

READING and WRITING in the

DARK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

THIS MONTH:

NEWSLETTER

MORE ROMANCE

with a **TWIST**, as **Adrien M. Lane** takes us to look for...

Things In Storage Hidden Away Chapter I

Page 7

Reading and Writing in the DARK Newsletter subscriber exclusive, a FULL chapter of the upcoming novel! It's GOOD to be a subscriber!

Feature: The Awakening of a True Believer

Page 3

Also:

From Iyapo's Blog:
Sweet Land of Liberty?!

Page 26

This month's
Word Search is all about

Black Writers!

Page 22

News and Information about Completed
and Upcoming Projects and MORE!



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NEWSLETTER

CONTENTS

WELCOME BACK! / Who is Adrien M. Lane?! Page 2

Feature: The Awakening of a True Believer Page 3

Things in Storage Hidden Away (A Sneak Peek) The Complete Chapter I Page 7

March Word Search Puzzle Page 22

From iyapo's Blog: Sweet Land of Liberty Page 26

MELANIN: A Novel Now on KINDLE UNLIMITED! Page 28

Alright, Enough about ME! Works by authors I know Page 30



READING and WRITING in the DARK Newsletter
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WELCOME BACK!

We're marching into MARCH!

It's March and I'm still at it! 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 still hard at work on the second Paradigm Void book, *Further Journeys into the Paradigm Void*. The first book is available to the public and I'm very proud to have published my third book! I will be following that up with *The Redemption of Maxine Allison: A Novella—presently in its first round of editing*. Also I'm still celebrating the completion of my first mystery novel, *Rasulallah, Ohio!* So far a couple people have read it in its rough form and have said they really enjoyed it! I can't wait to finished with the editorial process and get it out into the world! As always, if you want to contact me, just drop an email to: Feedback@iyapoyapa.com it's ALWAYS open! SEE YOU NEXT MONTH and THANK YOU FOR SUBSCRIBING TO MY NEWSLETTER!

Iyapo Yapa



WHO IS ADRIEN M. LANE?!

Adrien M. Lane loves romance.

She also loves scifi, fantasy and unpredictable conclusions.

With her writing she is determined to merge the two into romance novels with a twist!

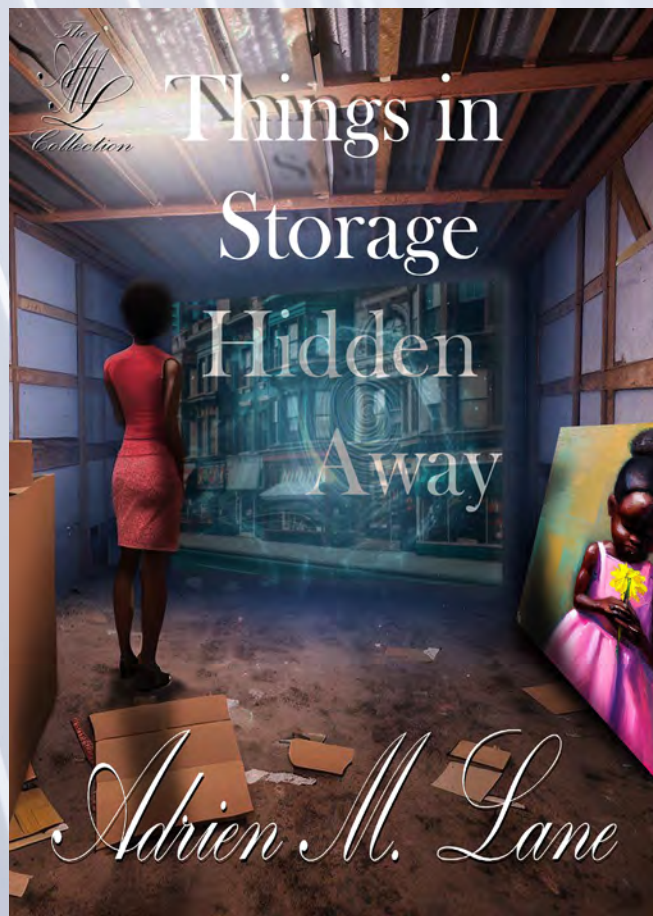
She has already began a series on the Kindle Vella platform called, *The Emancipatin of Teotta T. Adams*, and is currently working on her debut novel *Lost in Secret Arms*. She has several projects in the wings and is anxious to get them out into the world for lovers of romance and unpredictability to enjoy. Adrien has many tricks up her sleeve and strives to be original in every way she can from cover to cover of her work.

This month, *The Reading and Writing in the Dark Newsletter* is proud to introduce another Adrien M. Lane, story - the full first chapter of *Things in Storage Hidden Away*.

Adrien M. Lane, or "Ayddie" as those close to her affectionately call her, was born in Costa Rica into a large family and has eight siblings. She always enjoyed spinning stories for family and friends but never committed anything to paper, until her mentor and fellow writer R.J. Blakman said, "Baby, you have a head full of stories the world is just waiting to hear and you need to put them on paper so everyone can read them!" So, she took her mentor's advice, dug out an old laptop she hadn't touched in years and after typing the first few sentences, has never looked back!

Adrien lives in the tropics (because she hates the cold) with her pet gecko, (whatever one has wandered into her home for a given time), and is a member of a local Black writers group.

She enjoys looking at the lush colors of her surroundings, taking walks on the beach, and always, always thinking of new stories to write!



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THE AWAKENING OF A TRUE BELIEVER

(Originally printed as *The First Word* in UP Magazine issue 1 Fall 2019)

I call them “True Believers”, Black people who continue to march, protest, vote and “fight the power”. People of our community who still believe there can be social and political change in this country that would lead to true equality and a genuine kumbaya in America.

I was once a true believer.

I no longer believe.

The question is, “What, Iyapo, is it that you no longer believe?”

The answer: I no longer believe for Black people, it is possible to achieve any modicum of fairness, justice, equality or true integration into this system, globally and in the United States particularly. We are taught to pursue (or more accurately... are CONNED into a belief that we can reach) the “American Dream”, but does anyone explain that this dream was achieved to this point on the literal bodies of people of color and Black people specifically? Even if I could accomplish this feat... would I truly want too, knowing the cost to my grandparents and ancestors and the global history behind it?

There is no shortage of “successful” Black people who have no problem condescendingly telling the rest of us that “If I can do it, so can you.” And then proceed to list all the reasons they were able to ascend to their positions while the rest of us still flounder at the lower rungs of the ladder (if we even make it TO the ladder). We, as a collective are told (by members of our own people who have entered the ranks of the boulevards), that we are at fault for “not pulling our pants up”, “spending our money on Jordans”, “Listening to rap music and not reading books”, “not finishing school”, and any other “blame the victim” reason they can muster, while simultaneously all but ignoring

a system which was put in place, entrenched, and constantly evolving for the express purpose of locking our people out. The only time it is mentioned by them is to reinforce their own self-congratulatory narrative of how, in the face of racism and a system of white supremacy THEY were able to make it out. Therefore the problem obviously lies with the rest of US as a people.



If told that the reason they were able to reach various levels of “success” is in actuality only because they were permitted by white people to reach those pinnacles, the hostility and denial from them would be intense - this, while all the time ringing their own bell and at every juncture letting white people “off the hook” for the position in which they have placed our people.

This willingness to denigrate our people and in essence give the system of white supremacy – and by extension white people as individuals and a collective, a pass is problematic on several levels. It assumes that the only reason an entire group of people remain at the bottom of a caste system is due to the inherent inability of that group (in this case Black people), to “pull themselves up by our own bootstraps” and that the reasons white people occupy the highest levels is because they work longer and harder, they read more and spend their money wisely. We are told that the reason we remain at the bottom of the food chain is because we do not go out to vote and are not politically active enough.

The facts are that Black people have always worked hard in the United States, beginning with forced labor through enslavement, and the sun up to sun down exhausting, strenuous work in fields, rain or shine for absolutely no pay. Then

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THE AWAKENING OF A TRUE BELIEVER (Continued)

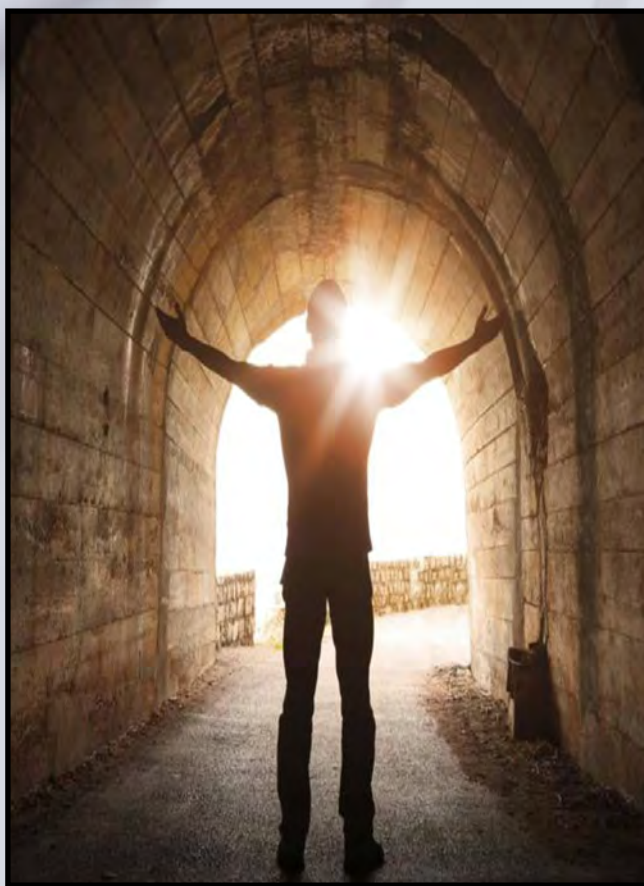
after “emancipation” we attempted to create our own farms and businesses through sweat and blood – only to have them hijacked through the trick bag of sharecropping, ultimately, working once again long hard work for little pay (when work could be had), due to the discrepancy in pay between white and Black people. Black people were sold the “American Dream”, but as we chased it, we were forced metaphorically to run shoeless to achieve it, while our white counterparts were given vehicles to drive to that destination – via wide disparities in pay, connections, social capital and collective wealth. Black people have ALWAYS worked hard, (two to three jobs at once in some cases), just to tread water – many times without success, and even when “success” was achieved and we attained degrees of self-sufficiency, our towns would be burned down or blown up by jealous white people (as in the cases of Rosewood and “Black Wall Street – just to mention two of the better known).

We have been politically active, we have marched and still do, we have picketed, and still do, we boycott, we speak out – many times through blow horns – spouting slogans like “No Justice No Peace!” “What do we want? (fill in the blank), When do we want it?! Now!”, or “Black Lives Matter!” Yet for all of our activism and pushback against the system that oppresses and kills us, and turning out to vote (when we can if we are not working split shifts, double shifts or second or third jobs), little if anything changes for our people – and that is somehow construed as OUR fault.

Oh... if we were to just stop wasting our money on designer shoes and clothes and pull our pants up... THEN we would be accepted and move

upward and out of the the position at the bottom which we have occupied since the day we were kidnapped into this nightmare.

South Carolina senator Tim Scott has, by his own admission been pulled over by the police seven times in one year due to being a Black man (no sagging pants), Professor Henry Louis Gates was arrested while trying to enter his own home - no sagging going on there and he obviously finished school, former police officer Milton Green of the St. Louis police department (no sagging pants), was shot in the arm by another white cop, ending his career – presently losing everything he has – but the white cop who shot him was not charged with any wrong doing and receiving large sums of money through crowd funding.



These stories can be relayed ad nauseam, for there is truly no end to the relentless day-to-day, moment-to-moment oppression, harassment, and attacks on our people.

The truth is, our people do play by the rules. We are hard working, well educated (whether by book or by self-learning, or intuitively), thick skinned, tenacious, determined, and creative people (one has to be when operating within a system that is hell bent on their subjugation and ultimate extermination). We do what we can and we do what we must to survive, and for many of us, we hold out hope and believe that the system can be “fixed”. But the question could be posed, that if after centuries in the United States, and thousands of years of history globally that shows a pattern of brutality, dishonesty, bloodlust, and need for control on the part of white people... what exactly will it take for Black people to see there is absolutely no point in, or way for us to

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THE AWAKENING OF A TRUE BELIEVER (Continued)

successfully integrate into their system that does not ultimately end in our own destruction?

Since the Antebellum period, our people have struggled for freedom and the ability to simply exist in peace. However, historically we have been denied any substantial remedy for the problems that plague us due to a system designed against us. Most prominent, oppression within a system of white supremacy from which everything else flows. It is time we address the elephant in the room and ask, at long last, *If white people TRULY wanted Black people to have an equal footing with them and they as a majority within their collective GENUINELY desired to see that day and push for it, then why would it take over four CENTURIES to do it, and it*

STILL hasn't happened? Watch any news reel from the 30's through to today, read any news paper as far back as the early 1800's and one thing will be apparent in terms of Black people. ANY conversation about our freedom or equality, anti-hate or violence against our people, could just as easily be found on a social media platform or on television today. In other words, little to nothing has changed for our people. I personally cannot think of anything in America (from suffrage to immigration) that has taken CENTURIES to get positive, decisive action on and a conclusion that happened in a reasonable amount of time. Everything this country genuinely wants to happen, happens without taking centuries. The fact that we are still having the same conversations now that we've been having for the past four centuries is telling.



