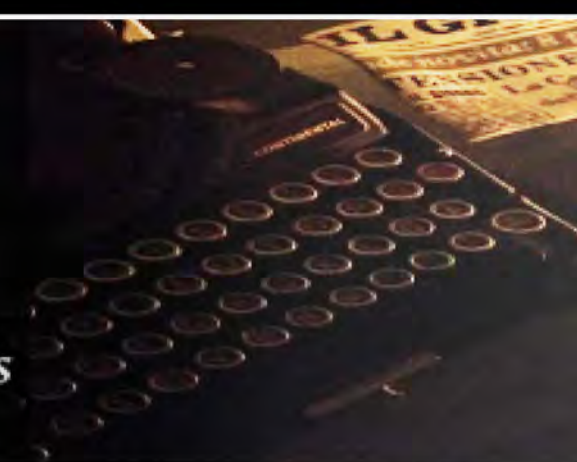


READING and WRITING in the

# DARIK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors



## THIS MONTH:

## MAGAZINE

Adrien M. Lane  
takes us into ...

*A Land  
Of Lost  
Emotion*

The Complete Prologue  
and Chapter I Excerpt.

Page 5

**Also:**  
The Complete  
Prolouge to  
the YA book  
Tunnel at the  
End of the  
Light!

Page 23

**This we present a WORD SEARCH we know you'll LOVE!**

Page 30

**News and Info about Completed and  
Upcoming Projects and MORE Every Month!**

READING and WRITING in the

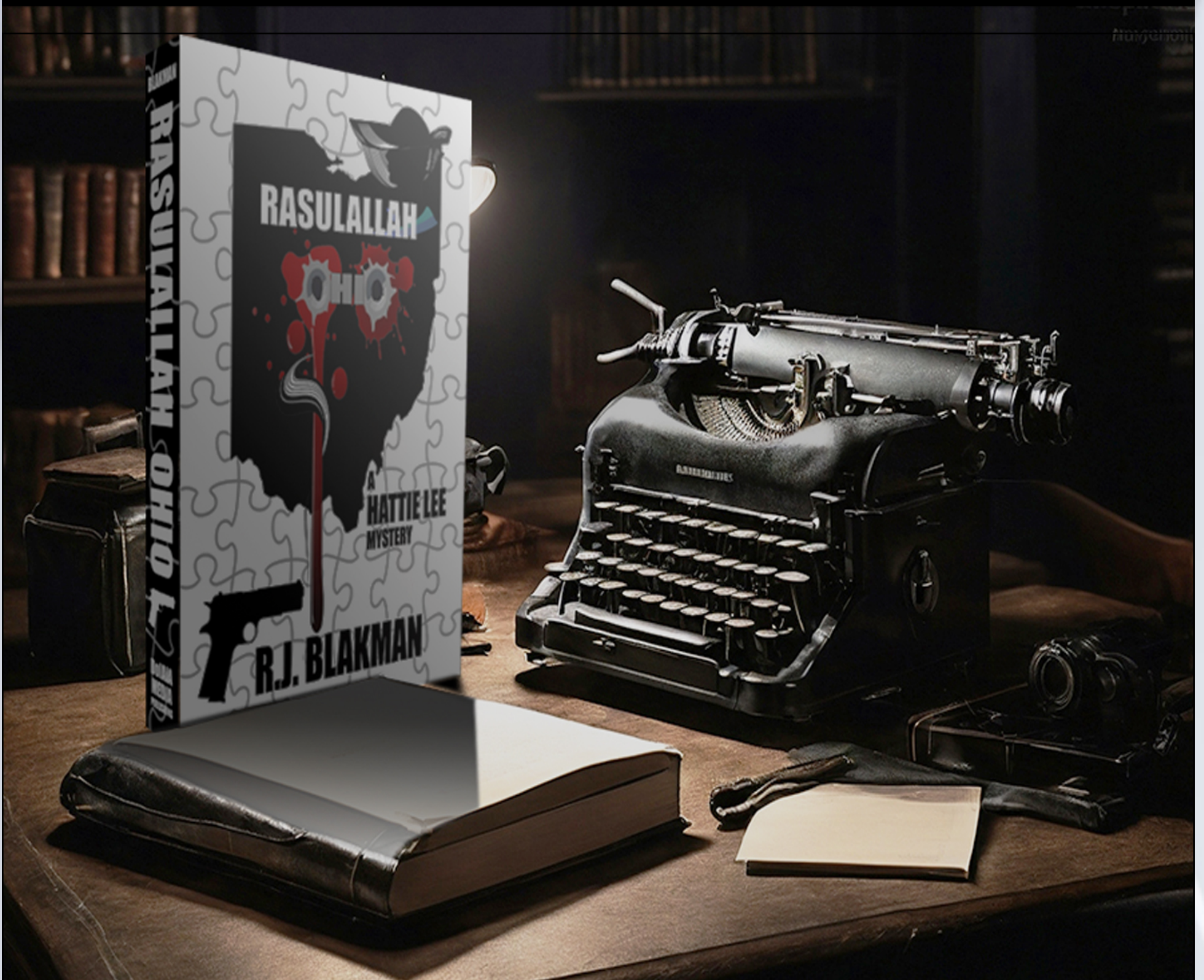
# DARIK

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## 1960s Ohio

Hattie Lee and her husband Benjamin were building a good life and preparing to start a family in a town that seemed like a dream come true. In a country unsafe for Black people sat Rasulallah, an oasis hidden in plain sight.

But one night.. within less than an hour... their dream became a nightmare!  
And Hattie was determined to find out why!



From R.J. BLAKMAN, author of the highly anticipated urban fantasy *The Dragons of Harlem*, comes a mystery that will make you laugh, cry, get angry and keep you guessing until the very end!

## ***RASULALLAH OHIO: A HATTIE LEE MYSTERY***

Available at: <https://iyapoyapa.com/rusulallah-ohio.html>

or click the image above for the direct link.

(Also enjoy a sneak peek at the full second chapter exclusively on the website)



OCTOBER 2025 - Volume 2 / Number 4



# MAGAZINE

## CONTENTS

WELCOME! ..... Page 3

A Land of Lost Emotion: Complete Prologue and Chapter 0 Excerpt .... Page 5

Tunnel at the End of the Light (Complete Prologue) ..... Page 23

October 2025 MAZE ..... Page 30

Alright, Enough About ME! ..... Page 43

## WELCOME BACK!

Well, here we are, back in October (my birth month).

A couple months and we'll be watching the fireworks, or the ball drop or the inside of our own eyelids, but we'll be stepping confidently into 2026, but we need to get good ol' 2025 out the way first. For this month's issue we give some space to Adrienne M. Lane as she introduces us to A Land of Lost Emotion. (What's the main character's name? Anyone who know anything about Adrienne M. Lane books will know just from the title... that's all I'll say). We present the entire prologue and an excerpt of the first chapter. Also, there is the complete prologue for a very special book I'm working on as a project for a none profit organization called Urban Nerds, titled Tunnel at the End of the Light. The none profit targets inner city youth and shows them that the world is far bigger than their surroundings, and their potential is even more vast!

I hope you enjoy both stories and as always, you'll find articles, puzzles and links to my work and the work of other Black authors that you have come to expect! ENJOY!

Blessings to you and thank you for being a subscriber!  
Iyapo

## A Look Back and to the Future!

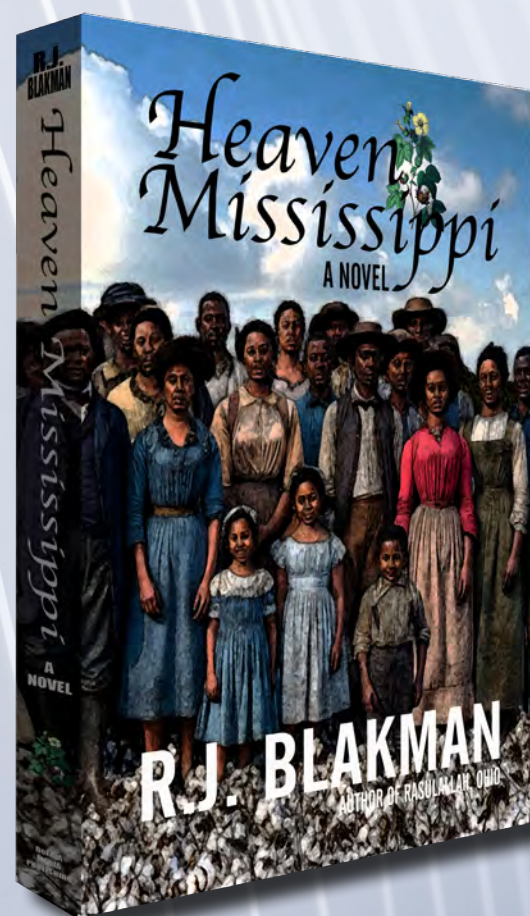
Ok, ok! Black people are sick and tired of reading and talking about our enslavement.

I get it!

So does R.J. Blakman.

There is no shortage of books and movies about the enslavement of Afrikans in America. The question becomes however, how quick should we be to dismiss a book because the main subject matter is chattel slavery as practiced in the United States? It is a tough subject that many of our people would like to just move on from and understandably so, but it is a fact of the history of our people in America. That said, *Heaven Mississippi* may not be what is considered a "traditional" book that takes place during enslavement. There are components of it that are unavoidable to highlight, else it could be argued that it would be a disservice to our ancestors who suffered, bled and died under that barbaric system.

That said, *Heaven Mississippi* is, as the reader will discover, a different kind of book. Blakman has nearly completed the novel and can't wait to get it into the hands of readers. He is promising something different with *Heaven Mississippi*, and from the way it looks thus far, R.J. Blakman is delivering! You can read a complete chapter from *Heaven Mississippi* in the July 2024 issue of the *Reading and Writing in the DARK Magazine*! So, check back here each month for regular *Heaven Mississippi* updates. To the right is the cover reveal! (A *RaWitDM* sneak peek.)



READING and WRITING in the DARK Magazine  
Vol. 2 No.4  
OCTOBER 2025

Iyapo Yapa  
Writer/Layout/Editor-In-Chief

Angela Riley  
Copy Editor

Iyapo Yapa  
Layout/Design

Iyapo using Leonardo AI Graphics for Cover and some other additional graphics.

READING and WRITING in the

# DARIK

*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*

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!**

Click the image below to enter a world of action, adventure, science and horror on Kindle



#### Top reviews from the United States

Amazon Customer

★★★★★ **Cornucopia of Action, Sci-fi, Mystery, Horror and Heart palpatng suspense.**

Reviewed in the United States on November 5, 2022

I love the pace of Iyapo's stories. He is a true master story weaver. This story is a cornucopia full of action, sci-fi, mystery, horror and heart palpatng suspense. The way he transitions between dramatic and comical situations are remarkable. After the daring trio's exhausting battle with vampires, out manoeuvring alans and harpes, they make it home to a well deserved rest within the sanctuary of Hevan only to be disrupted by the the Versquake. How much WORSE can it get living in a unmanageable and unpredictable dimension?

