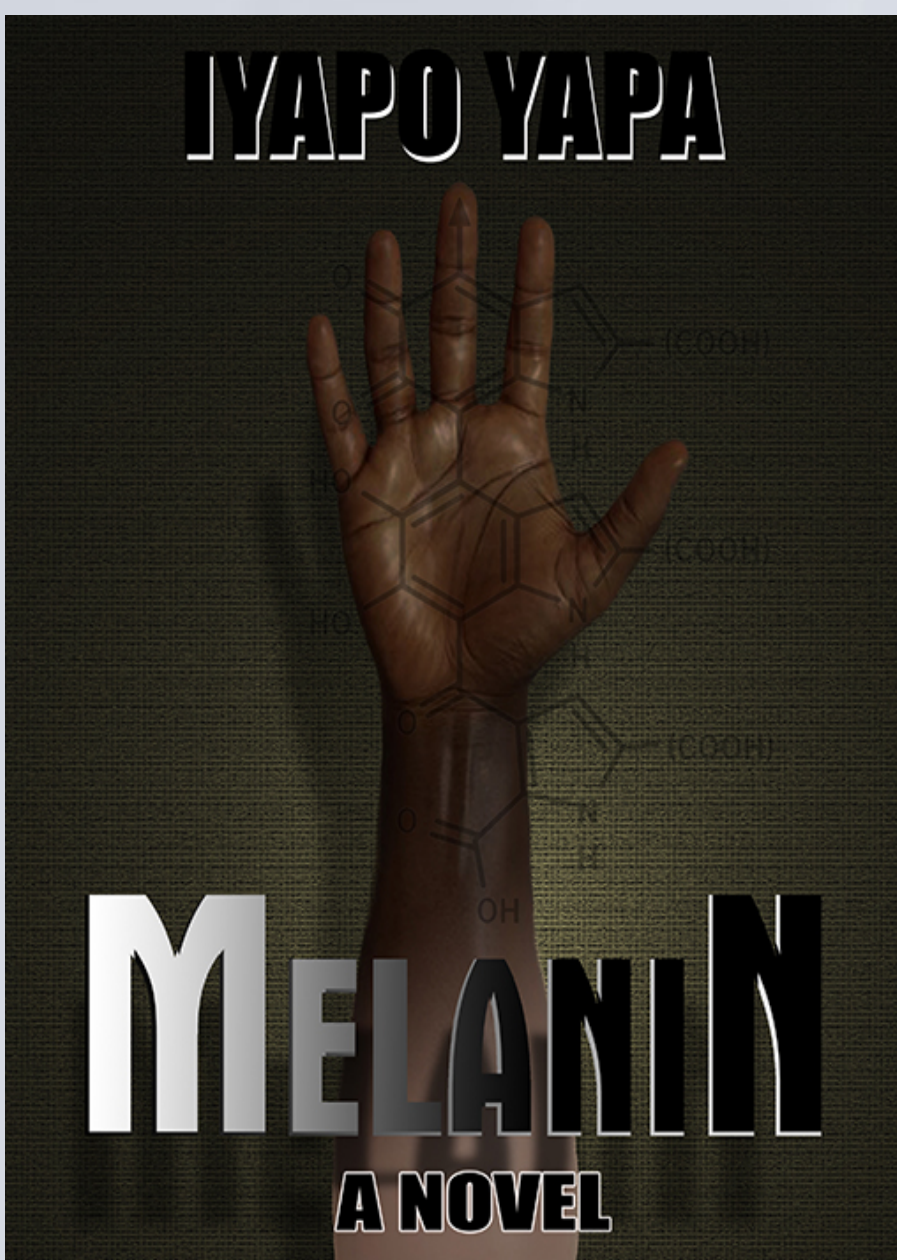
- M.A.D.M. Precious, author of *Michelle's Story* and *Loving Betrayal*

"Every Black person needs to read this book!"

- Gwen B

"It was exciting! I stayed up a few nights wanting to see what was coming!"

- Ayoka B.



AVAILABLE NOW!

MELANIN: A NOVEL

Buy it now on Amazon



goodreads

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ARE YOU HAPPY YET?