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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:

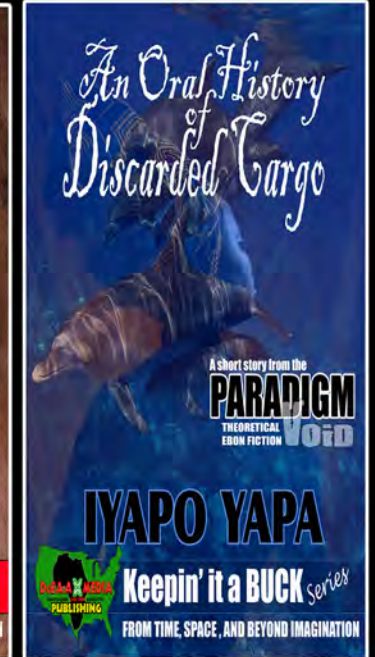
- What if somewhere in the universe numerous alien races observed earth and concluded that there is a faction on the planet that in no way should ever be allowed to reach out beyond the bounds of its own atmosphere?
- What if the universe itself started taking measures to correct and bring balance to 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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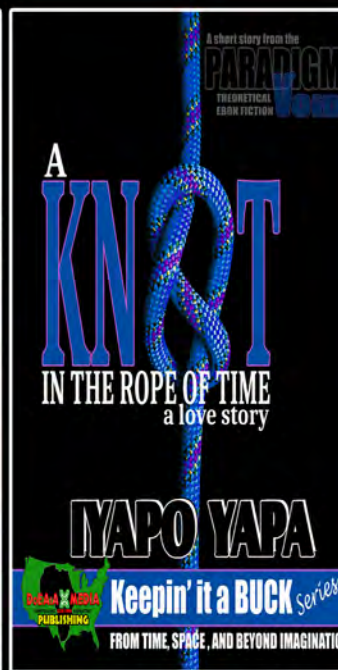


IT IS TIME TO JOURNEY INTO THE **PARADIGM VOID** ONE STEP AT A TIME.

EACH SHORT STORY IS DIFFERENT. EACH ONE THOUGHT PROVOKING & MIND BENDING.
EACH ONE ONLY **A DOLLAR!** AVAILABLE RIGHT NOW ON: **amazon**



Keepin' it a BUCK series



Also, Keepin' it a BUCK series TWO: Stories from Further Journeys into the Paradigm VOID is out NOW!



Also remember:

ORAL TRADITION talking books are also coming soon! Click the image to the right to hear a sample, of one of our talking books. Yes, it's still in its VERY rough form as we experiment with getting it right, but the story is still fun as all get out! So give it a listen and let us know what you think!

You can send your thoughts to: comments@iyapoyapa.com

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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away

Tisha took one more visual survey of the facility and then turned her attention back to the interior of her car. She reached over to the passenger side seat and grabbed the manilla folder that had been her only companion on her drive to the storage facility. She turned facing forward in the driver's seat and placed the folder on her thighs, letting the back of it rest on the steering wheel. Tisha thumbed through the folder containing important papers pertaining to her mother.

Power of Attorney.

Tisha's own identification.

Storage unit paperwork.

Death certificate.

She parked beside a BMW that had seen better days, the rust around the wheel wells and beneath the doors mocking the car's former glory.

She stepped out the car with her folder, and got a better look at the storage facility from a bit more close up.

The rundown nature of the place was

even more apparent upon this second look.

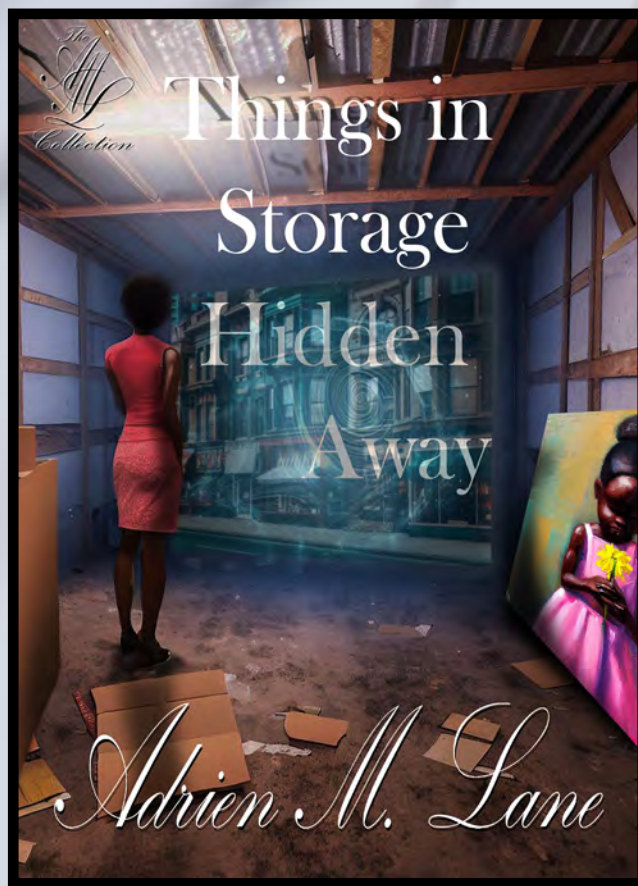
She glanced over to the BMW again, not knowing why, and noticed the faded dashboard, worn seats and fast-food trash and a few dented plastic two-liter soda bottles, one of them still a quarter full lying on the back seat.

Seeing cars that in their day would have been considered luxury vehicles, or at the very least status symbols, always made her think about people. Tisha always believed that people and relationships and how cars are treated are probably the most analogous to human relationships.

Someone loved that BMW once.

They dreamed about it, searched for it, maybe even had photos of it on a vision board at one time. Then, finally having found it, immediately, joyfully bought it.

They washed it twice a week, waxed it once a week and buffed smudges from it daily. Eventually, they stopped buffing it so much.



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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

They would wash it once a month, if that, and only if it had rained and become somehow particularly muddy. They stopped buffing it at all when stepping out of it.

Regular maintenance began to slip, until it seemed to be an expense and bother they just didn't care to tend to unless absolutely forced to by the 'check engine' light. Even then, they would take the car to an auto parts store and have them just turn it off so they didn't have to see there was a problem, without having ever addressed it.

As with a shiny new car, complete with new car smell. Having it always begins with the dream and desire for one.

People enter the lot.

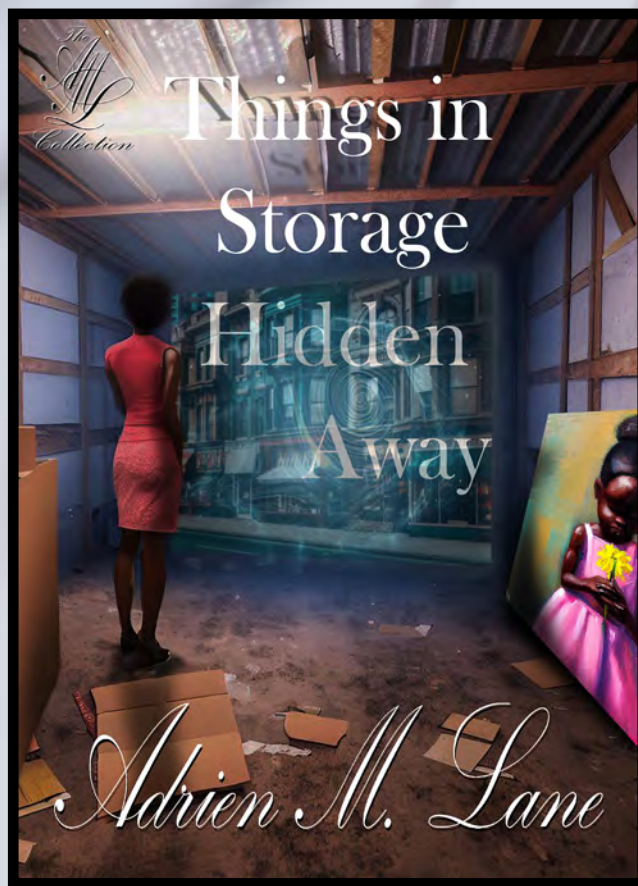
(The dating pool)

They look around a bit, measuring one car against another. Sometimes with their dream vehicle in mind and refusing to purchase anything less. Or their eye is caught by something that they hadn't even known they

were looking for and end up driving off the lot with it. Or perhaps, they're more flexible about it.

Eventually, the car ends up on a used car lot, where the milage is now an issue, and depending upon how it was cared for in the past, and by whom and how many previous owners, the vehicle is always cleaned and patched up, even to the length of spraying canned 'new car smell'

inside as a final touch to the detailing. When the next buyer comes along, they see what they already know to be a used car, but outwardly it is in perfect condition. Even upon starting it up and taking it for a test drive, the suspension is smooth and the engine purrs like a kitten. Little does the unsuspecting driver know that the vehicle was run for ten minutes before their arrival so they would not see the blue smoke from the exhaust upon cranking the engine. Or that saw dust was used to help the gears shift smoothly just long enough for them to make the buy.



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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

And so, they drive off the lot, smiling at their good fortune and having finally found ‘the one’ they can proudly drive around town and show to friends and family—bragging all the way.

Until one morning, there is a mysterious oil leak underneath the car—and so it begins.

Just like with people.

No wonder so many people give their cars names.

Tisha made her way into the parking lot of the storage facility, parked and walked to where in there was a man at the counter, who was in the midst of being yelled at by the customer, an older Black gentleman, on the other side. Both men became silent as they took a moment to look in the direction of the soft electronic bell that went off when Tisha entered. In a place that was so obviously rundown and just barely maintained, the sound of a modern entry bell seemed comically out of place.

She stood silently and looked around uncomfortably, immediately realizing she’d just walked in in

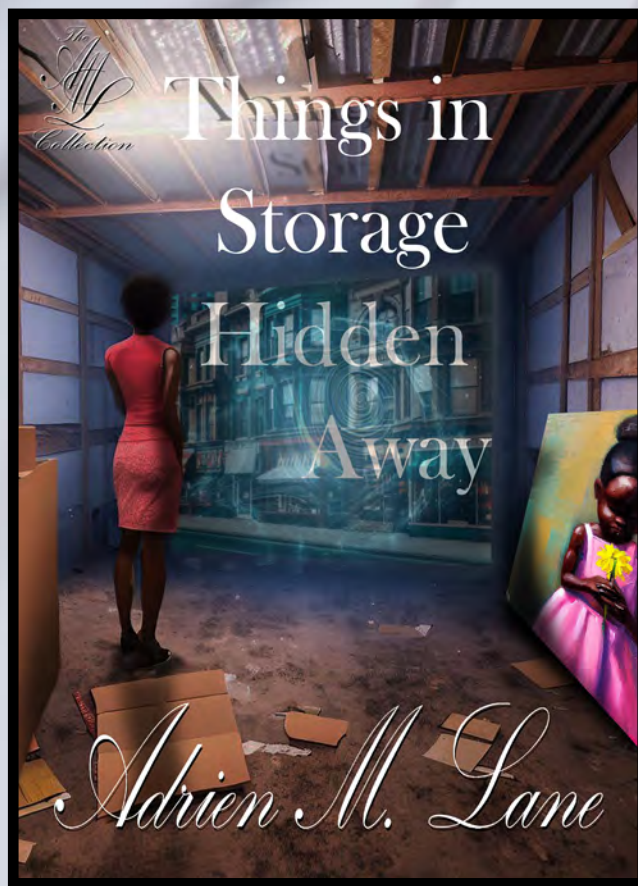
the middle of what was obviously a heated discussion about the fate of someone’s unit.

The older Black man who was trying to keep the contents of his unit from being auctioned off was making every effort to get the man on the other side of the counter to show some kind of compassion, but to no avail.

The man behind the counter was a portly white man whose clothes were ill fitting

and uncomfortable looking. He wore a dress shirt and necktie which hung down low beneath his collar where the knot was holding the two sides in place since he was unable to button the top button... and possibly a second loose one hidden underneath the tie. When he spoke, it seemed necessary for him to take a deep breath between sentences.

Tisha never thought of herself as the kind of person who could ‘read’ people. She was never good at it—especially when it came to men. But this guy she could read like the Brothers Karamazov.



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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

Broke: Likely.