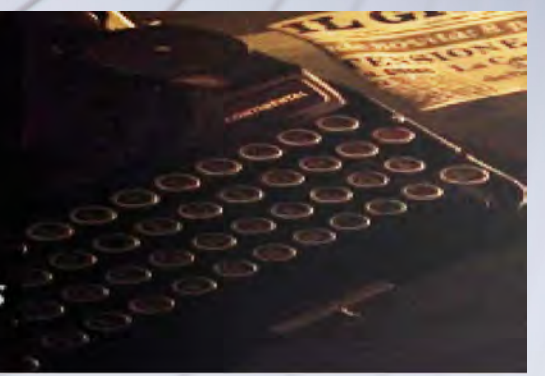
Amazon Customer

★★★★★ **Best Zombies Ever**

Reviewed in the United States on November 1, 2022

Amazon took down my review of Melanin, so I hope this stays. This is not your ordinary Zombie tale. I haven't read such inventive horror in years. Yapa really knows how to weave a story to pull you in. I had to laugh at how much fun I was having while reading it. I would recommend this author in a heart beat because all of his writings are so good.

# BOOK I - COMING SOON!



## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt

### PROLOGUE

Are raindrops the tears of Gaia, or do they fall in empathy for those who are grieving, lonely or heartbroken as a way to make them feel not quite so alone in the world?

Alolé Scott casually sipped a glass of white wine as she sat naked on an overstuffed leather armchair in front of the thirty second-floor panoramic window overlooking the Cleveland skyline and onward to Lake Erie.

This spot had always been one of her favorites for sitting, relaxing and gathering her thoughts, especially late at night. She appreciated the comfort of taking in, from the other side of the glass, the light speckled landscape that stretched out before her. The scenery was interesting to see in daylight, even artistic in its way—but within the embrace of the night, Alolé found it truly mesmerizing, and she was grateful she had her own secure perch from which to view it.

Her literal window on the world.

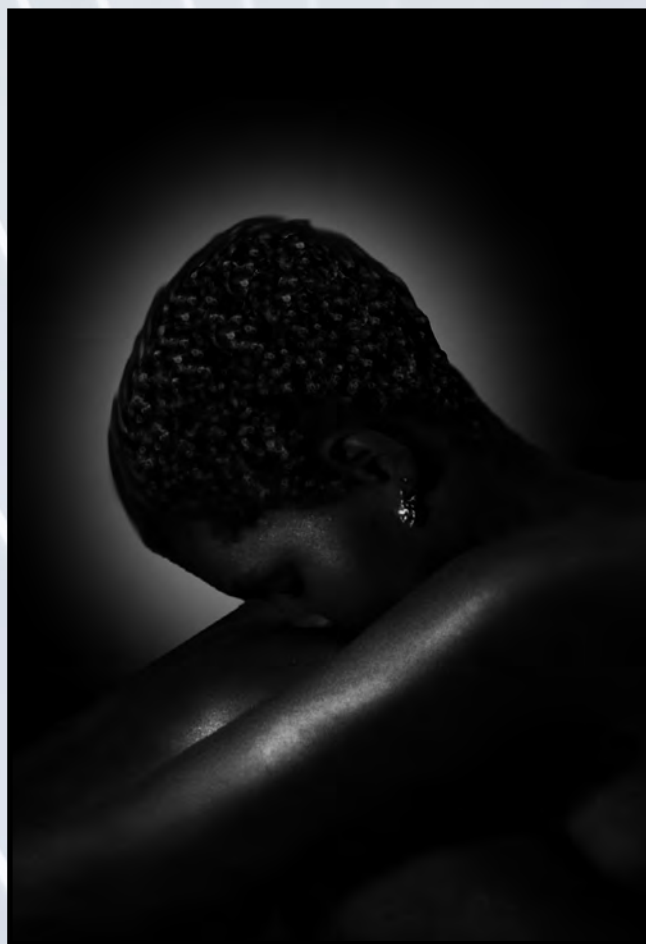
Alolé was always captivated by

the lights of the city and those of the skyscrapers that populated it—lights that never seemed to go dim—the ever-present glimmer of which reflected off the water of the lake and created its own form of light show

just for her. Presently it was mid-June, and for as beautiful as the sights were right now, the lights during the Christmas season made what she was looking at in this moment sadly pale in comparison.

With each light she saw in the towering skyscrapers, she wondered if anyone was in any of those rooms.

Maybe she was diligently dusting to a high shine, the surface of some CEO's massive mahogany desk and the huge rubber plant that sat next to it... a janitor emptying the waste basket of some law partner, shaking his head while grudgingly replacing a plastic trash bag with only three sheets of wadded up paper inside that could have been easily picked up out of the can, but for the spillage from a discarded one third full cup of mocha that made complete replacement necessary. Maybe in



READING and WRITING in the

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## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

the window above the janitor some businessperson was taking care of business—or even perhaps—behind the darkened window of an office two floors above the janitor and the workaholic was yet another businessperson using the office for a late-night tryst where, were their spouse to call, they could legitimately say they were at the office equally... ‘taking care of business.’

So many lights, so many things that could be happening in the darkness. The possibilities were endless. Is that why the floors of a building are called ‘stories? She would have to research that sometime.

Every now and then Alolé would look below, to ground level, or as much of ground level as she could see from her vantage point. The structures at the feet of the taller buildings were never as well lit, but they were still interesting to view and contemplate. This late at night, Alolé could know for a certainty that someone was sleeping.

Someone was crying.

Someone was laughing.

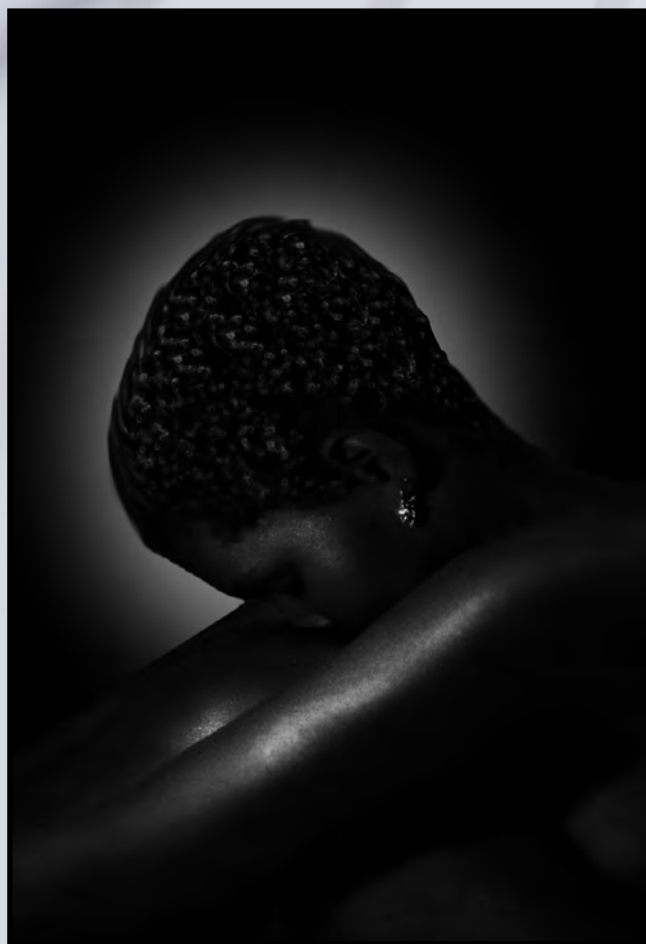
Someone was staggering home, or worse—to their vehicle after a night of too much libations.

Someone was passing from this life to the next, whether by nature, by force, or even by choice.

She did not have to guess at this, nor did she need to be a prophet or clairvoyant to know it. The late-night goings on in the city of Cleveland, Ohio was something she could predict merely by knowing the culture of the city and the patterns of things—anyone could who cared to.

Cleveland was not dissimilar or unique from any other large city when it came to crime and other unsavory things that happened in the hidden parts... its “underbelly.” All cities are alike and to greater or lesser degrees share the same characteristics—both good and ill.

That’s what makes them cities. There was little doubt in her mind that in the morning she could hear about those who had been caught and arrested in the commission of some overnight crime, or some unfortunate soul having been robbed, raped, or





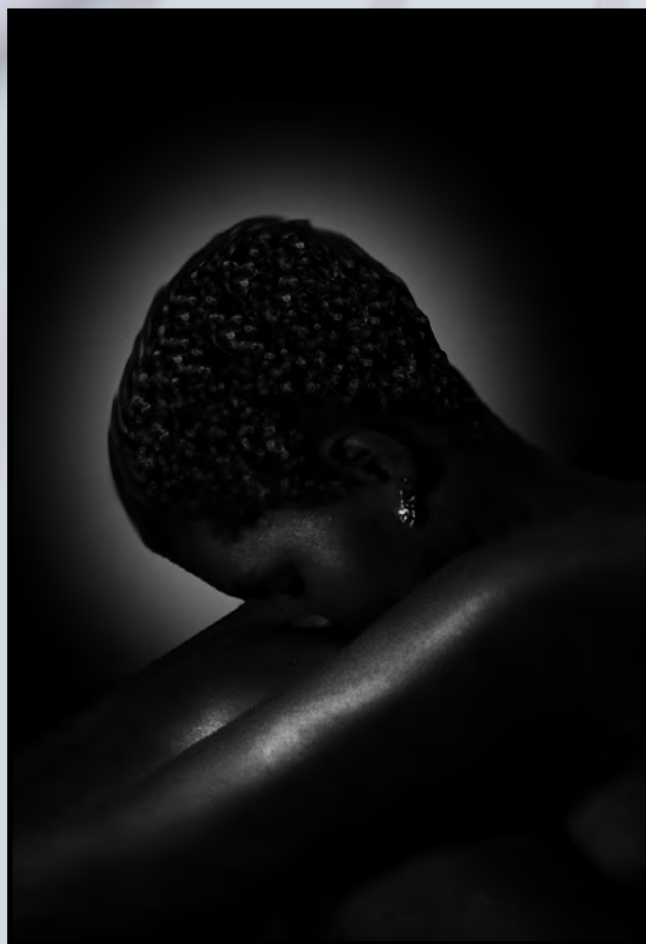
## [A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt \(Cont.\)](#)

murdered. She would need only turn on the news first thing in the morning—or open her police scanner app right now to hear that her imaginings would be confirmed.

Once again, she looked up toward the lights that had comforted her and the ever more distant lightning that so dazzled her. For now, she wanted her mind on less weighty things than the evil that men do and the pain and sorrow that are its inevitable aftermath—though presently, under the circumstances, she knew it was

all a diversion, a way for her to avoid dealing with her present reality—an unavoidable reality.