From IYAPO'S BLOG Saturday, 08 July 2023

This blog entry is from a comment I left on the AFRIKAN EX-ODUS broadcast on YouTube. The title of the video is: America: An Illuminati Conspiracy. (I altered the text a little to make it congruent).

Excellent broadcast. In the end montage I LOVE how Schwab talks about what chaos and disorder the world is in, and that what is needed is something to bring the world into cohesion, and that they have a plan to fix it. That's like me breaking into your home and then ransacking the place, spray painting the walls, breaking your dishes and tearing up everything so that it looks like a tornado went through it, then telling your family how much of a mess and a shambles your home is in - BUT I own a cleaning company that will come in and fix it up—now keep in mind, no one is ASKING ME to do ANYTHING—and from now on, my cleaning company will keep your house clean (the house that's a wreck because I wrecked it), and all you have to do is sit back and let MY cleaning crew take care of it. And oh, by the way, that means I'll have to take possession of your house and I'll dictate what rooms you can go to and when, what you can and can't eat, when you can and can't sleep etc. But it's all for your own good, so don't worry about it.

We are already seeing the beginnings of “You will own nothing and be happy.” It's happening in a way that is scattered on large and small scales so that each thing looks isolated, but if you look at the whole picture, you can see how the pieces are fitting together. People are losing their homes in high numbers and are being turned from owners to renters. DVD's and Blu rays are going the way of the dodo so people can't buy copies of movies to keep anymore, but you're free to pay monthly on streaming platforms that are ever growing. Remember when you could once buy a television and have all the shows you wanted? Now, the boob tube has been TOTALLY turned into a propaganda machine (though admittedly, it probably already was). And now people are having to pay monthly to stream content they used to be able to watch for free. People are no longer finding solid work situations from which they can retire or owning their own businesses (especially if you're Afrikan – and I'm presently talking mostly about the U.S.). In a way, people used to OWN their job, even as an employee, if you think about it. Now, people are working for temp agencies, being substitute teachers and adjunct professor, working as outsourced consultants, or driving Uber and Lyft, being delivery people and so on... basically “RENTING” their jobs. We used to be able to go to a computer store and purchase software like the Adobe

graphics suite, or Microsoft Office and then have them on our computer and own them. Now those widely used software, and many new apps are by monthly subscription; so, if you want to use them, you must pay monthly or yearly in perpetuity.



And if you want to take it a step farther and stretch it a little... through processed foods, the SAD (Standard American Diet), fast food and GMO'd mess, people's HEALTH is being destroyed. So, the one thing anyone can own for outright—their HEALTH—is being changed to something rented. How? Through having to pay monthly doctor's bills (in the U.S.) through high priced medical care, and eventually having to take daily medications that don't heal. And let's not forget the little thing they're trying to force the world into that will require periodic “boosters” ... so you can't even own your HEALTH.

And what happens when you own nothing and are unable to pay and are basically renting, or dependent upon someone else for everything? Your services are just cut off. Or, even if you CAN pay, and you step outside their open-ended “guidelines” or “terms”, they can just cut you off at will. That way, they have FULL control of you.

Which is actually their end goal, isn't it?

So, they are already moving us in the direction of not owning anything.

You will own nothing and be happy. Happy yet?

I must confess, I find it an incredibly difficult undertaking to get to the truth in a world so full of lies. I have determined that at the end of the day ALL my faith, hope and trust is in YAH and YAH ONLY. I gather information and weigh it almost non-stop, but as I said... at the end, I only trust Yah to lead and guide me, have mercy upon me and take me through the nightmare, that is this present system.



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Black Writers
Retreat



& cultural Exploration

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Tuesday, December 26, 2023 ~ Monday, January 1, 2024

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CLICK ANYWHERE ON THE IMAGE ABOVE TO GO TO THE WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION.