Lives with mother: Possibly

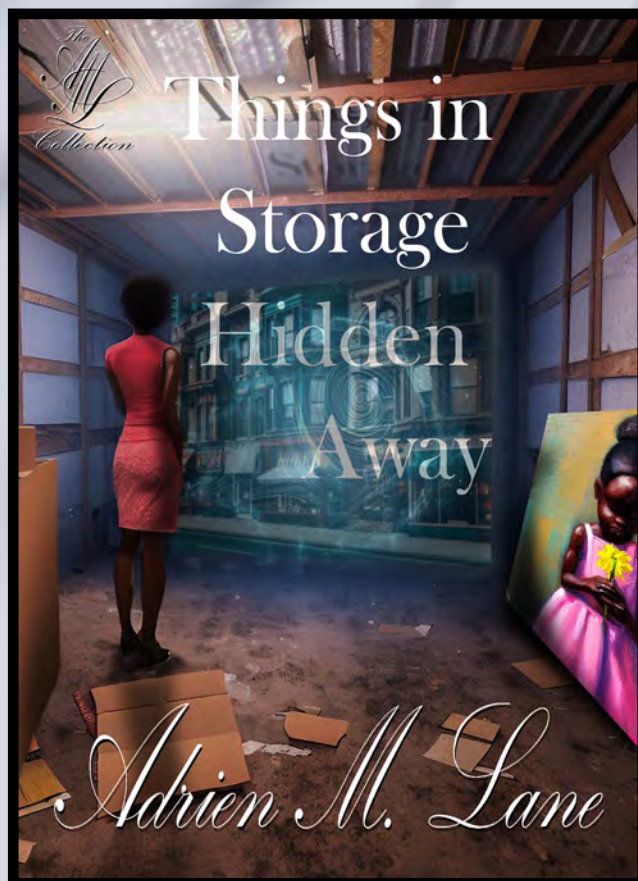
Single: Probably.

Incel: Definitely.

Everything about the man gave off a vibe of, “I don’t have any control whatsoever of my own life, so I will take what little power this job affords me and flex it every chance I get so that I can listen to people grovel and beg me for this or that.”

She gave a half smile at the man behind the counter who remained expressionless, save for the obvious once over he was giving to her well-proportioned body and attractive face. He did afford Tisha a slight nod to acknowledge her presence and then turned his attention back to the man who was yelling and becoming more furious by the second. “Mr. Bixby...” the man behind the counter finally said, interrupting the rant. “You are three months behind in your payments, and you’re standing here telling me that you not only can’t catch that up, but that you won’t be able to pay anything at all until the beginning of the month when your disability payment comes

in. I understand that you have your truck here and you just want to go in and get your things, but you know as well as I do that I’m not allowed to let anyone do that.”



“Dammit Tony!” The man yelled, “You know I fuckin’ fell on hard times! I couldn’t afford to make the payments. It was between payin’ this and payin’ my fuckin’ rent!”

“I understand that Mr. Bixby, but the rules are the rules.”

“Your rules are BULLSHIT! You know you can just let me go and get my shit! I’ve been payin’ on this frickin’ unit for eight stinkin’ years, Tony! EIGHT STINKIN’ YEARS! I started out payin’ eighty bucks a month, which was already too damn much, between now and eight years, ya’ll got me payin’ damn near two hundred fuckin’ bucks for the same fuckin’ space! You kept hikin’ the price and I couldn’t find anyplace that was cheaper, so I kept my shit here and my rent and food, utilities an’ all that other shit just kept goin’ up and up! The place isn’t even fuckin’ temperature controlled anymore, and

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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

you guys got me payin' more money for the same space but without damn climate control!"

"Mr. Bixby, things are tough all over. Everyone is struggling."

"I'll bet the motherfuckers who own this dump aren't strugglin'!" Bixby shouted. "I added it up! Over the past eight years I've given this place over fourteen thousand fuckin' dollars! Fourteen THOUSAND! And now since I'm a couple months behind you're just gonna take my shit and sell it?!"

"If you can pay the eight hundred thirty-six dollars, then you can stop your things from being auctioned off."

"You know I ain't got that kind of fuckin' money Tony! How the fuck do I owe so much when the rent on the storage room is only a hundred and eighty-seven dollars a month?!"

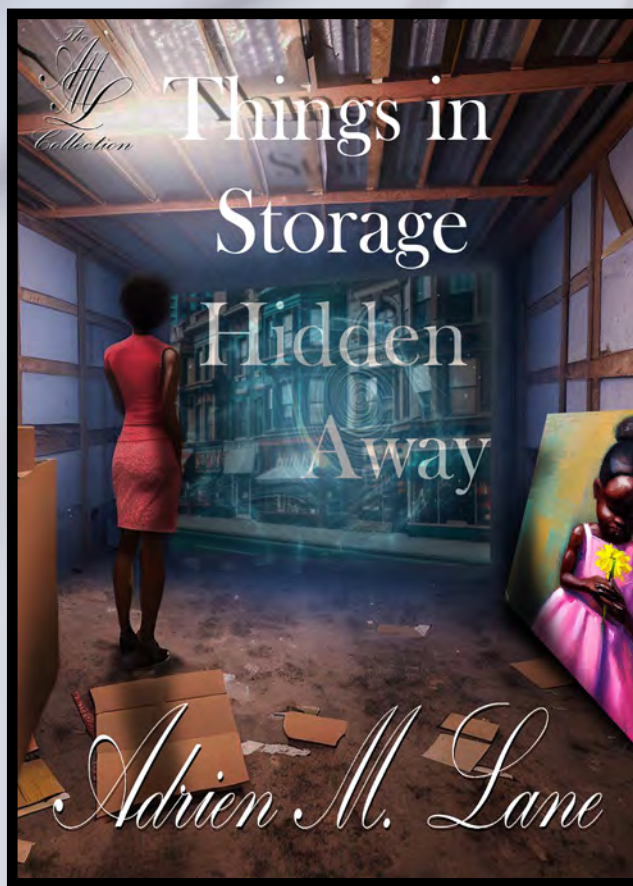
"You should have gotten notices by mail and email. The extra charges are for late fees, over term fees,

penalties, and a new lock."

"A new lock?!"

"Yes, as soon as you were over two weeks past due, we cut off your lock and put one of our own on. The lock we placed on that unit is included in the eight hundred thirty six dollars."

"Are you fuckin' shittin me?! Tony, just let me get in there and get my shit!"



Tony stood and looked once again to the woman who was now standing close to the entrance of the office area. She obviously felt something stood a very good chance of popping off, and she didn't want to be anywhere around when it did.

The facility manager turned his attention back to the irate man standing in front of him. "Or your other alternative is that you can come to the auction and bid on your lot. Just keep in mind, whatever we sell the unit for that is below the eight hundred thirty-seven dollars, you

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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

will still be responsible for.”

“ARE YOU FUCKIN’ SHITTIN’ ME?!?!”

Mr. Bixby was so angry that he didn’t make out the faint hint of a smile that briefly came across Tony’s lips, but it didn’t get past Tisha. Her eyes narrowed at the realization that there was no mistaking this man was getting some kind of sadistic pleasure from the older man’s distress. She already didn’t like this Tony person. Now she disliked him even more.

“Why are you doin’ this Tony?!” The old man said, no longer yelling and seeming to be on the brink of crying.”

“My hands are tied Mr. Bixby. Nothing I can do.”

“We both know that’s bullshit.” Mr. Bixby said as he suddenly became quiet. “Tony They burned my family out in Greenwood when I was a little boy, I lost both mah parents. Then I lost my wife an’ son to a drunk driver

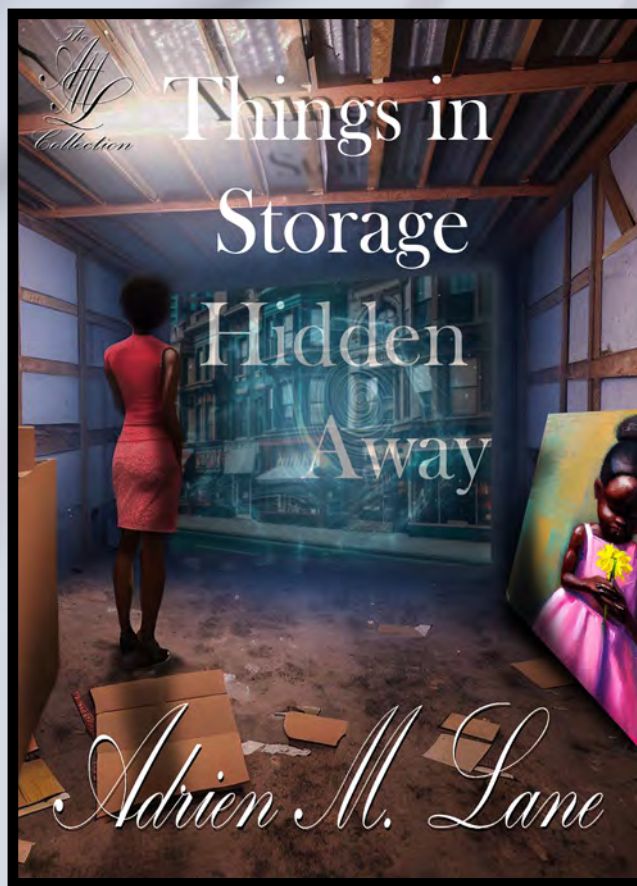
back in 05. Their photos and the few memories I have in them boxes is all I got left. They ain’t werf nuthin’ ta nobody but me.” He studied the face

of the man and realized there was no use in him saying anything more. Mr. Bixby slowly turned to walk out the door, passing Tisha without looking at her. He walked out and stood silently for a moment. Both Tisha and Tony looked at him through the glass that made up the front

wall. Bixby then turned around and yelled, “FUCK YOU TONY!” the sound of it was muffled behind the glass, but both people in the room could hear him, and if they missed that, there was no way of missing the two birds that Bixby was flipping and waving in front of him. “FUCK YOU!”

After Bixby limped to his car and drove away, Tony, shaking his head and snickering under his breath, looked at Tisha and said, “Next.”

Tisha walked up to the counter and took out her paperwork.



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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

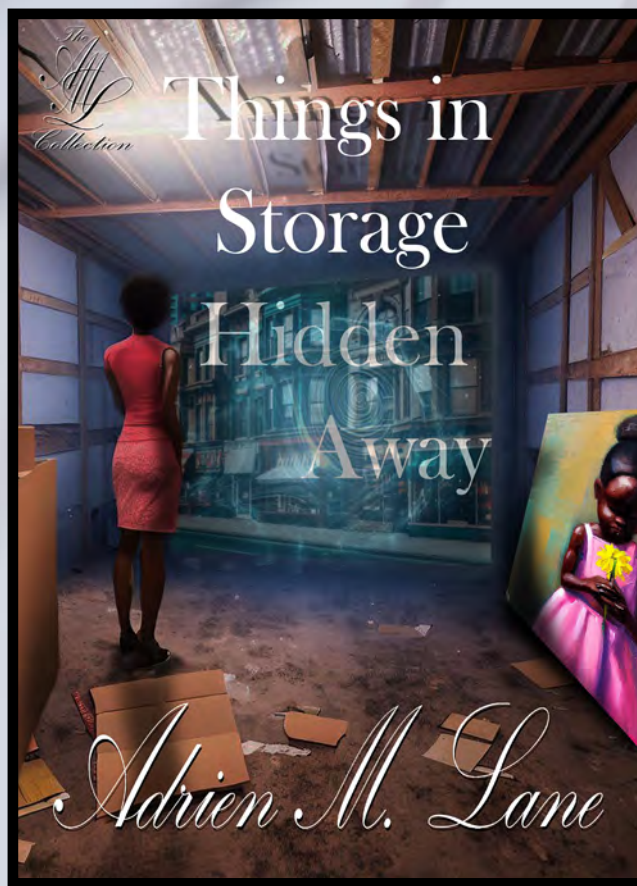
“What can I do for you Miss...”

“Three hun—are you serious?!”
Tisha said.

“Tomlinson. Tisha Tomlinson. I’m here about the unit belonging to my mother, Lorraine Tomlinson. My mother just recently passed,” Tisha said, “and I’m here to take over her storage unit.”

“Well it’s not just the rent on the space it’s also—”

“I’m sorry for your loss.” Tony said, both him and her knowing he wasn’t sincere. “Here, let’s see what we’ve got.”



“I know, I know. late fees, over term fees, penalties blah, blah, blah. I heard you giving your spiel to the other guy.”

Having just witnessed what happened to the man who was before her, Tisha knew there was no appealing to

He shuffled through the paperwork, then walked over to his computer keyboard and tapped until he brought up the account. “Ok. Here it is.” Tony said. “Hmmm, bup, bup, bup, bup he sang under his breath as he scrolled to different places on the screen. “Alright Miss. Looks like your mother has some unpaid fees that need taken care of before we can do anything with the unit.

the better nature of the creature who stood before her. Without another word she reached into a compartment in her purse and produced her card. “Here,” she said dryly.

“How much?” Tisha said.

“Three hundred and thirty-six dollars and eighty-seven cent.”

The man took the card, did a half turn and faced the cash register with the card reader beside it. There was also a computer screen beside the area for taking payments.

Tony stood, typing something in and breathing like Darth Vader. Tisha angled her head so that she could see what was on the screen. It was as she expected her mother’s storage

READING and WRITING in the

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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

unit—lot 8.

Tony studied the screen for a moment and then faced Tisha without running the card. Since today is the tenth, we've gone into another cycle, the system added a forty nine dollar late fee onto what your mom already owed.

Tisha didn't know how she felt about this walrus referring to her mother as her 'mom'. There was something that sounded too familiar about it to her, but she let it go.

"That makes your total, three eighty-five fifty." Tony continued lackadaisically. "You still wanna pay it?"