Yes. This space was one of Alolé's favorites. Her only misgiving about it was that the small corner of solitude did not belong to her. She turned slightly in the chair and looked over her shoulder without straining and stared at the bed, pillows on the floor, along with various articles of clothing. The typically immaculate sheets and comforter that usually had a showcase look about them were



now disheveled and upon them lay the owner of the space... her fiancé of two years, Darren Murdock—one of the wealthiest men in the state of Ohio, one of Forbes Multi-Millionaire 40 under 40, and one of the kindest most generous people she had ever known.

Male or female. She met him at a toll booth of all places.

This crazy rich, self-made millionaire, this celebrated philanthropist was stuck at a toll booth and would not be let through because he had forgotten his wallet

and had no money on him or in his vehicle. As traffic backed up behind him, and the sound of car horns became an orchestra, Alolé who was several vehicles back from ground zero of the backup, got out of her car and walked all the way to the front to find out what was going on—because that was just her way.

She remembered being taken aback for a moment by how good looking the man behind the wheel was—but she had seen handsome men before—hell—she dated a bunch of them. The



## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

A man behind the wheel of the factory fresh looking white Spyder, looked at Alolé and smiled sheepishly for a long moment, as if suddenly so transfixed on her that he had forgotten the matter at hand altogether—then, having a close car horn snap him back to reality. The man’s face went from a disarmingly gorgeous, silly grin, to obvious embarrassment—something Alolé immediately found oddly endearing in its sincerity.

The man in the car and the one in the toll booth explained their versions of the reason behind the holdup—both men were talking over each other in a way that Alolé couldn’t fully understand either of them but was able to get the gist of the problem.

Needing no further explanation, Alolé held up her right hand, signaling both men to please stop talking, then dug into her purse, grabbed a fifty-dollar bill and handed it to the man in the booth.

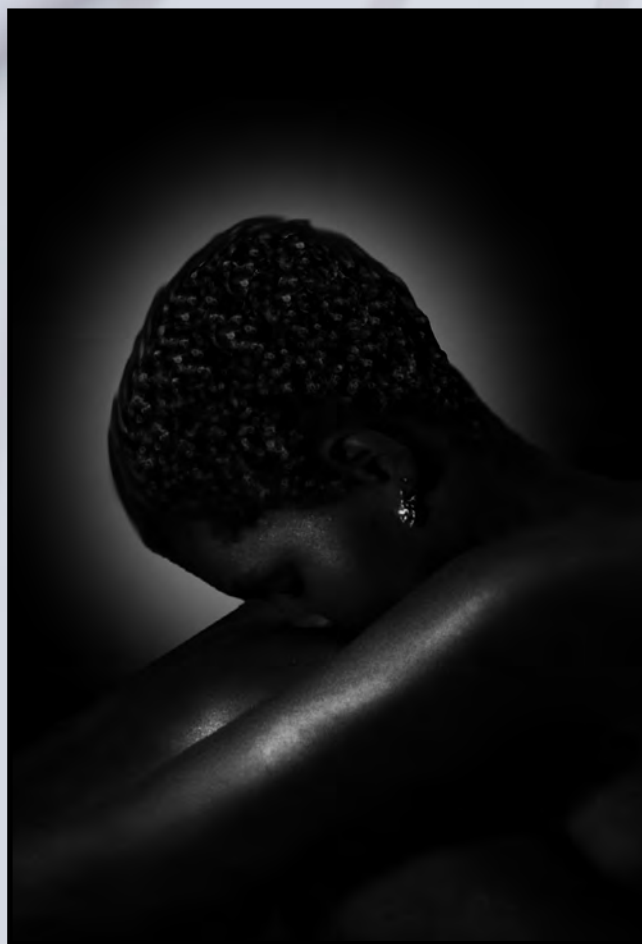
“Lady, what am I supposed to do with this pineapple?!” He said.

“Take it and let this man through so

that everyone can get moving.”

“You expect me to break this?!”

“It’s the smallest thing I have besides the money I have for my own toll.”



The man in the booth, noticeably flustered from already having carried on an extended conversation with the Black man in the expensive car held the fifty dollar bill out the window to Alolé. “Miss... I can’t take this!”

Alolé said nothing and turned her head to look at the ever-growing line of cars that was now spilling into other lanes and causing them to back up, then looked back at the attendant. The man in the claustrophobic desk fan cooled structure likewise followed the direction of her gaze and saw the trouble that had formed and the disaster that was to come if he didn’t do something PDQ.

“We’re not supposed to do this...” the toll booth attendant said, red faced as he lifted his hip so that he could reach into his back pocket for his wallet. He pulled out a twenty-dollar bill two tens and two fives.



## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

He handed Alolé the whole fifty, then put her bill inside his wallet and replaced it to his back pocket.

Alolé took one of the fives and paid the toll, then along with the change she got back, handed it and the forty-five dollars to the man in the car. “Here, this is so hopefully you don’t get caught at anymore toll booths before you get home and hold anyone else up.

And if there are no more booths, you can just use it to buy yourself some lunch or dinner on me.” After giving him the money Alolé turned and made a bee line back to her own vehicle. “You might want to start carrying some extra change in that fancy car of yours!” she called over her shoulder amid the honking.

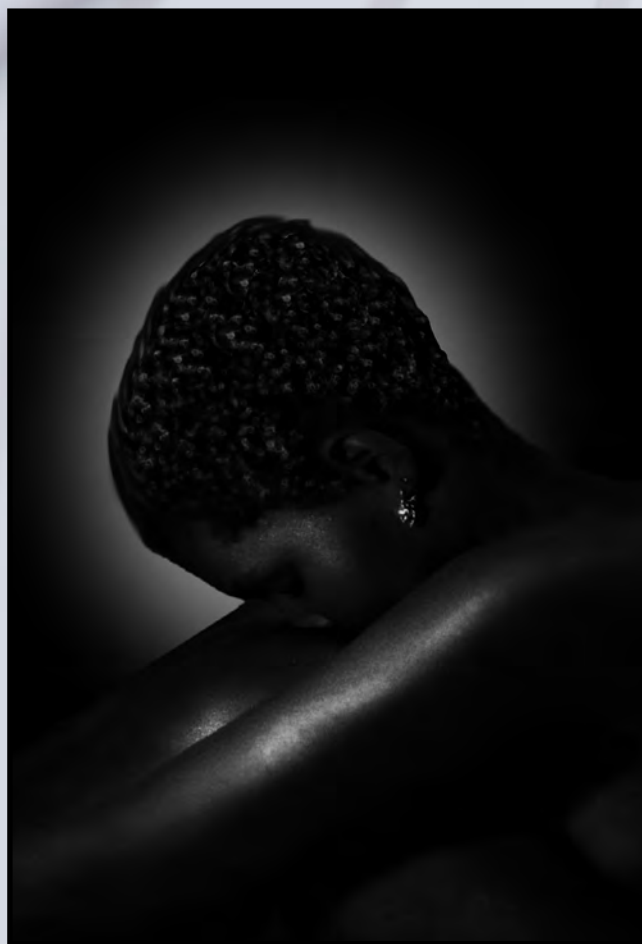
“Thank you! But hey wait a minute!” yelled the man in the car who she would later come to know as Darren Murdock. “What’s your name?! I need to pay you back!” he called after her. “Don’t worry about it!” the beautiful Samaritan yelled, voice becoming ever fainter as she walked away. “Hey wait a minute!” Darren flung open the door of the extravagant, still running car as much as he could in the tight space, banging it hard against

the toll booth and not caring that he did. “Hey! What the hell do ya think you’re doin’”, yelled the attendant. Darren, oblivious to the man in the box, angled himself sideways so he could slip from the driver’s seat and out into the environment. “Hey Buddy! You can’t do that! You’re holdin’ up the line! Don’t you leave that vehicle Mister!”

Continuing to ignore the man in the little box, Darren kept struggling to scoot free, he called out to his benefactor, even as he was dealt some choice words from apoplectic drivers immediately behind him who saw him trying to leave his

vehicle.

After managing to break free, Darren took several brisk steps as the voice of the attendant that was fighting to be heard above the car horns and losing, became more and more faint behind him. Nearly breaking into a trot so that he could get to the woman in front of him, Alolé wasn’t so far ahead that he had no hope of catching up to her, but eventually Darren became acutely aware of his surroundings and especially his self-centeredness in this situation. He stopped walking but continued calling after the woman who was nearly to her own car and





## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

insisted that he pay her back even over her repeated protests of “No worries”, “It’s nothing.” “Pay it forward”, and so on that were now mixing with the noises in the background. Alolé was in no particular hurry to be anyplace that day, but she was aware that just because she wasn’t that didn’t mean that other victims of this man’s forgetfulness didn’t have pressing matters requiring their attention.

There was always the “If you clock in late one more time, you’re fired!” (Something she unfortunately, was well acquainted with from another life, when she wasn’t working for herself). There were planes and trains to catch, sick children at home and any number of reasons that people needed to be on their way, where literally every minute counted. So, she wasn’t too keen on further holding people up so that she could flirt with some guy no matter how dreamy of a smile he had, or how disarmingly charming, or deliciously muscular, or devastatingly handsome he was.

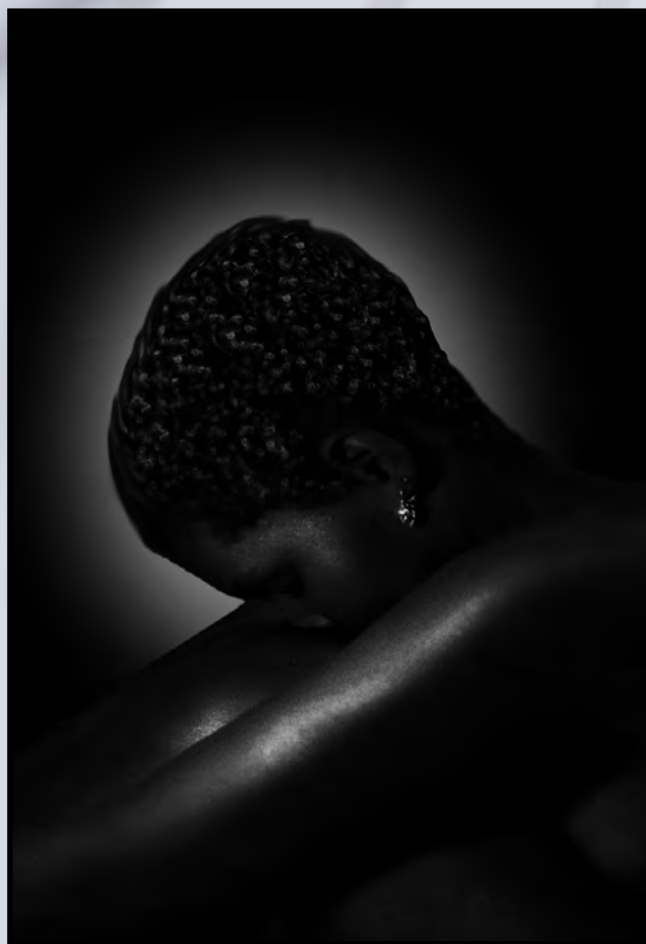
Alolé had made it back to her car and had her hand on the handle of the door when she finally looked back toward the front of the line for the

first time. At first, she was going to just get in, but there was something about how absolutely pitifully hapless he looked, as he called out to her, coupled with how this handsome Black man called out, “Please let me repay your kindness.” That made her pause. “Can I please have your number?!” he yelled. Without taking even one step in his direction and a little apprehensive about what she was about to do,

Alolé yelled over the ever-intensifying blaring of car horns, her phone number to him, God and everybody. She was certain he could not hear what she was

saying over the sound of the incessant noise all around them and she could see he had nothing with which to write. He smiled widely and waved to her, and she courteously waved back as she opened the car door, sat in the driver’s seat, buckled up and waited for traffic to start moving again.