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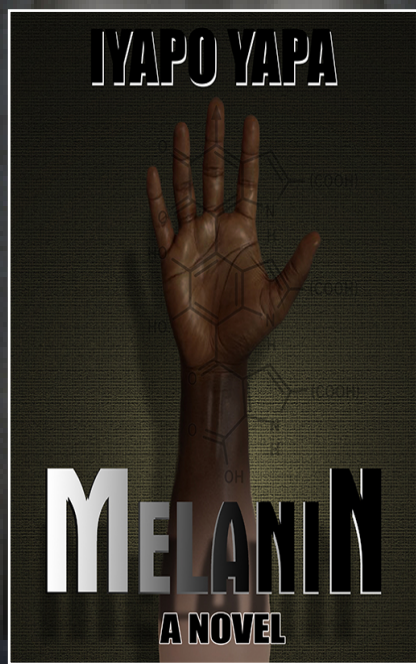
MELANIN: A Novel One Year Anniversary!

My first novel has brought joy to those who have read it and been kind enough to take time to rate it and write reviews. AND a ceaseless source of pride and joy for me. From the time I released *MELANIN: A Novel* it has only been available as a soft cover, hard back and Kindle edition. It is my only book that is not available on Kindle Unlimited.

Well... that's about to change. Coming on the one-year anniversary *MELANIN: A Novel* will be available on Kindle Unlimited for your reading pleasure! *MELANIN* will also be returning to Barnes & Noble (I originally removed it because of format-

ting issues but am correcting those.) Also be on the lookout for *MELANIN* and my other works appearing on new platforms to include the ability to purchase directly from iyapoyapa.com!

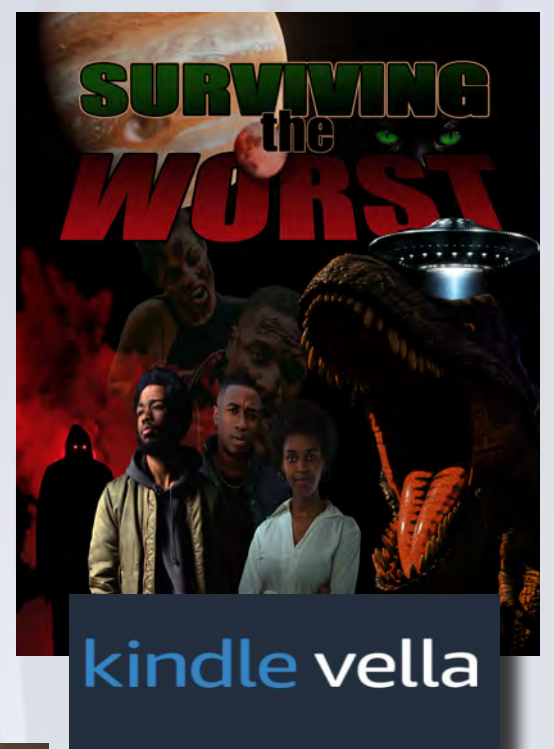
To close I would like to thank all those who were involved in bringing my first novel to fruition and who those who supported me from the very start as well as new supporters! Thank you ONE and ALL! I'm looking forward to providing you will even MORE ProBlack content and doing my part to TAKE CONTROL OF OUR OWN NARRATIVE!



Could YOU survive?!

Five years ago, a cataclysm now known as THE COLLAPSE occurred. Dimensions merged with horrific results. It is now common to see creatures of myth, legend, and nightmare along with once long extinct animals populating the landscape. Carl, LaTanya and Lester, embark on a quest to find a lost book that can't change the madness of the new normal but may assist them and others in the now nearly impossible task of: SURVIVING the WORST! Enter a world of action, adventure, science and horror on Kindle vella!

Click on the Kindle vella link below!



Be sure to take some time to visit my website at:

<https://www.iyapoyapa.com> - or just click the image to the right!

There are a LOT of things to see and interact with! There are also a couple special surprises hidden in the site. They aren't marked, but if you take a little time to search for them, you'll defiantly be pleasantly surprised!