"You're asking me as if I have some kind of a choice." Tisha said.

"You do." Tony looked around the office making certain they were absolutely alone, then took a quick glance toward the camera that was on perpetually during both business hours and after the storage facility had shut down for the night. "Look.

I know three hundred eighty five bucks is a lot of money these days... shit... ANY days. But if you want, we can work something else out."

As the man behind the counter spoke, he looked Tisha up and down as if he was starving and she was a porterhouse steak.

It didn't take much for Tisha to put together what the letch had in mind and that the place was pretty much empty except for the two of

them, and that the video camera (which Tony made absolutely certain he kept his back to) did not have sound. There was no way for her to hide the look of disgust on her face from the man who had just made himself look like ten times the pig he resembled before.

"I thought you just told that older gentleman that there was nothing you could do about such things." Tisha said dryly.

"For him, no... but for you..." Tony looked Tisha up and down one more time, "I can work some magic with a few mouse clicks. Whaddaya say?"



READING and WRITING in the

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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

“I say just run the damn card!” Tisha said, angry this, this—PERSON had the nerve to proposition her as he did. “If I thought it would do any good, I’d report you for sexual harassment!” she said.

“Can’t blame a guy for trying.”

“I’m not going to let my mother’s storage go. Just run the card so I can go to my unit and get the hell outta here.”

Tony seemed to be annoyed that the Black woman in front of him could so easily part with almost four hundred dollars and not bat an eye. There was no argument, begging or groveling or that she wasn’t an easy mark for him to coerce so that he could get pathetically laid.

He grabbed a receipt and paid in full papers from the laser printer then handed her a key. “This is to the lock we have on the unit. You’ll have to purchase your own if you want to keep the unit. For now you can leave it on there and bring me the lock when you get your own,”

he said.

Tisha took the key and receipt and walked toward the door, as she did she saw Mr. Bixby, who had slowly pulled back around in his pickup truck and had gotten out and was now walking toward the door. She took a quick survey of the man, and she didn’t see any noticeable weapons.

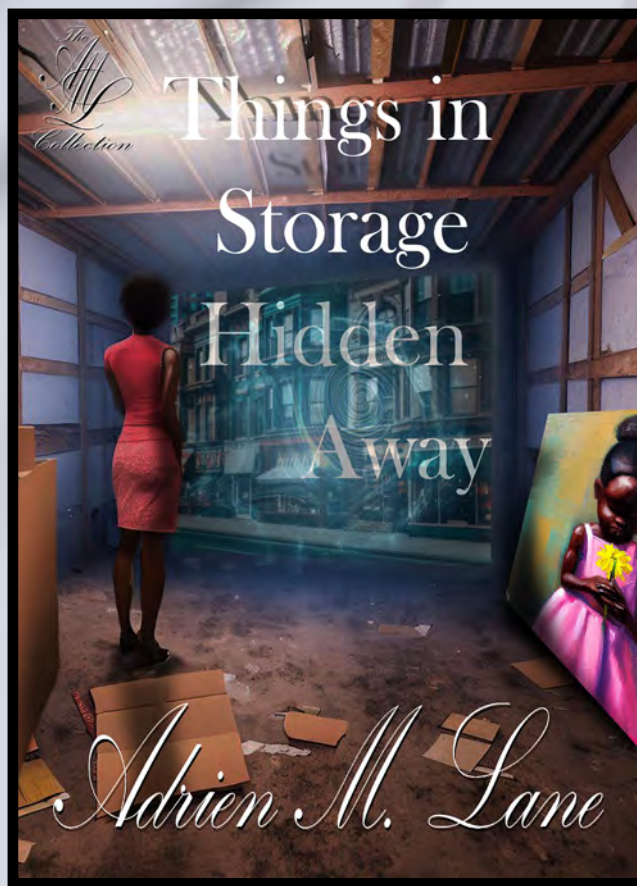
She hoped.

He wouldn’t be the first irate customer to come back to a place of business and shoot it up.

Mr. Bixby walked back in to the sound of the electronic bell as Tisha held the door for him. Mr. Bixby had a look of utter despair etched on his face.

“I—‘em sorry Tony. I didn’t mean ta lose mah temper. Kin we jus’talk about—”

“I don’t really know what there is to talk about. You can’t pay. I can’t let you have any of that stuff. Sorry.”



READING and WRITING in the

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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

The old man looked down, looking as if he were going to cry. The years of pain he'd already endured by people just like the one standing in front of him covered his face like a shroud. Situations like this always dredged up memories he'd spent a lifetime trying to forget, but never could because of constant reminders like this one.

“How much did you say it will cost for you to get your things?” Tisha asked the old man.

“This guy says it'll be eight hundred thirty-six damn dollars.”

Tisha turned around and walked back to the counter. Opening her purse, she dug inside and produced her card once more. “I'm paying Mr. Bixby's storage fee,” she said.

“You're what?!” Both men said almost simultaneously.

“You heard me ‘Tony’. I'm paying whatever fees he owes on that unit. Now take this and pay the man's storage fee.”

Wide eyed, Mr. Bixby took off his hat and limped over to Tisha's side. “Ma'am, you don't have ta do this. This ain't got nuthin' ta do with you. Everybody need's they money. I can't let you do this. Really. I appreciate it more'n I can say, but you don't have to—”

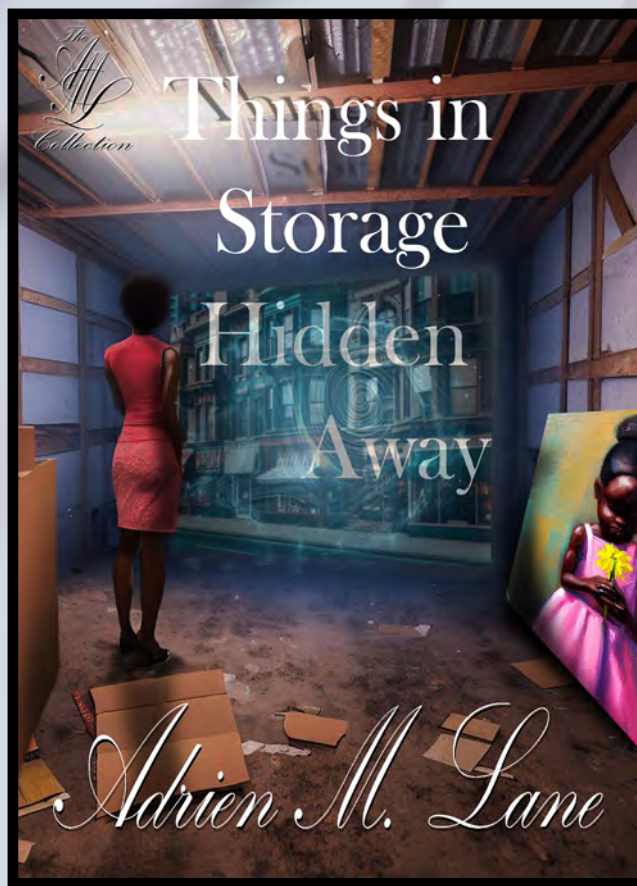
“Yes I do Mr. Bixby.” Tisha said as she lay a hand gently on the man's shoulder and gave him a soft smile. She then turned her attention back to Tony

and narrow eyed and stone faced said, “I'm paying for Mr. Bixby's storage fees.”

“Ol' Bixby over there's right Miss. You don't want to do this and add this big of a charge to your credit card.”

“It's a DEBIT card. Just fucking RUN it!”

Tony turned and brought up Mr. Bixby's information on the computer. “Eight hundred and sixty-seven dollars and thirty three cent.” He said without turning to look at either of the customers standing in front of



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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

him. He ran the card, halfway hoping his system would reject it just so he wouldn't have to spend the rest of the day thinking about a Black woman who had over a thousand dollars she could just hand over without flinching while his checking account was seventy-eight dollars over drawn—and counting.

He gave the card back to Tisha, then walked over to a laser printer and what looked like a wall safe without a combination lock on it. He opened the “safe” and picked around until he found a specific set of keys. Upon getting back to the front desk, he handed the old gentlemen the keys and then swishing the receipt and paid in full paperwork back and forth between the two customers he said, “Who gets these?”

“She paid, I guess she gets ‘em.” Bixby said. “Sides... I’m gonna just get my shit—” he stopped abruptly and looked at the beautiful young woman beside him and tipped his head toward her, “I mean, my things, ‘an you ain’t gotta worry ‘bout ever

seein’ my black ass round here agin ‘.”

Tisha took the paperwork and they both turned and walked out the door

and into the fresh air and sunlight. They both took a deep breath and smiled at each other. Mr. Bixby turned to face Tisha and, eyes moist, obviously holding back tears, he said, “Ma’am, that’s probably the nicest, kindest thing anyone’s ever done for me. You really didn’t have to do that.”

“Like I said Mr. Bixby... yes I did.”

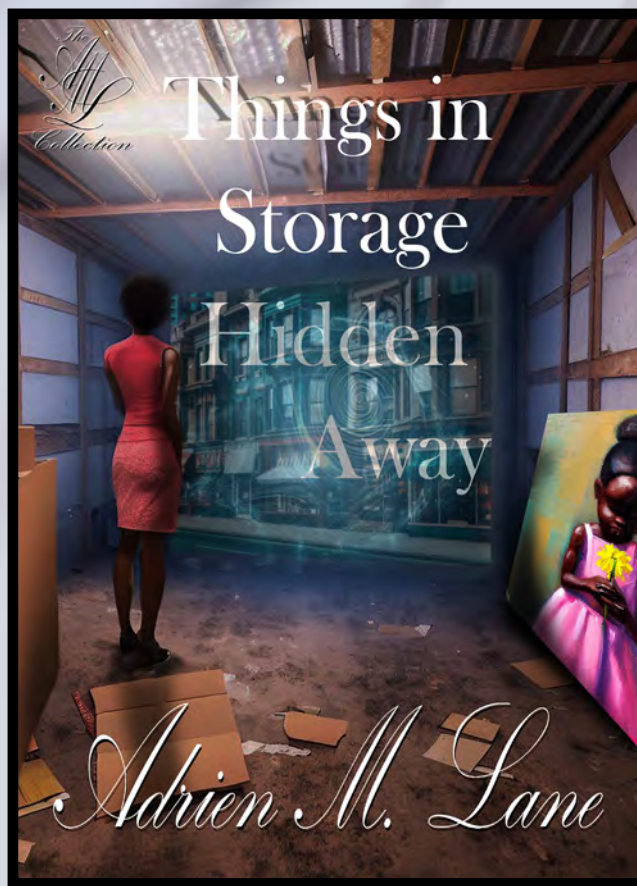
“Well, young lady, thank ya. Thank ya so much.”

“Tisha.”

“Tisha. Thank you, Tisha.”

“You’re very welcome Mr. Bixby. Now go on and get your things. Do you need any help?”

“No ma’am. It’s only a few boxes I kin definitely handle. To be honest Tisha... everythin’ in all three o’ them boxes proly ain’t worth mor’n



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Chapter I - Things In Storage Hidden Away (Continued)

five dollars ta anyone but me. Photos o' mah parents, mah wife n' son, sentimental stuff. You know. Thangs I wouldn't part wit fo' a million dollars."

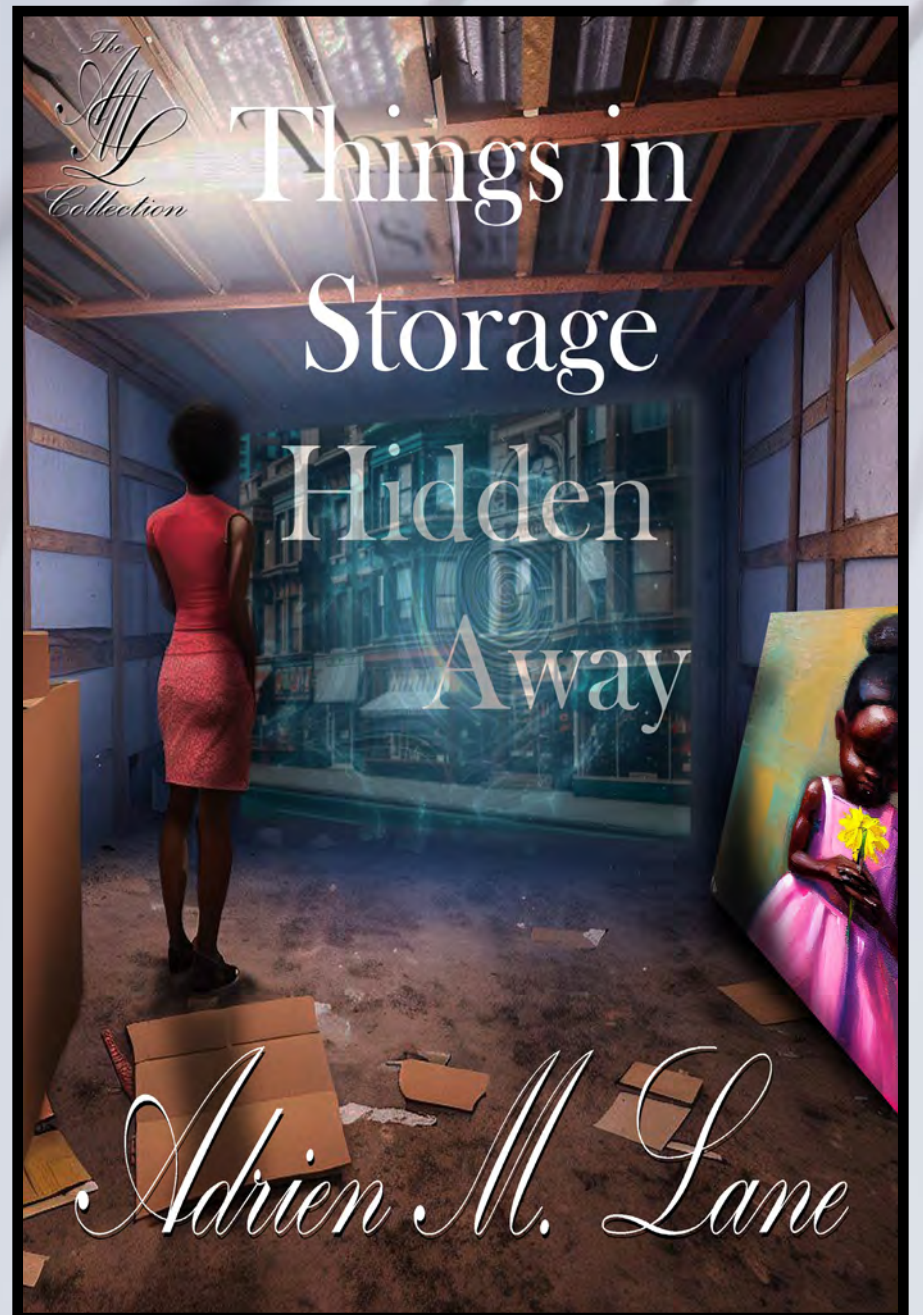
"I know."