Darren walked back to his waiting vehicle that was still running, the driver’s side door ajar, and began the task of once again angling himself, this time in order to enter his vehicle. As he did his dance, he looked at the attendant who, to his profound





## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

surprise was grinning widely at him. “I know she’s pretty n’ all, but damn man! Really?!” he said. Finally plopping down in the seat, and closing the door, Darren prepared to drive off as the gate before him slowly raised. “Didja at least get her phone number?”

The toll booth man asked. Darren only looked over to him and smiled, then turned his attention to the road in front of him and drove forward.

Though for the rest of the day, Alolé did think about the handsome stranger from time to time that day, she had dismissed any thought of him ever reaching out to her.

So much for thinking.

To her surprise, roses were delivered to her home the next day along with an envelope containing fifty dollars along with a thank you card and an invitation to dinner on a card that read:

“I promise I won’t forget my wallet this time.”

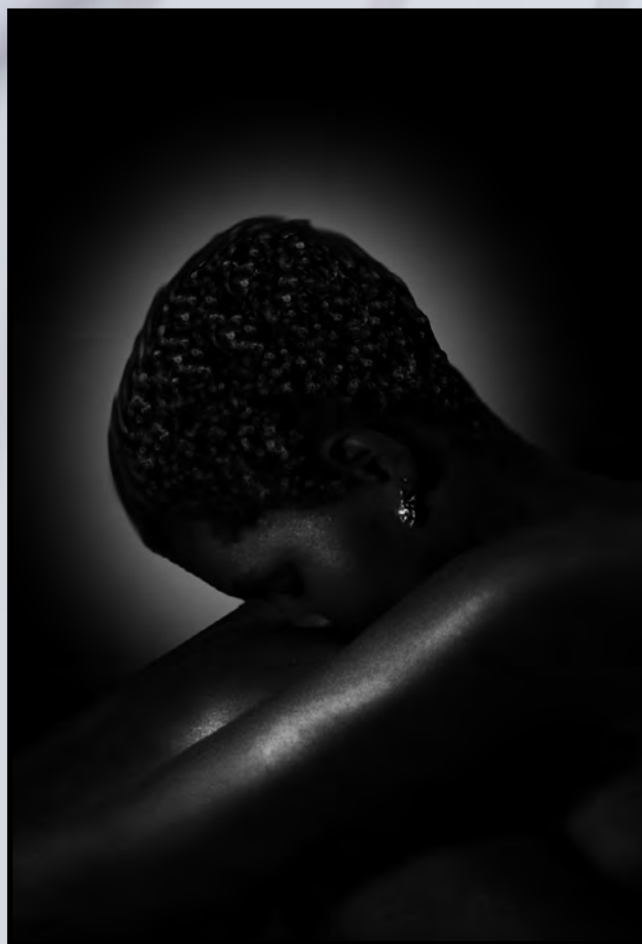
Alolé took the handsome stranger up on his offer, and as it turns out, as Darren later recounted, he never

did hear the phone number she called out of the blare of the impatient, angry vehicle horns. At some point he recognized her as the famous cartoonist Alolé Scott (that was the point at which he grinned widely and waved), and immediately upon getting to his office, Darren had his secretary contact Alolé’s PR firm, and that was that.

She stared at him as he lay on the bed, as naked as she was. The light from outdoors, creating shadows against his muscular body that accentuated his physique in a way that made him look almost like an artist’s rendering. Darren was

only the second man in Alolé’s life, besides her stepfather, to ever declare his love for her and back up those words with actions.

Alolé turned her attention to the city sprawled out before her as she listened to the hypnotic sound of the light rain that deceptively veiled the ferocity of the powerful thunderstorms that had just passed through the city less than an hour prior and was now making its way east; no doubt to awaken with a start some other hapless dreamers from their slumber by way of intense flashes of lightning followed by





## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

explosive bursts of thunder.

The now calm and light rain mirrored the past hours of Alolé's existence. It was during the height of the storm, not long ago, that the intensity of the thunder, the power of the lightning, the relentlessness of the down pour mirrored the love making between her and Darren.

Did the storm mirror them or did they embody the storm... or both?

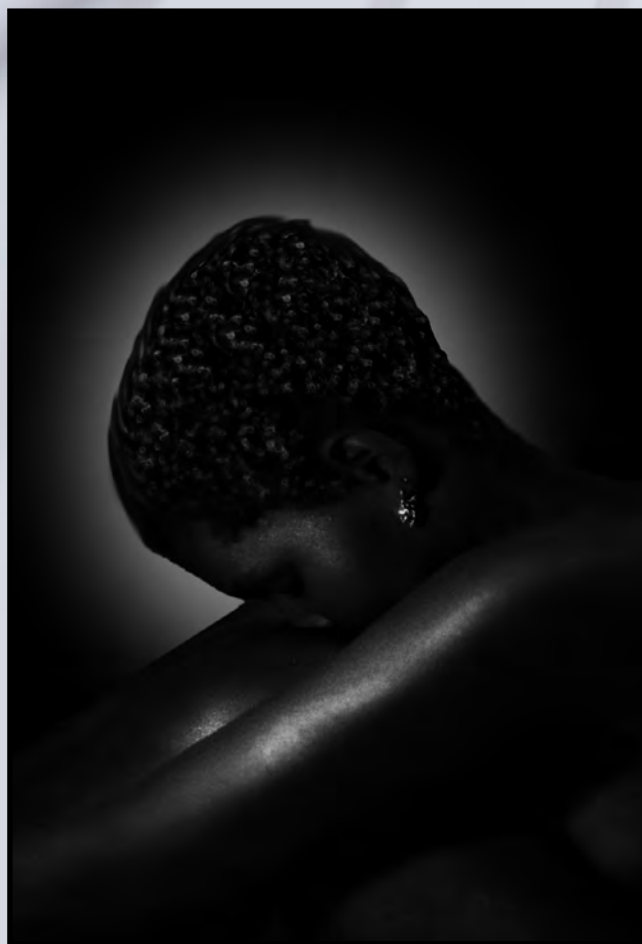
And now was the calm... or what should have been.

As Alolé watched the storm move slowly into the distance, her mind drifted back to life as a young girl in Georgia. During thundershowers or storms of any magnitude, her mother would have her quickly move away from any windows lest a bolt of lightning come through and strike her as surely as if she had been standing outdoors in a field under a tree.

She long since learned that the danger of watching lightning from a window was not in the strike coming through, but the lightning hitting the glass and causing it to explode, thus resulting in injury to the watcher by

projecting toward them sharp shards of superheated glass.

Tonight, Alolé had no such worries, nor did she particularly care about the consequences of lightning strikes on glass or anything else.



Typically, after making love, especially when with a lover like Darren, Alolé would fall into a deep, long, peaceful sleep.

Not tonight.

She looked to the left at the large wall clock that was as much a piece of art as a functional timekeeper.

3:37 am.

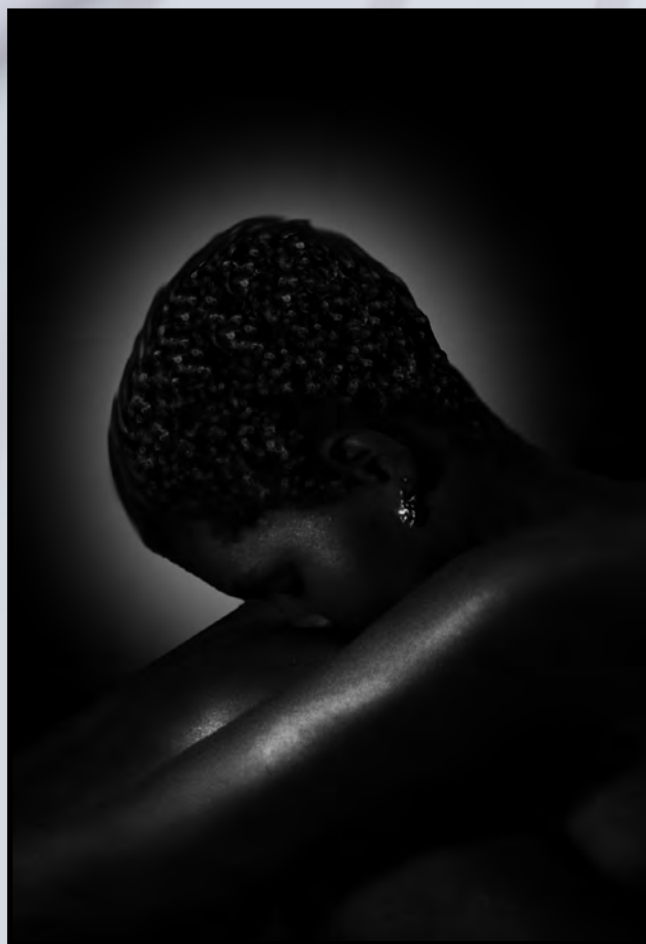
She had been sitting nearly half an hour and was wide awake with her thoughts. Her eyes and cheeks were by now dried from the initial tears that occupied them a short time earlier. She simply sat in silence now. Looking out the window and thinking. She lifted her forearm to her nose and inhaled deeply. She smelled the fragrance of her perfume, mixed with that of Darren's cologne, combined with that of the light perspiration that activates them both, and is a consequence of passionate lovemaking—if one is



## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

doing it right.

In her mind she could still hear his whispers and feel his warm breath lightly glide over her ear just enough to make her faintly convulse beneath him, strengthening the stiffness—were such a thing possible--of his body inside hers. As she recalled the sensations, Alolé slowly wrapped her arms around herself and with gentle hands tenderly caressed her shoulders and upper arms.



She could still feel the weight of him on top of her, making it hard to breathe, causing her to feel weak and unable to escape his passion, and as she worked for every breath, head getting light and swirling at times—her ecstasy heightened.

As she gently ran her hands up and down her body her mind opened and accessed the pathways that opened back to the flourish of orgasms she had experienced oh so recently. The sensation of the trembling of her diaphragm that moved lower, still lower and inward throughout her form—the essence of her femininity. The sensations that solidified in her spirit and soul the fact that she was a

woman and at this moment ecstatic to be so to exclusion of all else.

Alolé experienced orgasms of the kind that raised the legs, bent the knees and curled the toes without her even realizing she was doing it, the kind that made her clutch her lover's back with her left hand, and with the other, the perpetually shifting alternately relaxed, and flexed, muscular ass cheek of the man atop her—embracing him and desperately pulling him to her as if were she to let go he might float away and disappear.