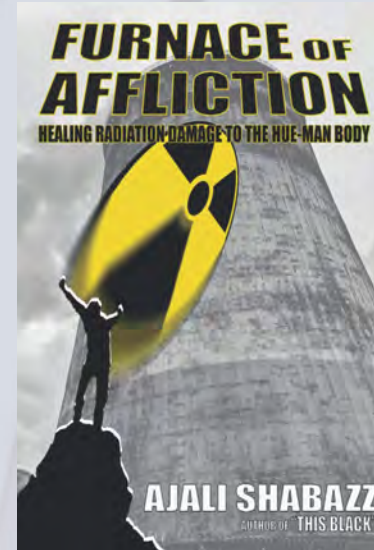
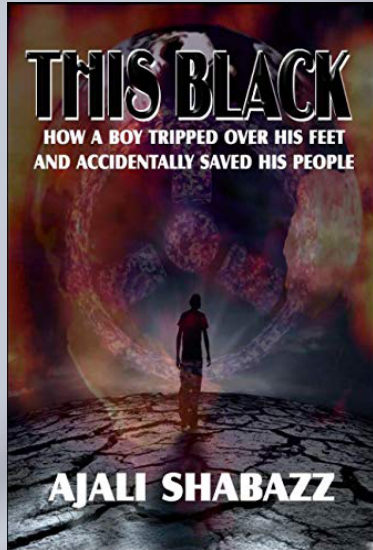
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Books by:

AJALI SHABAZZ



Author of: *This Black - This Black NATION* and *Furnace of Affliction!*
The Reading and Writing in the DARK Podcast Interview!

You don't want to miss this discussion with this new POWERFUL voice in
PRO BLACK FICTION in the genre of Theoretical Ebon Fiction, and Non Fiction!

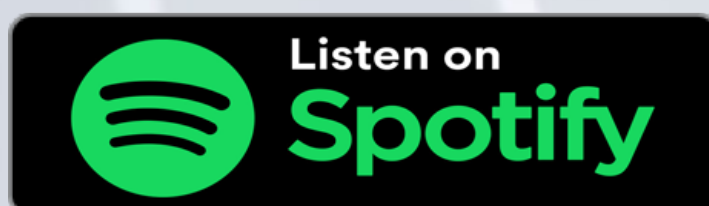
Listen to the interview on  by clicking the link below:

<https://www.spreaker.com/show/a-conversation-with-author-ajali-shabazz>



Did you know there is also a READING and WRITING in the DARK PODCAST?! Well there IS and you can tune in to it and listen just by clicking the block to the right.

You can also hear the READING and WRITING in the DARK podcast on:



CLICK THIS BLOCK TO LISTEN TO THE
READING and WRITING in the
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A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

podcast!

listen on Spreaker 

LISTEN ON iHeartRADIO 

Listen on Spotify 



Alright, enough about ME!

Below are AWESOME stories on the KINDLE VELLA platform by some authors I know!

Just click the cover art to be transported to their stories!

And remember, the first THREE episodes are FREE to read!



I DeClaire Love

Angela Riley

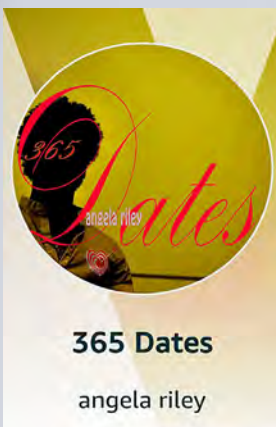
DeClaire and Tyrone meet and sparks fly. They fall in love with each other quick, fast, and in a hurry. It seems too good to be true. But is it? Is it safe to love? Are there any “good” rules when it comes to love? Do we have to fight for love? Are there always games being played when it comes to love? Is simple, sane, “old-fashioned” love out of style? CAN LOVE SET US FREE? *** New Episodes Weekly!



The Love X TamuTamu Agency

Angela Riley

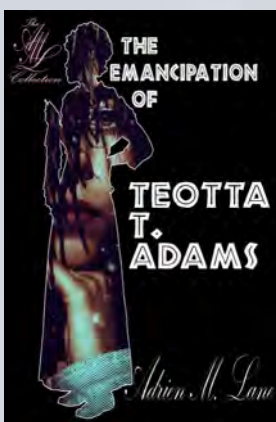
Love is natural but it ain't always easy. And Mama Tamu should know! She is a 91 year old match maker who has run “The Love X TamuTamu Agency” for FIFTY years. She has personally experienced and been a witness to all kinds of love. And, as she says, “Love is more than a notion!” Follow along as she stands up for and works to support and encourage the natural flow of Black Love.