"I wish I could pay you ba—"

"It was my pleasure and my gift to you."

"Well. Thank you Tisha. Thank you."

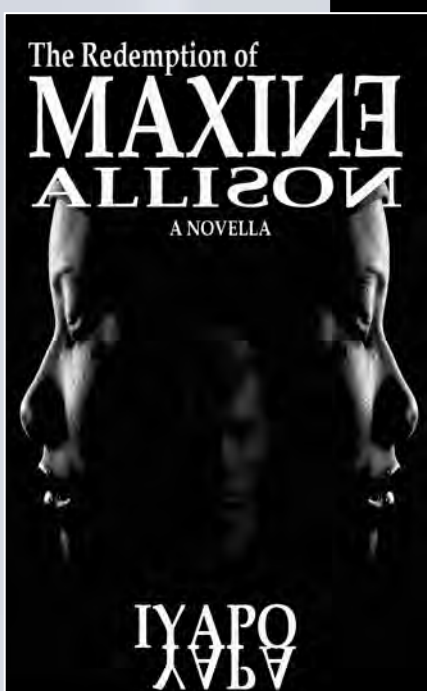
Tisha laughed, leaned in and gave a gentle hug to Mr. Bixby. "Don't mention it sir," she said. They parted ways and Tisha made turned and headed toward her mother's storage unit.



Things in Storage Hidden Away, coming soon from the Adrien M. Lane Romace Collection

COMING SOON!

PRESENTLY IN THE EDITOR'S HANDS! (So don't look a ME!)



Is it BEST to DIVEST?

Maxine Allison thought so.

She'd had enough of dealing with Black men who were abusive, lackadaisical when it came to work, and just overall "losers" in her opinion. So she determined she would find herself a "white prince".

Did she find her **PRINCE** and lose her mind? Is he **PRINCE CHARMING** or is he the **Prince of PERSIA?!**

Has she made a monumental mistake or is a trauma she sustained from a car wreck causing her mind to play tricks on her? If she has made a mistake can Maxine ever undo her disastrous decision ... right or wrong, it seems there is no way for her to find redemption...

or is there?

Love, hate, secrets and deception abound in what is sure to be one of Iyapo Yapa's most mind bending and controversial books to date. Read *The Redemption of Maxine Allison* and find out why!

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R.J. BLAKMAN



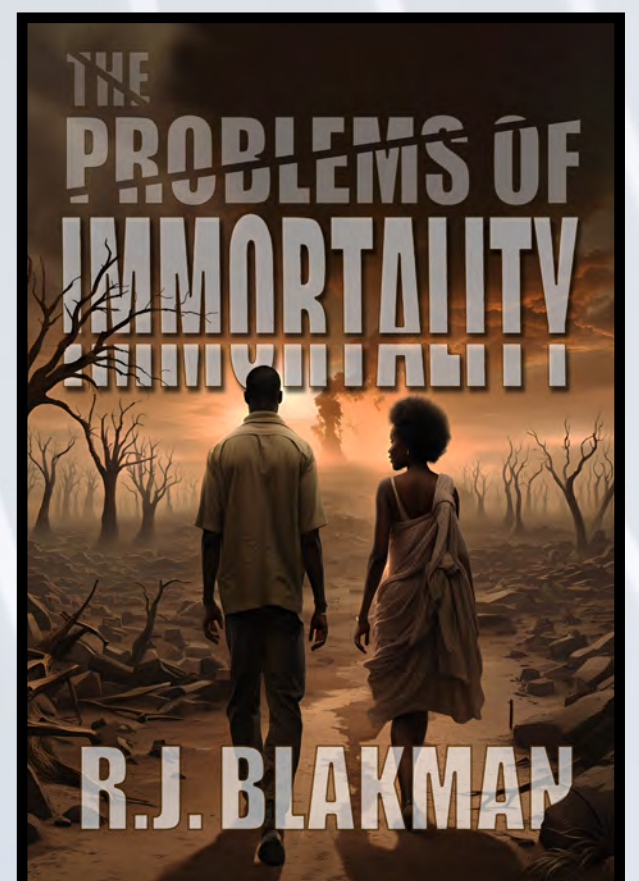
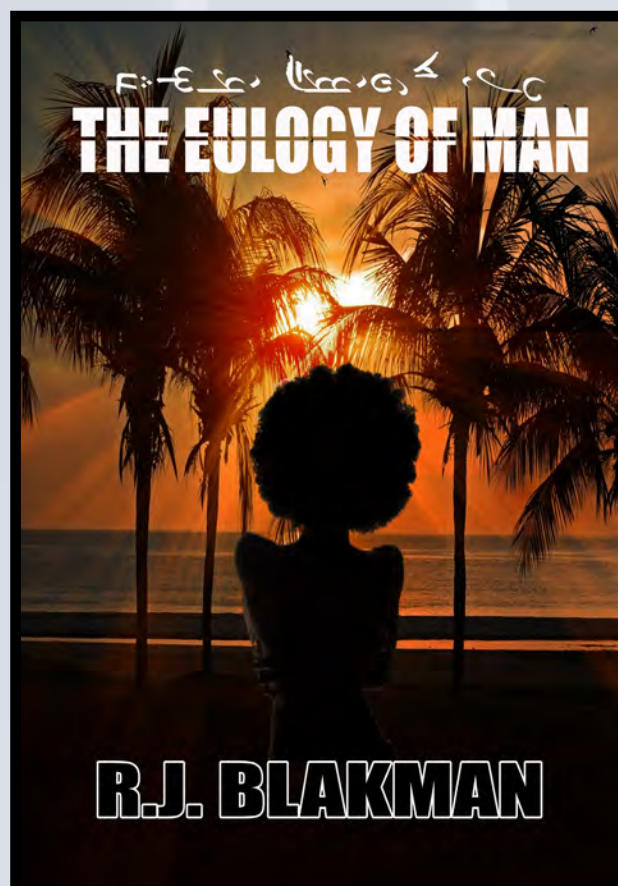
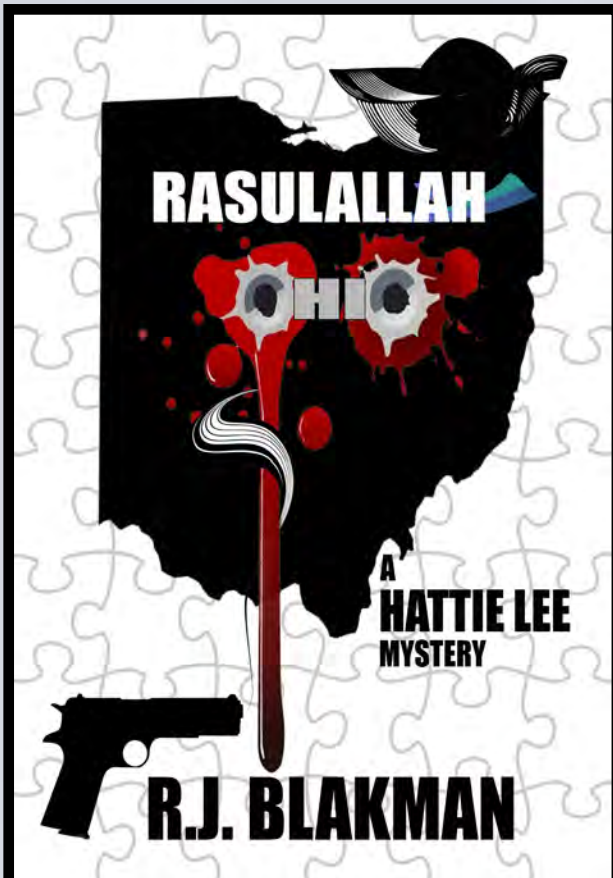
R. J. Blakman is a mystery writer, a writer of non-fiction and an all-around truth seeker. Blackman tries to look at things on a deeper level and whatever he finds, he tends to write about it with no sugar coating.

As a practice, Blakman seeks out truth and goes wherever that truth leads him, even if uncomfortable.

He tends to like working on more than one project at a time, so while he's hard at work on *RASULALLAH, OHIO* he is also working feverishly on his unique take on eternal life: *The Problems of Immortality*.

R.J. Blakman was born in Central America and had one sister. He currently lives in the place of his birth with his beautiful wife Maria. R.J. Blakman can be reached by email at: rjb@iyapoyapa.com

UPCOMING BOOKS BY R.J. BLAKMAN



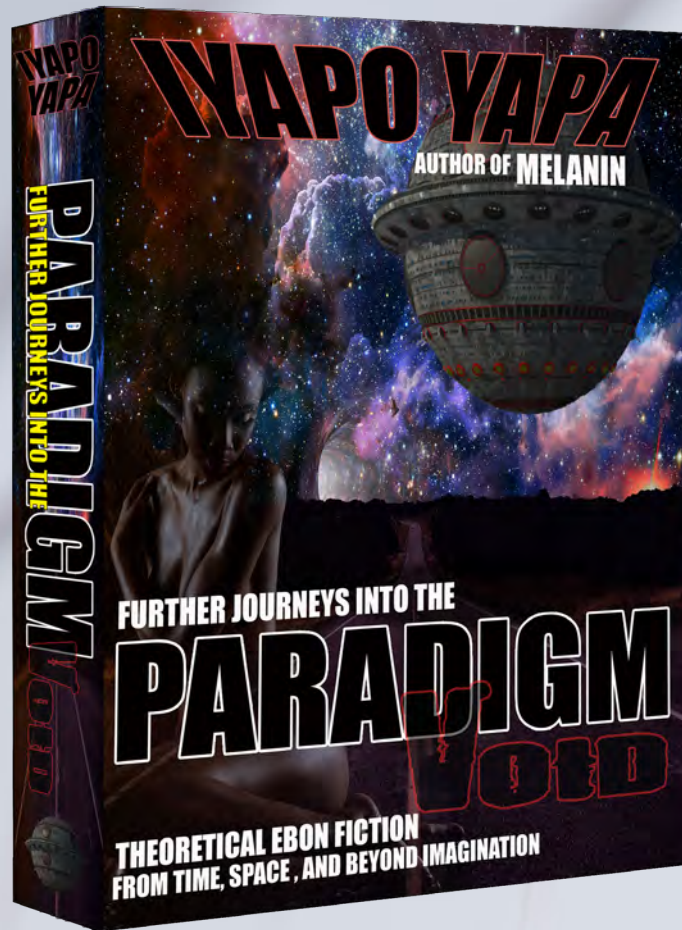
ENTERTAINING,
ENGROSSING,
THOUGHT PROVOKING!

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ARE YOU PREPARED TO JOURNEY BACK INTO THE VOID?!

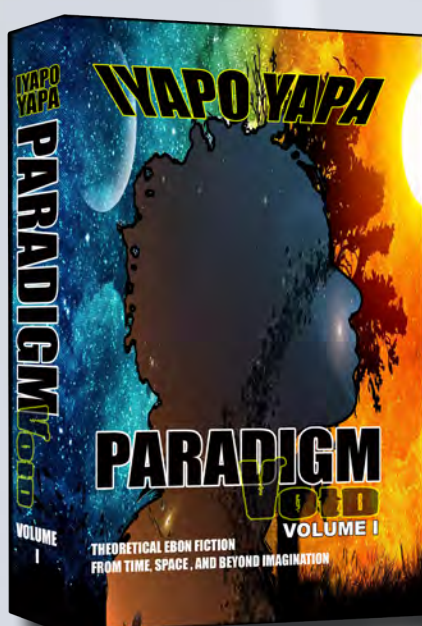


COMING SOON

The *Keepin' it a BUCK* series introduced readers to the *PARADIGM VOID*, a series of short stories in the genre of TEF: Theoretical Ebon Fiction, when everything is possible and anything can and does happen! Now it's time to journey back, and go even farther into the realm of the amazing, the unbelievable and the fantastic!