The kind that turns into a sort of undulating struggle for escape—not because of displeasure, but the exact, profound opposite. The kind of struggle that made her lover squeeze her more tightly as if trying with all his might to prevent her from getting away from him as his manhood became more solid within her to the point Alolé contemplated on a subconscious level, how any part of the human anatomy that was not an actual bone, could become so unimaginably rigid—and whether that part of him might somehow literally explode inside of her. They were both caught up in the passion



## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

of it.

The heat of it.

The sweat of it.

The cool of it.

The scent of it.

The chaos of it.

The overwhelming  
order of it all.

And the knowledge  
that in the end, and very  
soon, a part of this man  
would be left inside her.

That night.

The following day.

She would carry part of Darren's  
physical body with her—a knowledge  
and secret shared by only the two of  
them.

And a part of his spirit well beyond  
that.

The dance upon the Egyptian cotton  
bedsheets in the darkness produced  
strange shadows on the walls, and  
sounds both recognizable, but yet  
somehow unfamiliar as their most  
primal motivations—motivations of  
which neither of them were not even

aware dwelled within them—took  
over their bodies until finally, with  
groans that sounded more like agony  
than pleasure, Alolé felt the warmth  
of Darren filling her in powerful,  
unrelenting waves that seemed as if  
they would never end—and with each

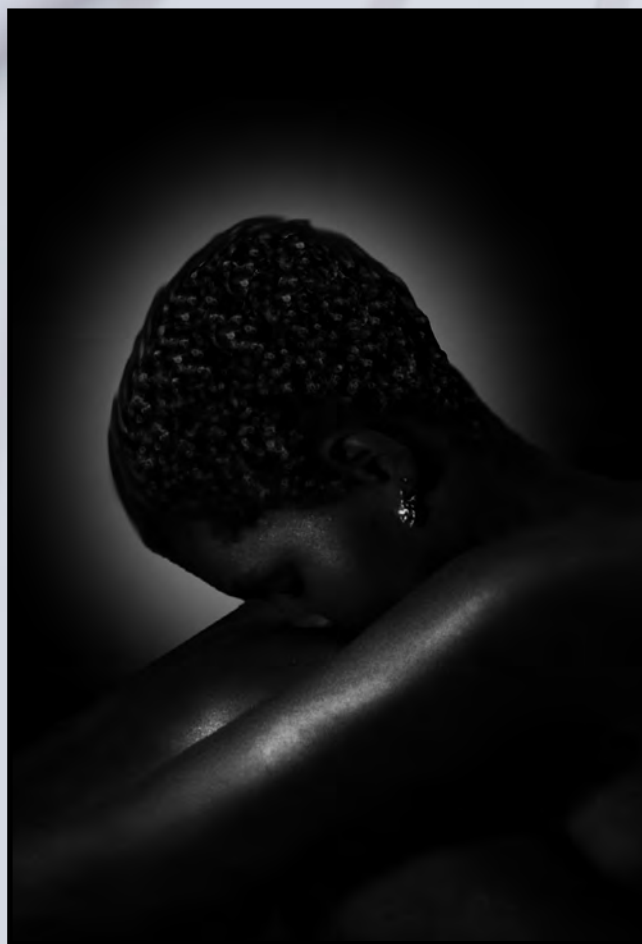
wave she let out soft  
cries in the darkness that  
she did not realize she  
was making, but caused  
Darren to squeeze her  
more tightly as if he was  
determined that every  
fiber of his being, both  
physical and spiritual  
must enter into her.

Simultaneously, Alolé  
grasped tightly the  
sensation of her own  
final climax. It was an  
orgasm that caught her

by surprise, one of the rare orgasms  
that coincide with that of the lover.  
The sort of orgasm that is impossible  
to describe—the kind that in seeking  
to quantify or put into words would  
be more difficult than attempting to  
describe the color blue to someone  
who was born blind—or catching a  
breeze with a net.

When it came upon her, coupled with  
Darren's body flooding hers, Alolé  
was at once everywhere and nowhere.

For a split second she heard nothing—





## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

and she heard everything. Uncreated in that moment.

And then recreated.

Flashes of lightning continued to glow in the night sky as they became ever more distant on the horizon, but still demanding attention, catching Alolé's eyes, pulling her from the show in her mind, to the one on the other side of the window.

The storm was still unapologetically displaying the braggadocio of their power by illuminating the city and lake beneath it. With the flashes of light, the glass shined, intensifying her reflection upon it. Against the glass, Alolé caught glimpses of her own nude form, deep dark skin and auburn eyes. Alolé knew she was attractive.

There was a time early in her life when she felt the need to have that fact affirmed to her by others—to validate her, but in time, after learning how to truly see herself and her people... after learning not to judge herself or her appearance by European standards, Alolé discovered a profound love and acceptance of herself and who

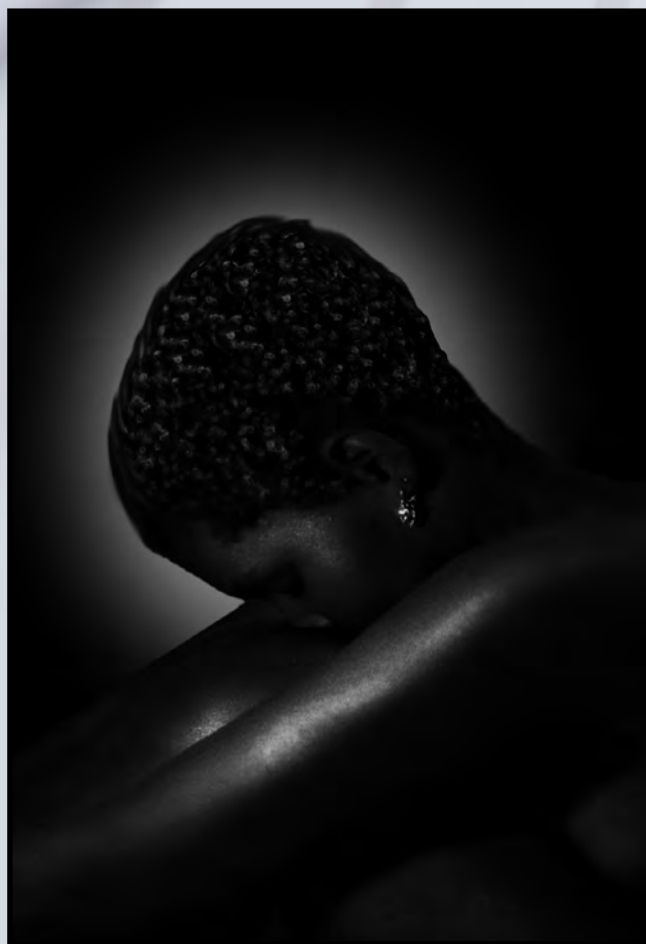
she was as a person.

All of that notwithstanding, Alolé Arlene Scott was strikingly beautiful by any standard.

Her physical beauty unfortunately was as off putting to some men as was her profession. Alolé was the creator, writer and illustrator of "The Miss-Adventures of Nora" a highly successful daily comic strip that garnered her worldwide acclaim and was said by many to be second in edgy urban humor only to Aaron McGruder's "The Boondocks".

In some circles, she was considered to be first.

She sat silently and continued listening to the distant thunder and watching the lighting of the skies which preceded it. The thunder now sounded subdued and harmless to her—while Alolé sat knowing that whoever was now in the vicinity of the strike was likely startled awake from a peaceful sleep and was pressing a calming hand over their hard thumping heart. She had always been fascinated by perspective and the thought of here and there. Even to the degree that as she looked at the

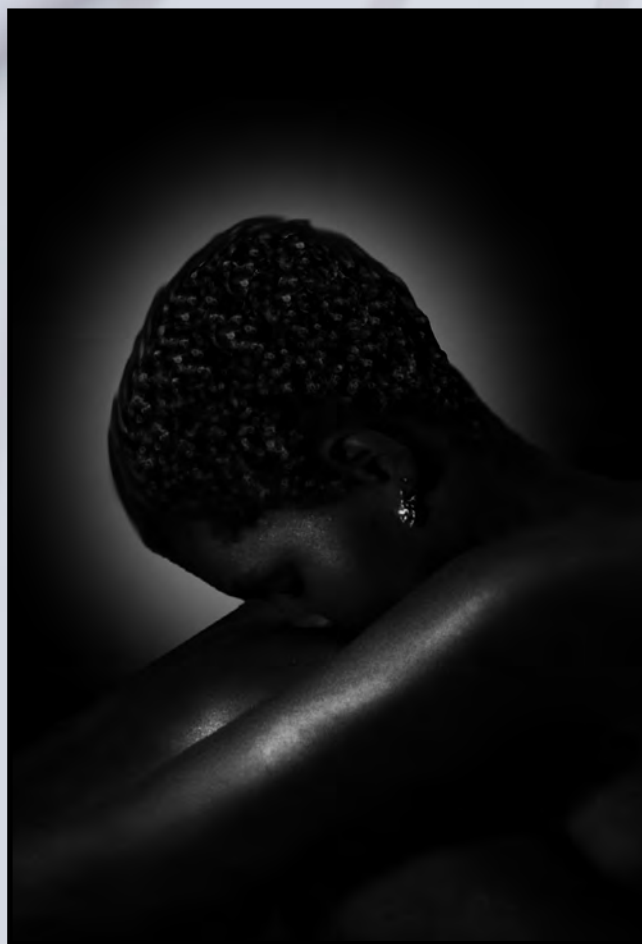




## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

stars on a cloudless night, she would often wonder if someone, somewhere was at that very moment staring back at the small light that held the planet in its orbit on which she stood and wondering the same thing.

Alolé lifted the wine glass to her lips to take another sip and found it empty. She closed her eyes and sighed as she gently sat the glass on the round table beside the armchair, and reluctantly picked up the cell phone she had been making every effort to ignore from the moment she sat it down close to an hour ago, in favor of nursing the glass of Chablis.



With the index finger of her left hand, she brought up the numeric keypad that represented the telephone feature, and with her right thumb of the hand cradling the phone slowly tapped the illuminated screen.

A woman's voice came from the speaker after two rings. "9-1-1—what is your emergency?" she asked.

"My name is Alolé Scott. I am at The Lumen at Playhouse Square in the 32nd floor penthouse. I need for you to send someone out."

"I'll send someone immediately Alolé, but first I need to know the nature of your emergency please so that I can dispatch to your location those who are best equipped to assist you?"

Alolé once again turned her attention to the panorama before her. Being so high up and far removed from the dangers of the harsh streets below had created for her a false sense of security—a feeling of invulnerability, or even superiority to those who existed in such spaces.

Tonight—this morning, Alolé would be taking an express elevator to the ground floor. "Ma'am are you still there?" came the voice that shook the beautiful Black cartoonist from her daze. "Yes." She said softly and slowly with a bit of a drawl, "Technically there is no emergency. I am here with Darren Murdock of Murdock Imports Limited.