365 Dates

Angela Riley

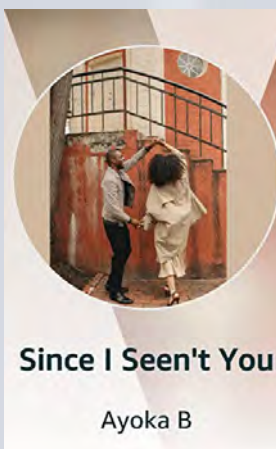
Single again, after my first divorce, one day I had a new thought: I WANT TO DATE. And... NOTHING. No one came knocking on my door to woo me. No one approached me when I was out wanting to court me. Nobody asked friends/family to be set up with me. Just crickets! So, thinking that maybe my goal was too vague--I want to date.--to make anything happen, I decided to pursue a HUGE goal of going on 365 dates. Not 3, 5, or 6 dates but three HUNDRED and SIXTY-FIVE dates. So...LET'S GO!



The Emancipation of Teotta T. Adams

Adrien M. Lane

Teotta T. Adams has it all, big house, nice car, fine clothes, and a private chef, one of the best in the world, and a successful husband. Yes, Teotta has everything. Everything except her FREEDOM! She spends her days in the lap of luxury, but inside she knows something's wrong. Her 'husband' is just this side of a stranger, and worse, Teotta knows even less about herself. When she finally discovers why, and the incredible truth behind it, she will long for the bliss of her lost ignorance.



Since I Seen't You

Ayoka B.

She and David met when they were 18. After a rough start, they build a friendship that would span decades: marriages, children, love and heartache. When they lose touch, she thought that she would never see him again, but she was wrong. Can men and women truly be just friends? Can their friendship withstand what life has in store?



The Match

Ayoka B.

Have you ever changed someone's life? I mean in a life and death sort of way. I opened a letter that I almost threw out, thinking it was junk mail; it said that I was a possible bone marrow match for someone! I couldn't even remember being tested. The letter asked me to contact them if I was still a willing donor... what would you do?



A'DICK'tion The Back Story

MADM Precious

From Book 1: Sex addiction is a real thing; When Quincey finds out his wife is caught up in some things, can they save their marriage.

ALSO AVAILABLE on AMAZON and OTHER PLATFORMS!

Below are stories and books by some authors I know!

Just click the cover art to purchase their book.

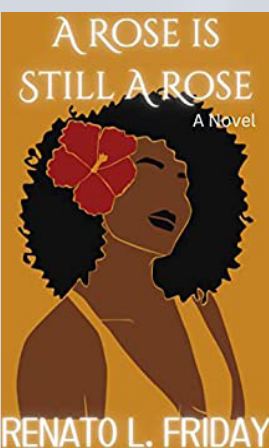


Affirming Self Love (Graphic Non-Fiction SERIES)

angela riley

SelfLOVE Meditation, Reflections, & AFFIRMATIONS Series...

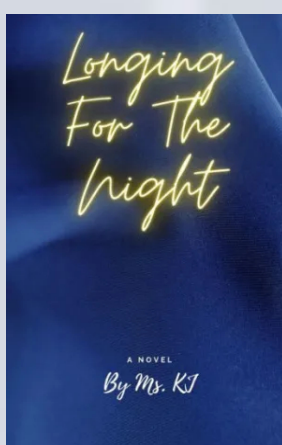
With a new book released each month, this "Graphic Nonfiction" series is filled with love for BlackUs. Each episode opens with a short essay exploring a theme such as "Following the Happy" or "Plan & Reflect" and culminates with a dynamic collection of affirmation. You'll have a beautiful time meditating and reflecting on the monthly theme as you AFFIRM Self Love.



A Rose is Still a Rose

Renato L. Friday

Rose thought life was going great: she was engaged, had a beautiful set of twin girls, a recent trade school graduate, and a new job right around the corner. Unfortunately, her fiancé, David, turned out to not be what she needed, and she chose to break things off. In the midst of her failing relationship, she met a man named Falcon, who ironically turns out to be her new boss. They quickly go from acquaintances to lovers, which opens up a fire pit of drama. Then comes Landon, a self-made millionaire, who is very humble about his accomplishments. He shows her all the things she was lacking while with David, and ultimately proposes. Naturally, Rose is scared to fall for Landon and accept his proposal due to David's lies and Falcon's toxic choices, but she takes a chance and allows Landon to love her the way she needs. Will her love for him forsake the feelings she's still harboring for Falcon, or will she give into temptation?