- What is life like for a person who is “unstuck” in time? One man gives his confessions.
- What if the universe, in an effort to balance itself started removing EVERYTHING that was of no use or value - to include some PEOPLE?!
- Luxury isn't always what it seems, or is cracked up to be, as one newlywed couple learns first hand.
- A comet is on a collision course with earth and there is no stopping it. One family decides to have one final family dinner together. And that's when the family secrets start coming out!

All this and MORE is coming to the new addition to the *Keepin' it a BUCK* series with, *Further Journey's into the PARADIGM VOID!*



RIGHT NOW!

Stories from Time, Space and Beyond Imagination,
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Retreat



& cultural Exploration

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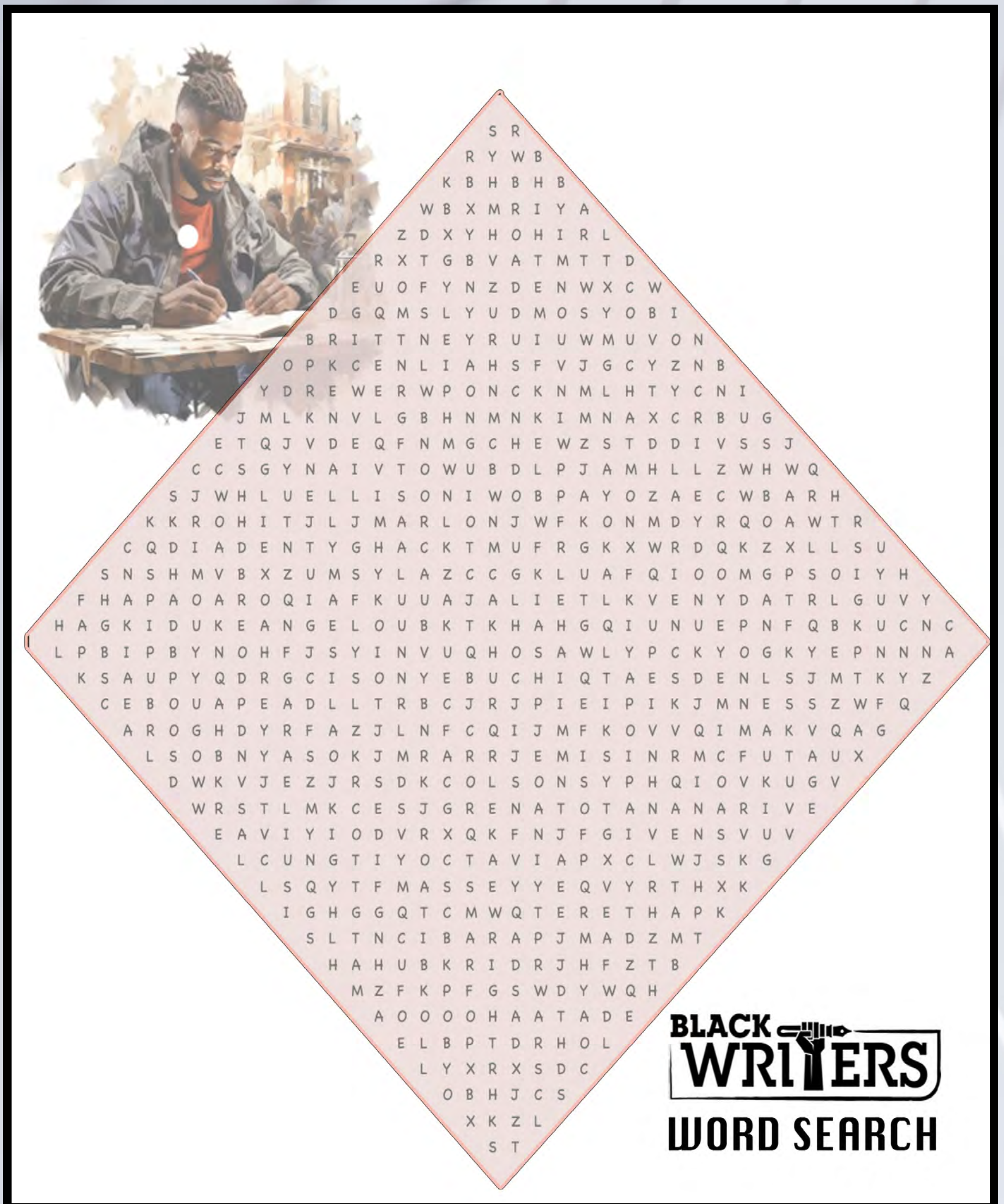
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NEW! March 2024 Word Search!

If you've been a Reading and Writing in the DARK newsletter subscriber for a while, then you'll know that the words for this month's wordsearch are the answers to last month's crossword puzzle. So, if you don't want to go directly to the back of this issue to see the answers and just want some hints, here they are!

As always, the answers to last month's puzzle are at the back of this issue and the answers to this month's crossword puzzle will appear next month. HAVE FUN!

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



The word search puzzle is a diamond shape containing the following text:

S R
R Y W B
K B H B H B
W B X M R I Y A
Z D X Y H O H I R L
R X T G B V A T M T T D
E U O F Y N Z D E N W X C W
D G Q M S L Y U D M O S Y O B I
B R I T T N E Y R U I U W M U V O N
O P K C E N L I A H S F V J G C Y Z N B
Y D R E W E R W P O N C K N M L H T Y C N I
J M L K N V L G B H N M N K I M N A X C R B U G
E T Q J V D E Q F N M G C H E W Z S T D D I V S S J
C C S G Y N A I V T O W U B D L P J A M H L L Z W H W Q
S J W H L U E L L I S O N I W O B P A Y O Z A E C W B A R H
K K R O H I T J L J M A R L O N J W F K O N M D Y R Q O A W T R
C Q D I A D E N T Y G H A C K T M U F R G K X W R D Q K Z X L L S U
S N S H M V B X Z U M S Y L A Z C C G K L U A F Q I O O M G P S O I Y H
F H A P A O A R O Q I A F K U U A J A L I E T L K V E N Y D A T R L G U V Y
H A G K I D U K E A N G E L O U B K T K H A H G Q I U N U E P N F Q B K U C N C
L P B I P B Y N O H F J S Y I N V U Q H O S A W L Y P C K Y O G K Y E P N N N A
K S A U P Y Q D R G C I S O N Y E B U C H I Q T A E S D E N L S J M T K Y Z
C E B O U A P E A D L L T R B C J R J P I E I P I K J M N E S S Z W F Q
A R O G H D Y R F A Z J L N F C Q I J M F K O V V Q I M A K V Q A G
L S O B N Y A S O K J M R A R R J E M I S I N R M C F U T A U X
D W K V J E Z J R S D K C O L S O N S Y P H Q I O V K U G V
W R S T L M K C E S J G R E N A T O T A N A N A R I V E
E A V I Y I O D V R X Q K F N J F G I V E N S V U V
L C U N G T I Y O C T A V I A P X C L W J S K G
L S Q Y T F M A S S E Y Y E Q V Y R T H X K
I G H G G Q T C M W Q T E R E T H A P K
S L T N C I B A R A P J M A D Z M T
H A H U B K R I D R J H F Z T B
M Z F K P F G S W D Y W Q H
A O O O O H A A T A D E
E L B P T D R H O L
L Y X R X S D C
O B H J C S
X K Z L
S T

BLACK WRITERS
WORD SEARCH

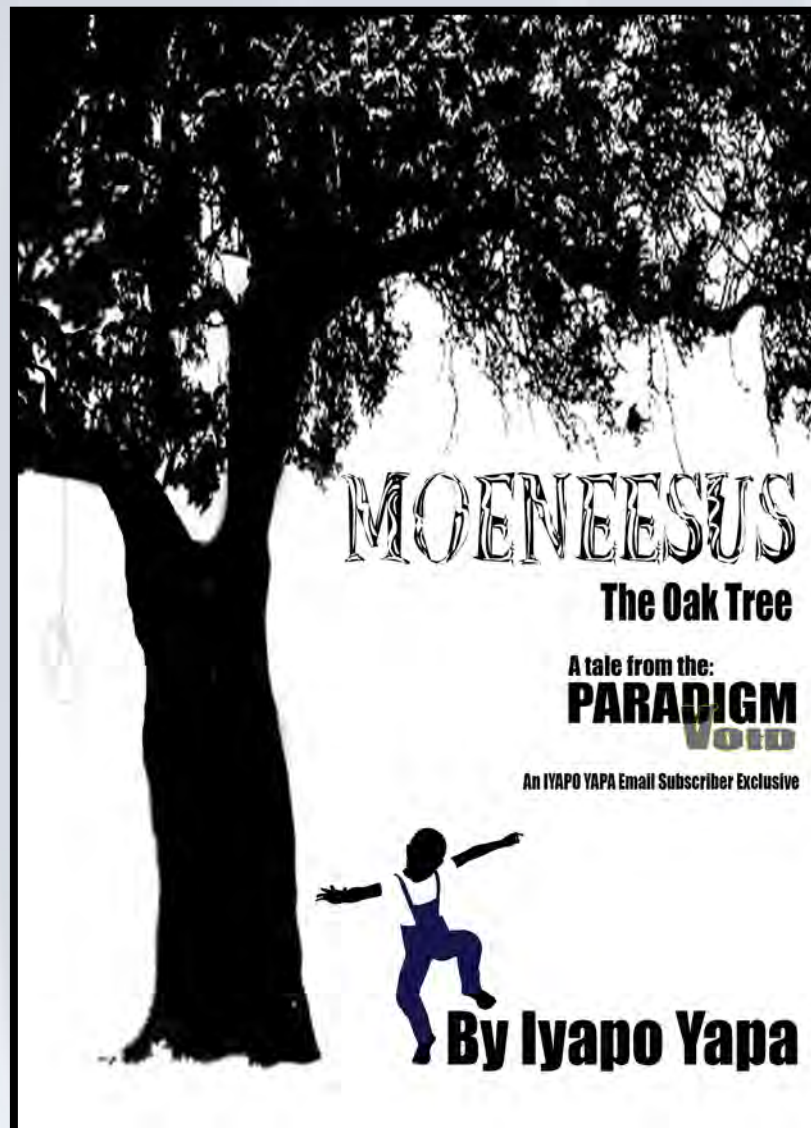
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MARCH 2024 WORD SEARCH PUZZLE WORDS - BLACKWRITERS

ONYEBUCHI	GIVENS	RENATO	OCTAVIA
ANGELOU	ADYEMI	RILEY	NAKIA
ANGLEA	AJALI	TERETHA	SHAWL
TJ	ELLISON	JEMISIN	BOOKS
ISHMAEL	BROADDUS	CHATMON	KENDALL
CALDWELL	BALDWIN	SAUNDERS	TEMI
COLSON	CHINUA	ROSEANNE	TANANARIVE
WRIGHT	BRITTNEY	IYAPO	MASSEY
KJ	OYEYEMI	BALOGUN	OKORAFOR
AYOKA	MARLON	ADRIEN	TADE



If you are a READING AND WRITING IN THE DARK subscriber and haven't read your free copy of MOENEESESUS THE OAK TREE, what are you waiting for?! Relax and take some time to read a great story from the the Paradigm VOID! It may make you smile, it may make you cry, but either way, you are going to enjoy it.

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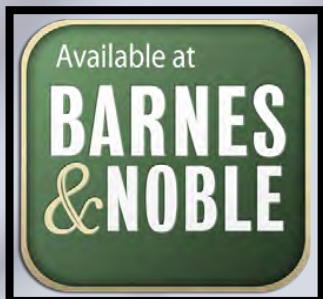
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And What of the CARGO?



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And What of the CARGO?

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“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?

What are readers saying about And What of the CARGO?

“This story is an exceptional horror tale of what happens when displaced restless souls whose spirits sought to exact restitution from those who prospered from their demise are ignored. The reunion and collaboration between the historical and modern families to bring about justice for their stolen legacy was gripping.”

- Amazon Review

“Mr. Yapa is one of the most imaginative writers out there. He handles controversial subject matter with grace and maturity. He offers powerful insight on one of the most important topics of our era: the Atlantic slave trade and modern-day racism. In this story there is retribution for evils - past and present. There is blood, dismemberment, horror, anger, rage, justice, hate, love, passion, politics, wealth, and finally reconciliation and peace. What a journey. I Loved it. And yes, it did scare me - It scared me a lot!”