Darren Murdock is dead."

## CHAPTER I

Waiting for the ball to drop.

New Year's Eve –11: 46pm.



## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

Alolé sat in her studio at her drawing board—pencil in fingers, finger on hand, hand on paper—waiting in vain for the pencil to do something.

Frustrated.

“Draw something damn it. You need to be drawing.” She whispered to her hand as if speaking to an employee who was lying down on the job.

She dropped her pencil, sat back in the just comfortable enough gaming chair she found perfect for sitting down to illustrate, and rubbing her eyes with both hands, let out a sigh that sounded more like a moan and then she stretched and flopped haphazardly back into her moderately cushioned seat.

She put her arms up on the armrests of the chair and looked directly in front of her where stood a mahogany case that proudly displayed behind glass, the many awards and honors she had received from an early age. The first being a little gold metal—now turning a little green on the edges, but she treasured it since it was the first thing she ever won for drawing something... a picture of

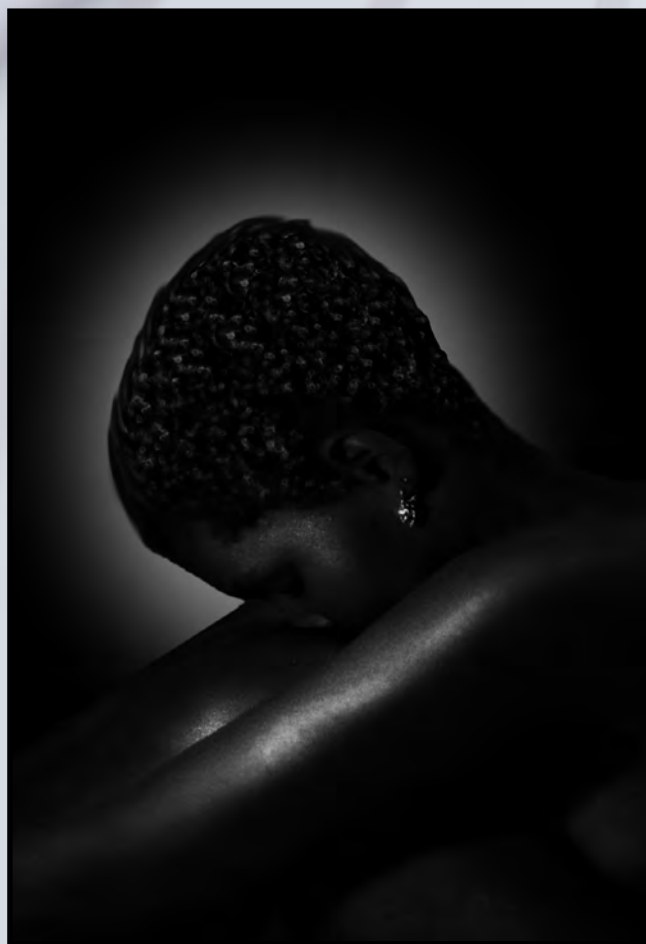
Fred Flintstone.

The first time she ever drew a picture of the stone age cartoon character was from looking at it on the cover of a board game. Afterward, she thought she'd made such a good job of it that she entered it into her classroom art contest and won first prize, it was placed on her art wall in a spot of honor at the top of a pyramid of second and third place winners, with a bunch of honorable mentions. That was back in the days when everyone didn't get a trophy or ribbon just for showing up, so the award actually meant something.

As Alolé got older a classmates would offer her a nickel or a dime to draw some cartoon character for her, that is when she realized, hey, I can make money doing this! And so, she did. One year she made a whole five dollars in less than a month so she could purchase a gift for her mother for Mother's Day.

Those were exciting times.

Also, in the glass adorned case were an Eisner and two Ruben awards. The Eisner, she received for a graphic





## [A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt \(Cont.\)](#)

novels she created, wrote and illustrated under the pseudonym “John Rockford”, called, “Mickey Mann”, about a world in which, through a cosmic event every man, woman, child and baby gained some kind of superpowers—everyone except the hapless Mickey Mann that is.

Using a completely different drawing and narrative style than she was known for, Mann was her one and only foray into the superhero genre and after the runaway success of the book, resisting the clamoring of fanboys and fangirls around the world for a sequel, she decided to leave well enough alone and not “push it.”

Besides, whenever she thought about the book she did manage to complete, she remembered how much time, energy, and emotion she poured into it and how much it took out of her. Go through that again? No thanks. The graphic novel garnered her a lot of attention and was immediately optioned by a major motion picture company. That was several years ago—at last word, it was still caught in development hell.

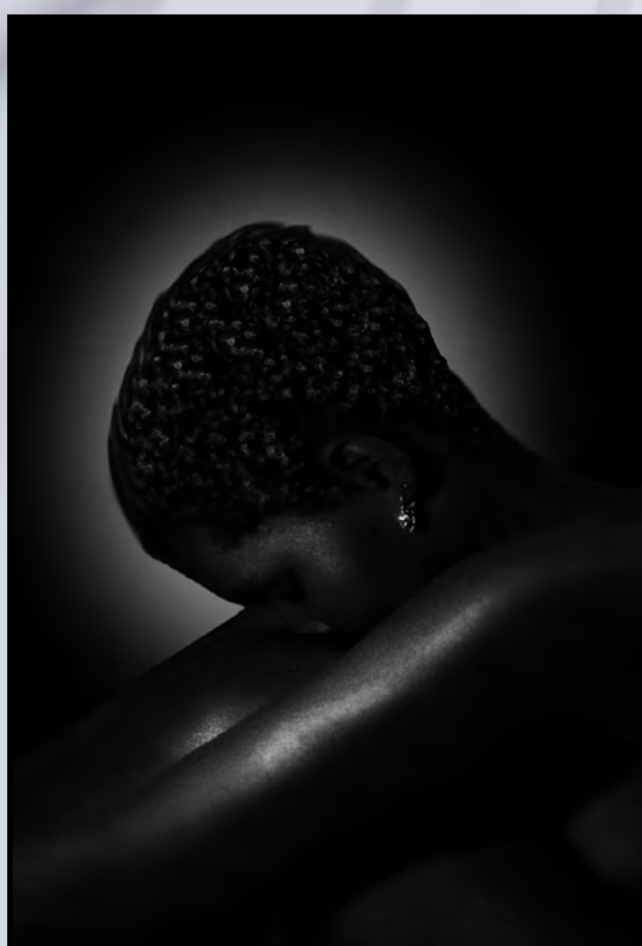
The two Rubens, she earned for her

highly acclaimed comic strip, “The Miss-Adventures of Nora”, were Alolé’s proudest achievements to date. She created the strip for her college paper while working toward her bachelor’s degree in creative writing. Fairly quickly the little strip became a hit on campus and made it into a few local papers, and then a few newspaper and distribution syndicates came calling after her—something almost unheard of for a local cartoonist with no national name recognition.

Those two... just like the Eisner, were for excellence in cartooning, but early in life when she first started writing and drawing her own little comic strips and comic books, she learned about the Rubens and had made it her goal to win one, one day. She did not find out about the Eisner until much later, and though she thought it would be nice to win one of those too, it was the Ruben that always remained in her sights.

The fact she had won awards for her cartooning, or that she still drew at all was just this side of a miracle.

At seventeen she had budded into quite the artist. She had become





## [A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt \(Cont.\)](#)

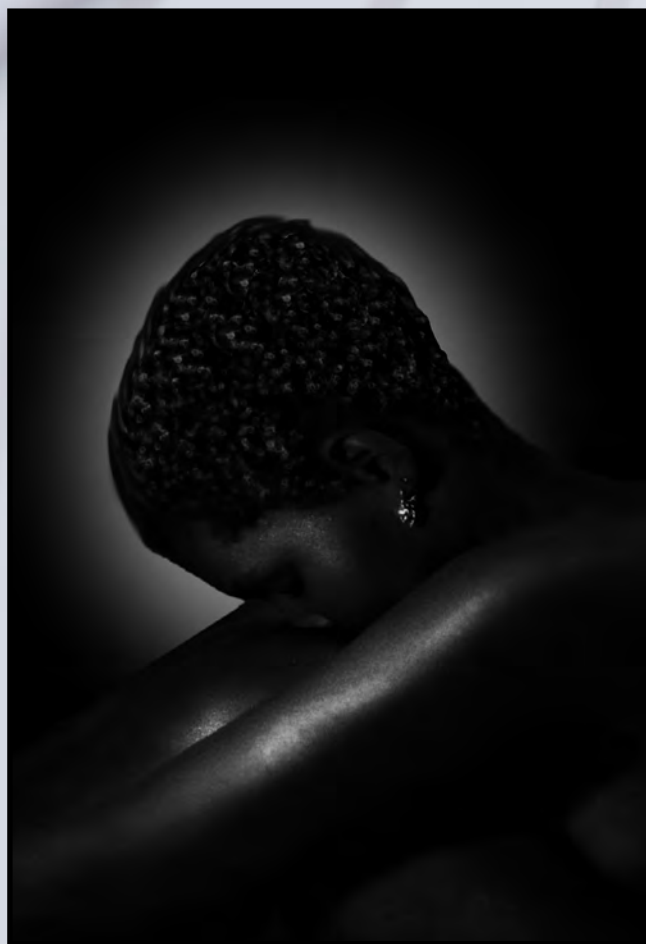
fairly competent in other forms of art, but cartooning was her thing. From the time she was five she started doodling, making cartoons, doing simple animations on any scrap of paper she could get her hands on, and spending every moment thinking up some kind of stories to go with them.

Every New Year's Eve, her mother would let her and her stepbrother, Vince—older by one year—stay up past midnight so they could watch the ball drop in Time Square. At first, they needed permission to stay up past ten, but after sixteen they had the option as to whether they wanted to witness the spectacle or not.

Every year, Vince would do whatever it was he did, and Alolé would sit around drawing or writing. She would do it because one time, a long time ago, she had heard somewhere that whatever you were doing when the New Year “came in”, that is what you would be doing for the rest of the year. Perhaps that is why Christians went to church and prayed in the New Year for what they call, “watch night service”.

Every year, from the time she was

seven or eight, she could remember making absolutely certain she was drawing or writing when the New Year arrived. From the age of twelve, Alolé had ‘brought in the New Year’ drawing every year in her thirty one year old life drawing or writing something or other.



Alolé enjoyed drawing all her life, and then fell in love with cartooning when she realized she had an aptitude for it. She spent all her spare time as a child writing stories and illustrating them. Eventually, she caught the eye of a particular teacher at her elementary school, a Mr. Francis Campbell, who taught math of

all things. Mr. Campbell recognized what she felt was a prodigy in their midst and single mindedly set out to see this young phenom published.

Alolé came from a single parent home and did not have much in the way of supplies to produce her work, but she made do. Once she came across of motherload of punch time cards that were not practical for creating any lasting masterpieces, but were quite usable in terms of practicing and honing her cartooning skills. Eventually Mr. Campbell realized the young girl didn't have the supplies

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## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

she needed to create her works, so he dug into his own pocket and started providing them himself.