Longing for the Night

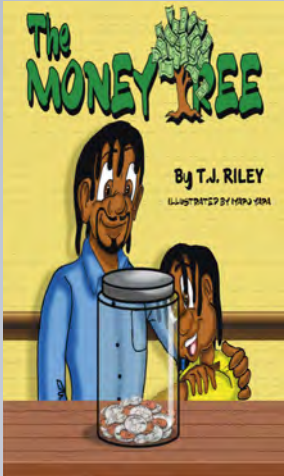
Ms. KJ

Inspired by the poem Goblin Market by Christina Rossetti, two young sisters face the trials and tribulations of the hood in this coming-of-age story about the harshness of living in South Central Los Angeles.

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DARK

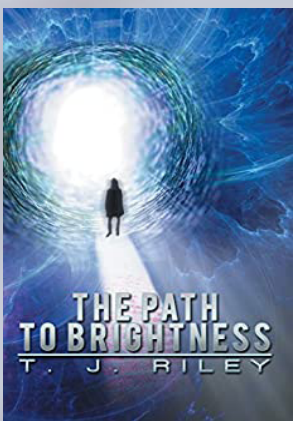
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The Money Tree

T.J. Riley / Illustrated by Iyapo Yapa

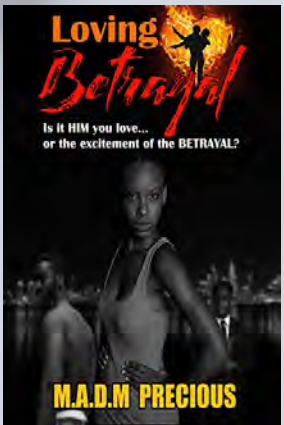
Every child wants money to buy something, right? Our hero does too. But, his father has a surprise, a Money Tree. Join the fun journey to find out how to grow your own money tree.



THE PATH to BRIGHTNESS

T.J. Riley

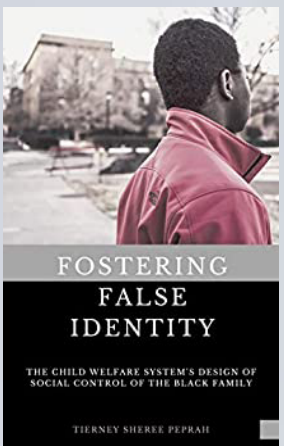
Fatima, a young woman, has a near-death experience. When she awakes from a coma and recovers, she has mystical powers. She begins to see auras and experiences life with her new abilities. For the clever character, Fatima, life is about to dramatically change. Follow Fatima's journey as she tries to convince others of the astounding esoteric knowledge she has brought back from beyond the veil. However, there are some that wish to stop her from sharing an ancient secret. A secret that will change life on earth, forever.



LOVING BETRAYAL

MADM Precious

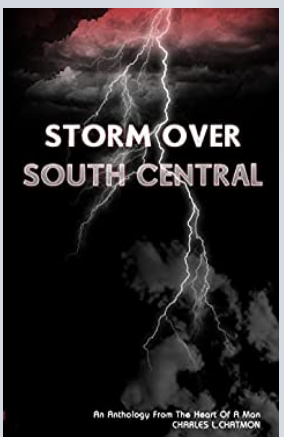
When Michelle met Michael, she thought that she found the love of her life. She was young and coming out of a bad marriage. A single parent of two children, she was scared, broke and had no self esteem. Michael seemed perfect, except for one little problem...