- Gwen

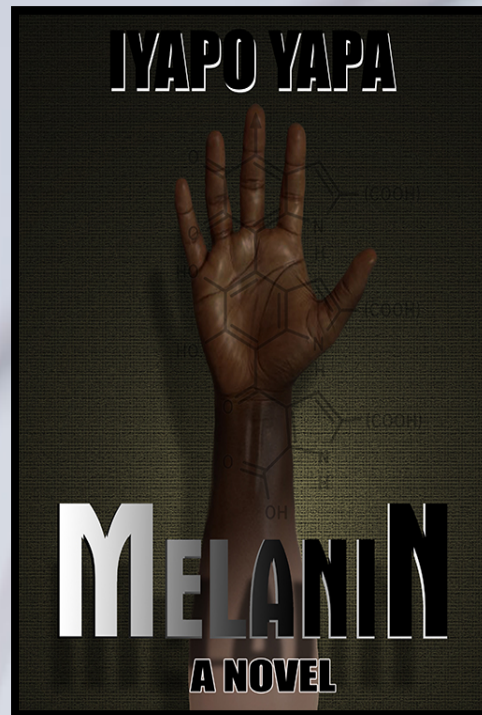
“Yapa weaves another story this time interwoven with historical references. I was on my seat with every chapter. I don't want to give it away but....revenge is sweet when served dead. And I can't get over how different each of his offerings are. Read his Vella's and you'll see what I mean. Another great book by Iyapo Yapa. A must read!”

- Amazon review

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MELANIN: A Novel



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MELANIN: A NOVEL

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Due to a series of man-made radiological catastrophes, the non-Black population of the planet becomes susceptible to a highly virulent form of melanoma and has to choose between becoming Black (phenotypically and genetically), or almost certain death.

MELANIN: A NOVEL examines a world where Black people are realizing they are once again truly free. What does it mean for Black people to be back in their rightful place, after centuries of subjugation, marginalization and terror? What does it mean for Black people to no longer be under the boot of a system put (and kept) in place to use and keep using them?

Conversely, what happens to those who have only known control and dominance for centuries as the tide is turning? How do they react to the knowledge that they are powerless to stop the turning tide as the field becomes genuinely level, and the system of white supremacy utterly collapses around them?

On top of that, is a threat to the world at large that is so horrifying no one could have imagined it!

goodreads

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.

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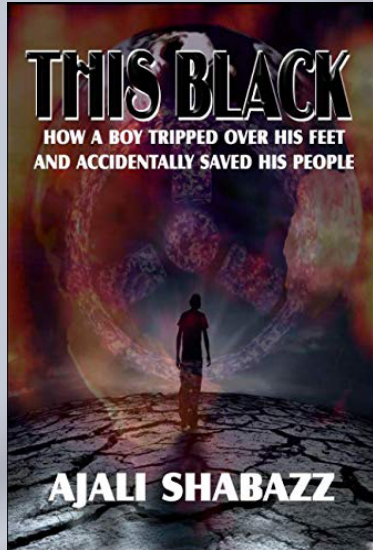
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Books by:

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!

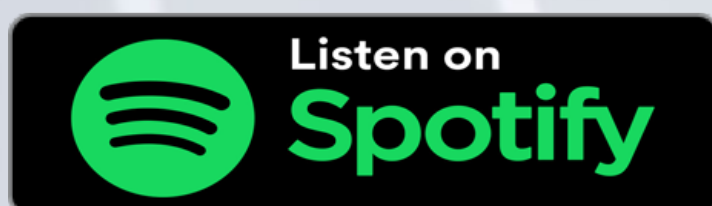
Listen to the interview on  by clicking the link below:

<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:



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Sweet Land of Liberty?!

From IYAPO'S BLOG Sunday July 17, 2022

For some reason I sat this morning and thought about the song – “My Country Tis of Thee”.

People in my age group will remember being taught it in school (at least the first verse), sometimes sung before the “pledge of allegiance”.

I sat and pondered the first stanza. The one I was taught in school and sang repeatedly.

“My country tis of thee,

Sweet land of liberty,

Of thee I sing.

Land where my fathers died,

Land of the pilgrim's pride,

From every mountain side,

Let freedom ring.

Ok, number one, I haven't thought about that song in DECADES and haven't sung it in probably over 50 years, but I can still recite it from memory, which in itself is problematic.

I decided to do a little cursory research on the song and found that it is actually a very long song, based on the British melody of the song “God Save the Queen” (that part I already knew). The main thing I was looking for were dates.

My Country Tis of Thee was written in 1831.

What else happened in 1831?

THE TRAIL OF TEARS:

The Trail of Tears was a series of forced displacements of approximately 60,000 American Indians of the “Five Civilized Tribes” between 1830 and 1850 by the United States government.

Native Americans were forcibly removed from their ancestral homelands in the Southeastern United States to areas to the west of the Mississippi River that had been designated Indian Territory. The forced relocations were carried out by government authorities after the passage of the Indian Removal Act in 1830.

The relocated peoples suffered from exposure, disease, and starvation while en route to their newly designated Indian reserve. Thousands died from disease before reaching their destinations or shortly after. According to Native American activist Suzan Shown Harjo of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, the event constituted a genocide.

“Sweet land of liberty / from every mountain side, let freedom ring.”

Uh huh.

President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. Meaning the song was written and they were singing it for over THREE DECADES – AT THE SAME TIME Black people were enslaved, terrorized, raped and lynched by THEM!

The “founding fathers”, wrote a strongly worded “Deceleration of Independence” and started formally celebrating “Independence Day”, the date: July 4th 1777. So they were celebrating



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Sweet Land of Liberty?! (Continued)

From IYAPO'S BLOG Sunday 17 July 2022

“Independence and freedom” HUNDRED YEARS at the same time Black people had been and continued to be enslaved, terrorized, raped and lynched!

And CONTINUED to do so through the “Jim Crow” era and on through present day with no end in sight.

They taught me and other Black children to memorize the song as a mantra, KNOWING that we were singing and glorifying our subjugators, oppressors and the very country that was and is



for almost a terrorizing our people, both at home and abroad – something that itself likely gives them some form of twisted glee as they listened to us sing it.

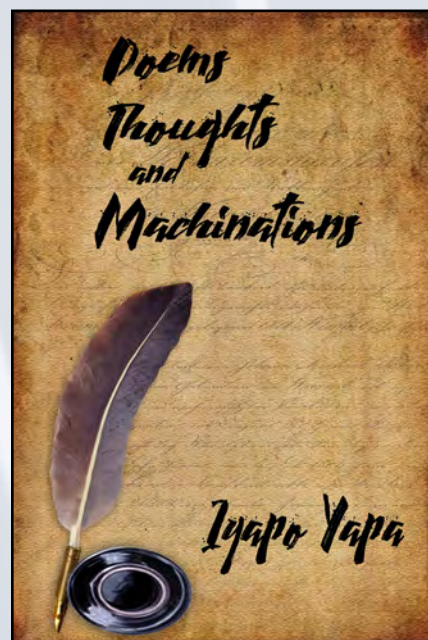
My belief is that singular individuals can sometimes change, but ENTIRE PEOPLES DO NOT CHANGE! The amount of cognitive dissonance displayed by those who sang and continue to sing these songs, and the rich white enslavers who wrote those hypocritical documents pertaining to FREEDOM, and the people who continue holding them up as paragons of virtue, is

something I can not begin to relate to.



Flash fiction is a genre of fiction, defined as a very short story. While there is no set word count that separates flash fiction from more traditional short stories, flash fiction stories can be as short as a few words (while short stories typically run for several pages). Flash fiction is also known as sudden fiction, short-short stories, micro-fiction, or micro-stories.

Got a few minutes or a good story? That's all you'll need.



The title says it all.

Sometimes I think all people wax poetic whether they write it down or not. For the most part I think everyone has times of reflection and seeking deeper meaning in things.

Here is where I write it down in verse and many times without traditional structure.

Always seeking.

READING and WRITING in the DARIK

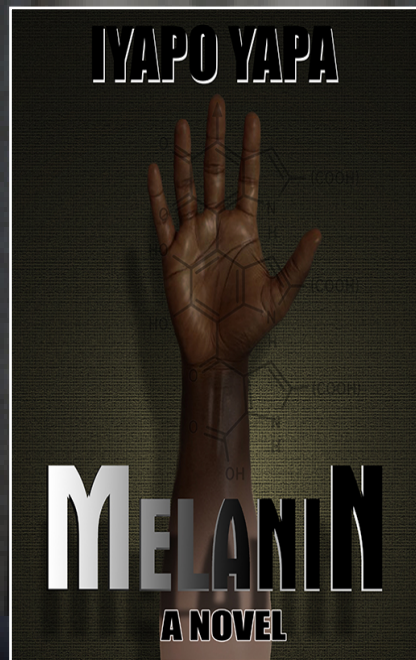
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MELANIN: A Novel NOW ON KINDLE UNLIMITED!

I know that 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 *MELANIN* has been a ceaseless source of pride and joy for me. From the time I released *MELANIN: A Novel* it has only been available as soft cover, hard back and Kindle edition. It is my only work published through Amazon, that is not available on Kindle Unlimited.

UNTIL NOW!

To celebrate the One Year Anniversary of the publication of my debut novel, *MELANIN: A Novel* is now available on Kindle Unlimited! This means that if you have a Kindle (or any tablet or mobile device) you can (download and) open the free Kindle App and read about what hap-



pens in a world were becoming genetically and phenotypically Black is the difference between life and death.

So, tell your family and tell your friends! Tell your neighbors and your colleagues! Tell your book clubs and your reading groups!

And remember you can still also get your copy of *MELANIN: A Novel*

as a soft cover or hard cover edition as well as purchasing it to add to your Kindle digital library!

I want to thank everyone for your support, well wishes and purchases! It means a lot to me to know my work is being read and appreciated! It is my goal to keep

bringing you the very best work I can produce!

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!



kindle vella



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!



READING and WRITING in the

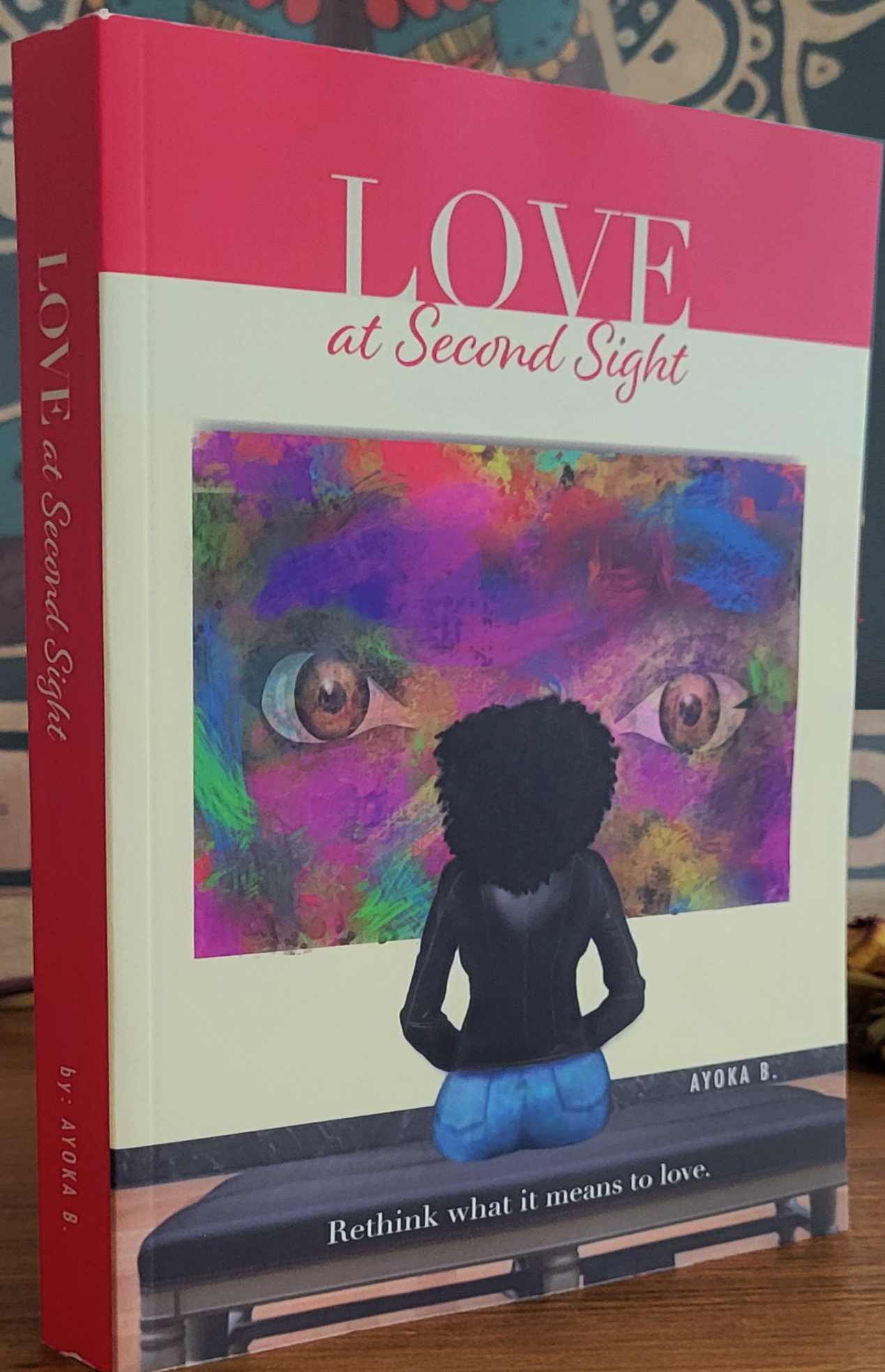
DARK

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LOVE AT SECOND SIGHT IS AVAILABLE NOW!