Eventually she had written and illustrated several children's books and a stack of comic books that stacked up nearly to her waist. It was then that Mr. Campbell began his quest. He was to give the gift of this talented young girl's work to the world.

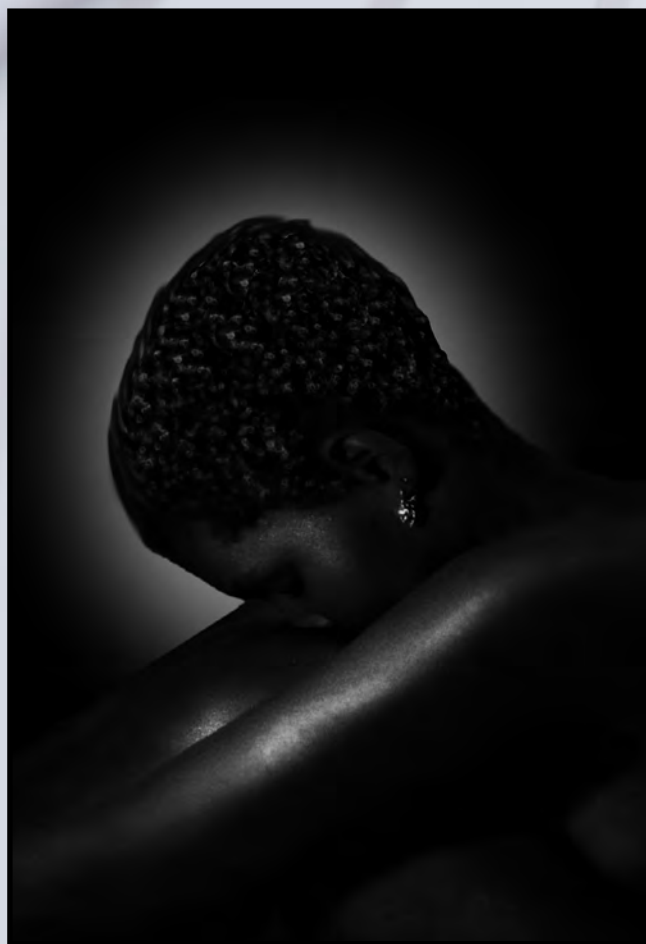
He began by first calling various publishing houses in Ohio, telling them about the works and sending samples. It was an unorthodox way of approach, but they seemed to allow it when they were told the age of the girl who had written illustrated the works. With each call they were extremely interested and couldn't wait to meet this young phenom. He figured (and rightly so), that publishers would jump at the chance to claim a child author as their own, if only for the public relations angle. The fact that the work was fantastic would just be the icing on the cake.

They went from publisher to publisher over the course of several months, sometimes driving for a few hours after having gotten permission from

Alolé's parents and the school. Each time, the excitement filled letters and phone calls would become awkward, insincere, face to face meetings when, as they both watched the huge genuine smiles of the publishing execs, fade and became something undeniably forced. Then suddenly, the publishing deals that were sounding like a sure thing by phone (given that the publisher's had the work in hand while giving Mr. Campbell the most encouraging assurances.) Alolé would sit listening as her exhilaration and high hopes became disappointment and borderline despair as she'd listen to the

publisher say how great the work was, but that suddenly, it "wasn't what they were looking for at this time."

She'd go back home and deliver the bad news to her mother and her brother, (who she thought she'd help lift out of poverty with her writing and artwork), then go right upstairs and start plugging away again at new drawings and new stories. The child didn't understand why all of the sudden the publisher wasn't interested, but there were still plenty who were.



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## A LAND OF LOST EMOTION: Complete Prologue and Chapter I Excerpt (Cont.)

Mr. Campbell diligently took Alolé to all of them. The story was the same over and over until there were none left. She knew how hard he had tried to get her published, and in a way he seemed more disappointed than she did. On the final trip, they sat parked.

Outside Alolé's house and were both quiet for a moment. She positioned her portfolio on her lap and looked at the obviously disappointed math teacher. She noticed for the first time that he was becoming beet red, and visibly angry. She thanked him for all his help, even if it didn't pan out, as she added that maybe her work wasn't as good as they thought it was. It was then that Mr. Campbell blurted out. "You are the most talented child I've ever seen! You deserve to be

published, and the only reason they won't publish you is because of the color of your skin! Don't you ever let anyone make you think your work isn't good enough! It's better than a lot of this junk I've seen out here! Don't let this ever cause you to give up!"

It was plain that he had been holding all that inside, probably from the very beginning. He never said anything because he didn't want the little girl to get discouraged. In her eleven-year-old mind, she didn't know quite how to process what she'd been told. She understood it alright, but she didn't really know the gravity of it, or that it was only the beginning.

Her formal introduction to overt racism and oppression.

# ADRIEN M. LANE

# MAJOR MARJ MASON

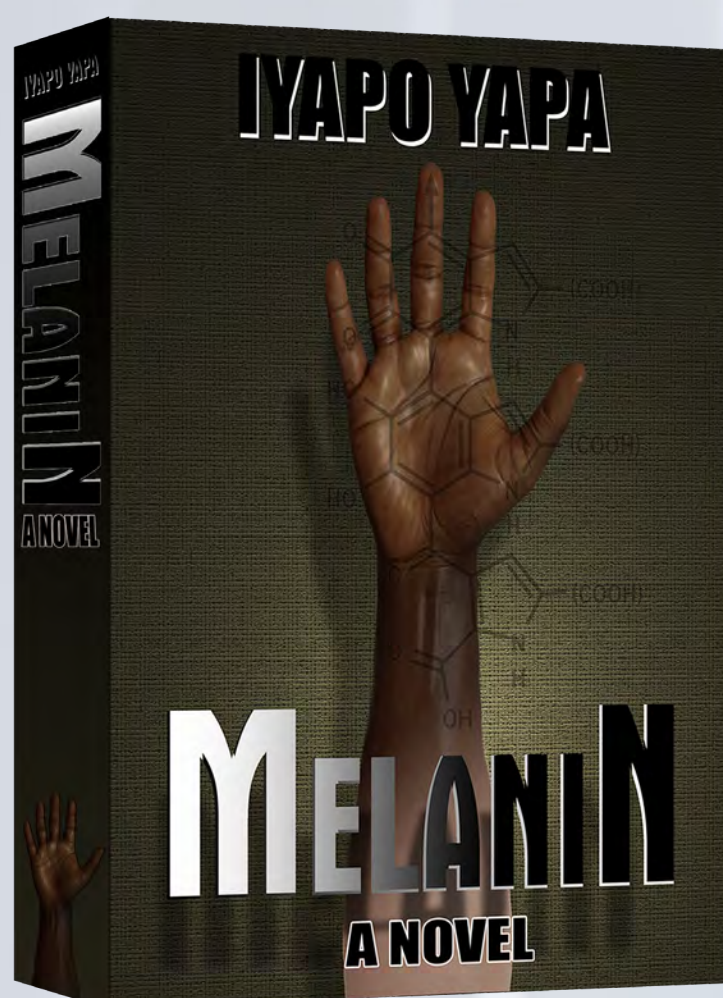
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After two years,  
*MELANIN: A Novel* finally  
has a trailer!  
(And it's an exciting one too!)  
You can check it out now by  
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Click the image on the left to  
purchase the novel!



## TUNNEL AT THE END OF THE LIGHT

MIXER stood at the white board and looked over his hand drawn schematic. He'd been staring at it for over an hour, hoping he would catch something he'd missed.

The door to the huge clubhouse closed with a metallic clank.

“Bosson?” Mixer said without turning to look and see who it was.

“Nah man. It's Michael.” The voice said as it drew closer.

Michael Barnes walked in carrying a box of fresh doughnuts.

“Mix... how long you been in here starin' at that board?” he asked.

“I dunno.” Mixer said, sounding a little annoyed, that he was being interrupted. “A half hour... an hour... I dunno.”

“Figure anything out yet?” Michael said as he stepped beside Mixer and started looking over the schematic.

“If I figured it out do you think I'd still be standin' here wrackin' my brain?”

“I didn't ask if you figured it ALL the way out... I was just wondering if you came to any new conclusions.”

“Well...nope.” Mixer said, now unable to hide his annoyance. He stopped looking at the board and turned his attention to Michael who was some five years older than him and nearly a foot taller. Mixer looked up to the fifteen-year-old and said, “But if I DO figure something out, you'll be the FIRST to know.”

Ok?!”

Michael forced himself not to laugh. He knew that when calculations were going through Mixer's nine-year-old little brain, he could become very irritable. Especially if he thought the answer to a problem was right in front of

him, but there was just some reason he couldn't see it. Sure David “Mixer” Martin was a brilliant young man who some were calling the next Harvey W. Banks<sup>1</sup>. It seemed there was nothing that was in his way of achieving and surpassing that goal.

All that said, Mixer was still a nine-year-old boy, with nine-year-old sensibilities and a nine-year-old world view.

Not that being fifteen was that much better. “Ok! Ok!” Michael said as he put up the hand that wasn't holding



## TUNNEL AT THE END OF THE LIGHT (Continued)

the donuts, in mock defense. “Don’t bite my head off. I know you’re working hard on figuring out why our portal isn’t operational yet. We all believe in you though. We know you’ll get it sooner or later.”

Mixer kept looking over the board. Every now and then using a finger to push his huge circular glasses from the tip of his nose back to the bridge.

“You don’t have to do that you know.” Michael said.

“Do what?” Mixer said, continuing to scan the whiteboard.

“Wear glasses. I mean... you know we all know you have perfect vision and those are just plain glass.” Michael said.

“I know. I just wear ‘em so I fit in more. Everybody else wears glasses.”

“Yeah, we know. But you know too that this group isn’t about following and conforming. It’s about being an individual and leading. And yes—working as a group. But you can still be you and work with us as a group.”

“I know. I know.” Mixer said. They make me feel smarter too.”

Michael smiled and shook his head. He saw he wasn’t going to win this one, not right now.

Mixer pouted a little. He knew Michael didn’t mean any harm when he asked about his progress. He felt

bad about getting short with him. “I’m sorry Mike.” Mixer said. “I mean, about talking to you so rough before. You’re right... this is just frustrating me. I was kinda’ hopin’ I’d have it figured out before you guys started showin’ up. That’s why I came to the clubhouse so early.”

“No worries Little Man.” Michael said.

Michael walked over to the large dining room table that sat on the far side of the room, laid the doughnuts down, opened the top and got one, then asked Mixer if he wanted a doughnut. Mixer didn’t answer, he was too busy studying the board.

The table at which Michael now sat, was in very good shape for something someone had thrown out. It took all three boys, plus Latrina Callaway, to carry it all the way to the clubhouse. They didn’t care that people gave them curious looks as they





## TUNNEL AT THE END OF THE LIGHT (Continued)

awkwardly carried the table up the street to destination unknown. The table had two matching chairs and mismatches for the remaining four. Each member of the “Urban Nerds”, as they had dubbed themselves, brought one of their

from home. \ chairs

The brilliant brother and sister team of Caleb “Bosson” Peaks and Dreema were the ones who brought the only two chairs that matched.