Fostering False Identity: The Child Welfare System's Design of Social Control of the Black Family

Tierney Peprah

THE ORGANISM OF RACISM IN THE UNITED STATES CRAFTS VARIOUS SYSTEMS MEANT TO ACHIEVE ONE OVERARCHING PURPOSE, that is to ensure that peoples and groups designated for an inferior existence pose little to no threat to the social structure of wealth and privilege that is propped up on their backs. These systems are allowed to exist, oftentimes unchallenged, by propagating dishonest descriptions of why these systems exist. Many people are without the proper means to challenge these systems, camouflaged as being charitable or in the public interest, for their unjust outcomes. In *Fostering False Identity*, the American child welfare system is explored as such a system. While the child welfare system is portrayed as a moral arbitrator in the abuse and neglect of children, in actuality this system was formulated for the specific purpose of regulating disenfranchised populations by removing children from those communities to assimilate them into White society. Thus assimilated, they are believed to pose minimal threat to the social order. *Fostering False Identity* will explore this phenomenon through a lens of Black liberation and self-determination of African families who are consistently victimized by this system.



Storm Over South Central

Charles L. Chatmon

The Storm has been unleashed, which means it's time to share what's inside the much anticipated anthology by author Charles L. Chatmon.

Chatmon, a refreshing voice in the world of modern poetry and author of *The Depths of My Soul* & *The Voices of South Central* returns with engaging short stories and thought provoking poems.

Read *Storm over South Central* and discover the thoughts he writes about in this volume filled with verses and tales of despair, stories of hope. It will also reveal a lot about American society – its strengths, its flaws and its people. This is a literary journey you will enjoy taking.

**And there will be more authors to come, who are working to
TAKE CONTROL OF OUR NARRATIVE!**

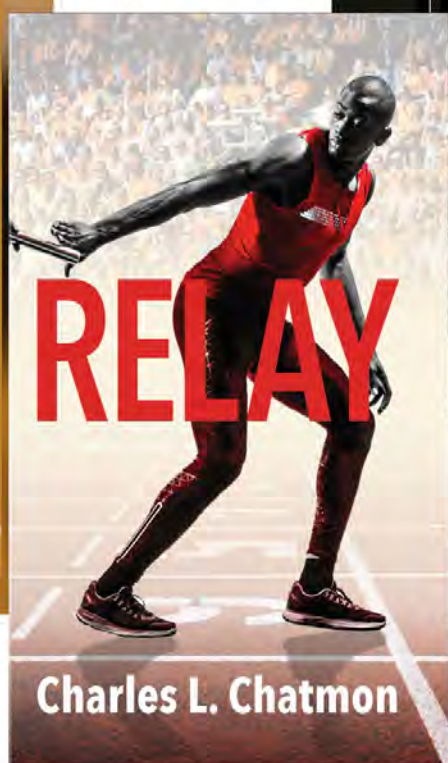
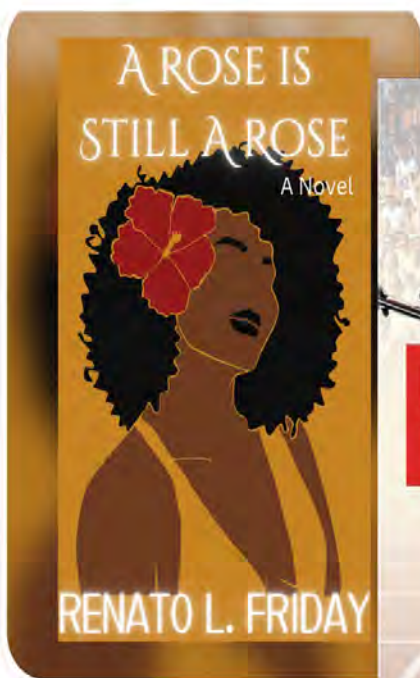
THANK YOU for subscribing to the newsletter, I genuinely appreciate it! Be sure and spread the word about my work by telling others about my website, books, podcasts and such at: <https://www.iyapoyapa.com>

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HERE IS THE SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE!

**JULY 2023
THEORETICAL EBON
FICTION (TEF)
ANSWER KEY**



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IYAPO YAPO

Tales of the
MONKEY'S PA



NOT EVERY WISH GRANTED MAKES DREAMS COME TRUE

BE CAREFUL WHAT
YOU WISH FOR!



Keepin' it a BUCK *series*

SHORT STORIES of HORROR and SUSPENSE



BE SURE TO VISIT IYAPO YAPO ON THESE OTHER PLATFORMS!