Shane's life is full... of poetry, motherhood, and friends. She is a Single Mom who is pensive, passionate, and generous and loves her family. Ambitious and hard-working, Shane is trying to carve her path. Enter Mike. He is talented, complicated, and guarded. Their undeniable connection changes their hearts and lives. A beautiful and layered story of artistry and love, this novel spans generations. Love At Second Sight will make you laugh, cry, and cheer and inspire you to rethink what it means to love.

This unputdownable book showcases descriptive prose that makes you reflect on your own relationships.



CLICK ON THE BOOK ABOVE TO VISIT AYOKA'S LINKTREE!

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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

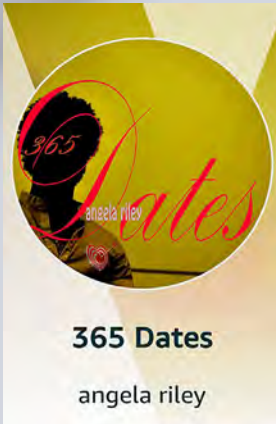
DeClaire and Tyrone meet and sparks fly. They fall in love with each other quick, fast, and in a hurry. It seems too good to be true. But is it? Is it safe to love? Are there any “good” rules when it comes to love? Do we have to fight for love? Are there always games being played when it comes to love? 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

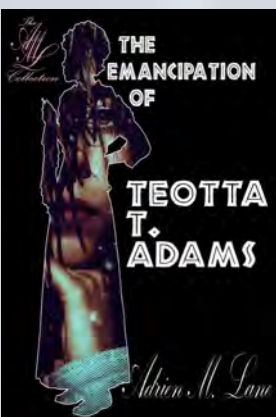
Single again, after my first divorce, one day I had a new thought: I WANT TO DATE. And... NOTHING. No one came knocking on my door to woo me. No one approached me when I was out wanting to court me. Nobody asked friends/family to be set up with me. Just crickets! So, thinking that maybe my goal was to 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!



Fully BLACK

Angela Riley

Because she is IN LOVE, talented dancer and homeschooled student Makena enrolls in the elite Fullson High to be closer to Marshall.



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?

READING and WRITING in the

DARIK

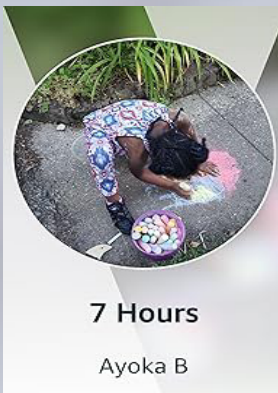
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The Match

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?



7 Hours

Ayoka B.

Time is precious so honor it. This is a peek at how our family was indelibly changed in the span of seven hours.



The Skin I'm In

Ayoka B.

As a child, the world outside of my safe life chipped away at my confidence and self-image. I was 18 before I liked what I saw in the mirror. Or at least I could actually look at my reflection and smile. Self-love and identity are frequently intertwined; they definitely were for me.



A'DICK'tion The Back Story

MADM Precious

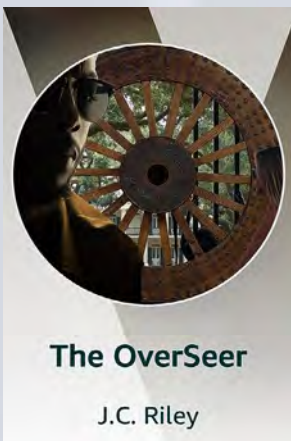
From Book 1: Sex addiction is a real thing; When Quincey finds out his wife is caught up in some things, can they save their marriage.



The Godchild Chronicles

J.C. Riley

War rocks the Planet Raosis! Ptahlon Anuku is drafted onto the Anti-Terror Detail & is under constant attack. With ties to both sides of the conflict, Ptahlon must choose a side in order to get him & his wife (fellow CDO Officer Raseem) safely off of Raosis. What will it take for Ptahlon & Raseem to escape in one piece? Who will they rely on to help bring their ambitions to a reality? And more importantly, what kind of sacrifice are they willing to make to achieve their ultimate goal?



The OverSeer

J.C. Riley

It's nice to be up high and seeing over things, right? Welcome to the world of THE OVERSEER. Strap yourself in because it's one heck of a ride!

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.

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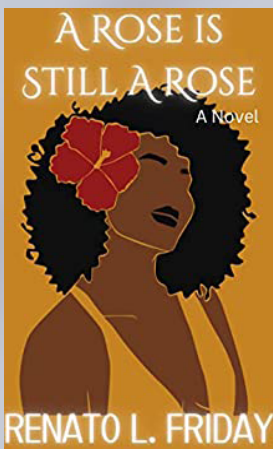


Affirming Self Love (Graphic Non-Fiction SERIES)

angela riley

SelfLOVE Meditation, Reflections, & AFFIRMATIONS Series...

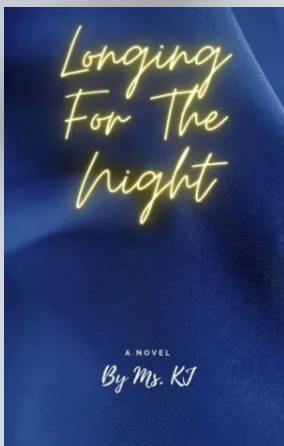
With a new book released each month, this “Graphic Nonfiction” series is filled with love for BlackUs. Each episode opens with a short essay exploring a theme such as “Following the Happy” or “Plan & Reflect” and culminates with a dynamic collection of affirmation. You’ll have a beautiful time meditating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



A Rose is Still a Rose

Renato L. Friday

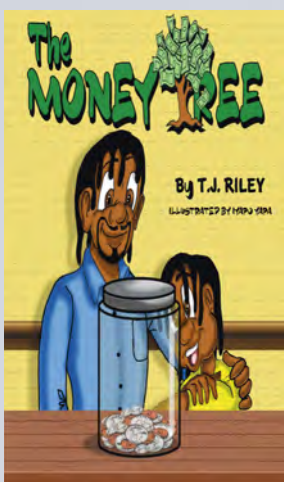
Rose thought life was going great: she was engaged, had a beautiful set of twin girls, a recent trade school graduate, and a new job right around the corner. Unfortunately, her fiancé, David, turned out to not be what she needed, and she chose to break things off. In the midst of her failing relationship, 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

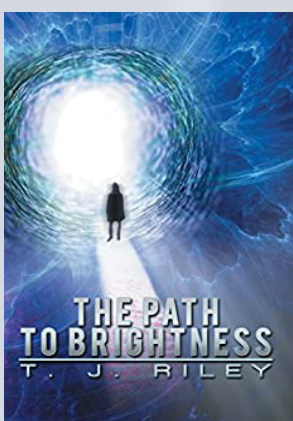
Inspired by the poem Goblin Market by Christina Rossetti, two young sisters face the trials and tribulations of the hood in this coming-of-age story about the harshness of living in South Central Los Angeles.



The Money Tree

T.J. Riley / Illustrated by Iyapo Yapa

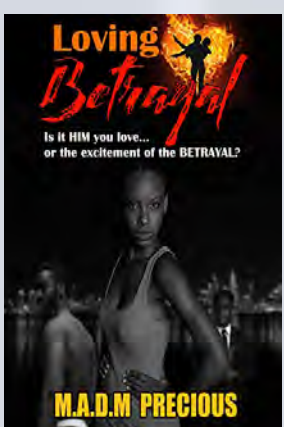
Every child wants money to buy something, right? Our hero does too. But, his father has a surprise, a Money Tree. Join the fun journey to find out how to grow your own money tree.



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.



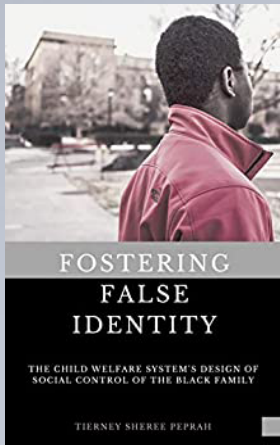
LOVING BETRAYAL

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...

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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.



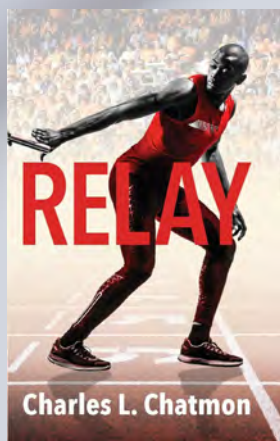
Storm Over South Central

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.



RELAY

Charles L. Chatmon

A high school track relay team is in the hunt for their ultimate goal. When tragedy strikes, the team bands together to capture a dream they've had since childhood. Totally within their grasp, they must come together as one to achieve the final victory. Along the way, they face personal challenges that threatens to derail their dreams - and their lives.

Explore the saga of the Appleton High School varsity track team as they compete to win a championship they have worked hard for - with difficulties along the way.



-The Director

Benita, a desperate and out-of-work actress, had been selling her blood to stay afloat. Times were hard and getting worse until she agreed to star in a film by an unknown director named Danny West. He'd been producing mystery and horror flicks for years. Yet, no one knew it was just a front for his secret agenda.

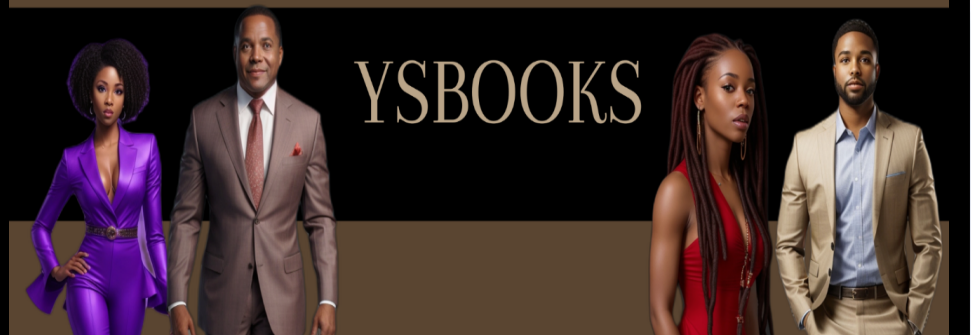
* * *

For even MORE fantastic FREE Audio Dramas by this author just click the image below!
Buy her a cup of coffee while you're there!

CLICK THE IMAGE ABOVE TO LISTEN TO

THE DIRECTOR

**READ FOR FREE OR
LISTEN TO THE AUDIO DRAMA!**



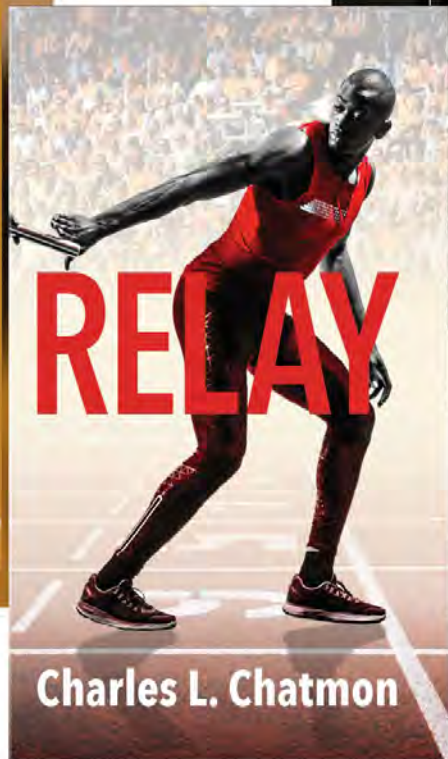
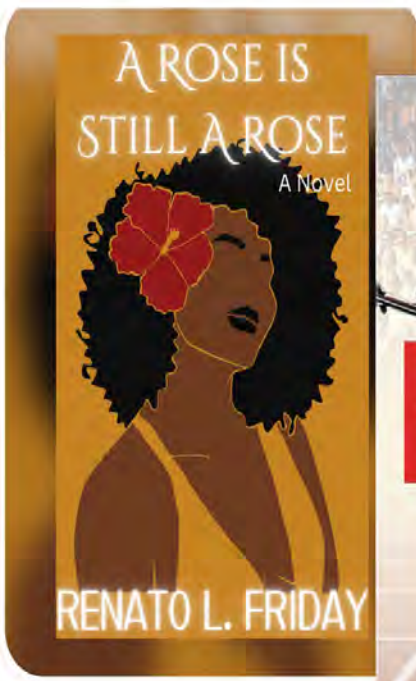
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HERE IS THE SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE!

BLACK WRITERS

Solution



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IYAPO YAPA

Tales of the
MONKEY'S PAW

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 YAPA ON THESE OTHER PLATFORMS!

MAJID MARIJ MARIJ



2024