“Hey Mike! I think I figured it out!” Mixer yelled as he stepped close to the board and began drawing furiously. “What if at junction C, we put a second capacitor and then set up the relay so the capacitors at B and C release power intermittently. When the signal reaches the resistor, it will read as one smooth power flow instead of surges! That might create a sustained energy flow that will give us the result we’ve been looking for!”

“It’ll cause a time loop.” A voice came from the entrance of the room as the door clanked shut. Both Michael and Mixer looked in the direction of the door as Caleb, and his younger sister

Dreema walked in. He was thirteen, she was ten.

“What?!” Mixer said, looking like a confused puppy.

“I said... what you’re proposing will cause a time loop.”

Bosson went on as he spied the box of doughnuts in front of Michael. “Those for everybody?” he said as he made a beeline for the table.

“Yep.” Michael said.

As Bosson went to fill his face with some doughy, sugary goodness, Dreema

walked over and stood beside Mixer. She was basically in the same place where Michael had been standing less than ten minutes ago.

She looked over the schematic, along with the new parameters Mixer had just added. “Bosson’s right.” Dreema said. “With the design we have right now, if we use two capacitors, there isn’t any scenario where it don’t end up in a time loop.”

“Aw, what do you know about it?!” Mixer said, “You’re an astrophysicist



## TUNNEL AT THE END OF THE LIGHT (Continued)

... not an electrical engineer.”

Dreema walked over to the board and snatched a red dry erase marker. She popped off the cap and circled two items. She then pointed them out as she spoke. “I know enough to know that if we add a second capacitor it’ll cause micro-surges at junctions K and L. The system will read them as repeats and get us stuck in a time loop!”

She then shoved the lid back on the marker and slammed it back down where she got it from.

“And none of us wants that.” Bosson said with a mouth full of doughnut.

Mixer looked at the screen and thought about it for a moment. Dreema was right! He threw the eraser he was holding at the whiteboard. “Hey! Take it easy!” Bosson said. “What’re you so mad about! It looks like you’re making some progress!”

Mixer was partly mad because he knew the siblings were right. He was also angry because he was so certain that the answer to the puzzle was staring him right in the face!

“I know it’s somethin’ simple!” he said as he stomped his feet over to the table where Michael was sitting, grabbed a jelly doughnut and chomped into it like it was the enemy. Michael and Bosson looked at each other and grinned at the jelly smile that now surrounded Mixer’s lips.

The door opened once more and slammed shut with the familiar metal clang.

The last two members of the group will have arrived and then the team would all be there. Latrina stepped in quietly, with a deep look of sadness etched on her face.

“What’s the matter with you?” Bosson said, “You look like the Eagles just lost the Super Bowl.”

“Hey, where’s Eddie?” Michael asked. Latrina and Eddie usually walked to the clubhouse together since they lived across the street from each other.

“I-I don’t think Eddie’s coming today.” Latrina said almost in a whisper as she walked over to the





## TUNNEL AT THE END OF THE LIGHT (Continued)

clubhouse together since they lived across the street from each other.

“I-I don’t think Eddie’s coming today.” Latrina said almost in a whisper as she walked over to the table.

“Why not? He sick or somethin’?” Mixer asked.

“No.” Latrina said as she stopped in front of the table and looked at everyone. “Late last night a bunch of sirens woke me up. I looked out the window and there were three police cars in front of Eddie’s house. From what I could see, they took his father out in handcuffs. I guess he must’ve gotten drunk again and... and... well... you know how Eddie’s father does when he gets drunk.”

Dreema stopped looking at the board and turned to see Latrina who now had tears running down her cheeks. Everyone in the room was silent.

“That ain’t right!” Mixer finally yelled out, “We need ta build a...”

“NO!” Michael yelled back, interrupting the little boy.

“Whatdaymean, no?!” Bosson said,

“Mixer’s right! What are we supposed ta do?! Huh?! Just let that monster keep beatin’ on our friend and his moms?! We can build somethin’ that can take care of him once and for all!”

“No!” Michael said. “We can’t do what you guys are talking about. But we’ve got to figure out something different. What’s rule number one of the Urban Nerds?!”

Everyone else in the room became silent and looked at the floor.

“Come on guys!” Michael insisted. “RULE NUMBER ONE!”

“We only create things to help our people... never to hurt them.” Dreema said reluctantly.

“We only create things to help our people... never to hurt them.” The rest of the group said in an unconvincing mumble.

“NEVER to hurt them.” Michael said. “We can’t ever forget that or else we become just another gang.” He stood up, back straight. “We are the Urban Nerds, we’re geniuses. We are GOING to figure something out.”

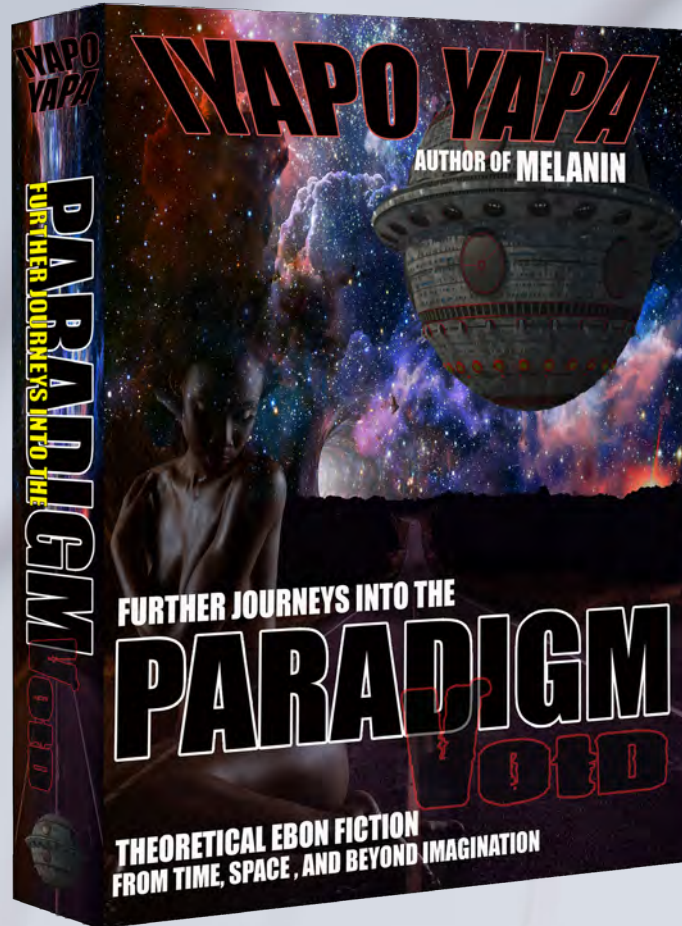


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- What if the universe itself started taking measures to correct and bring balance to itself in terms of justice?
- What if time slowed down nearly to a stop ... but only for YOU?

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This month's puzzle continues to celebrate the completion of my seventh novel, *The Problems of Immortality!*

The solution to last month's word search puzzle, is at the back of the magazine. So, there it is!

HAVE FUN!

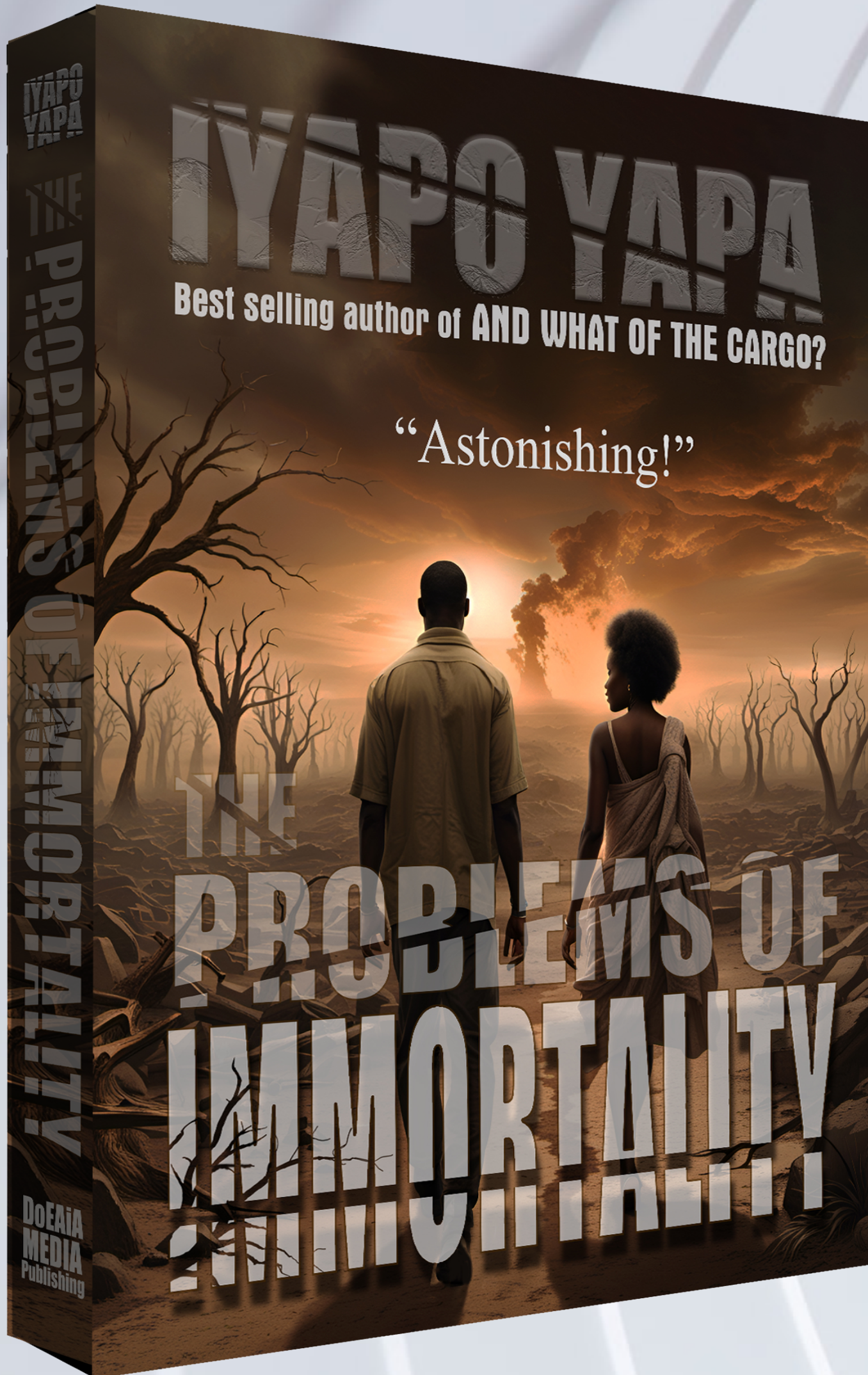
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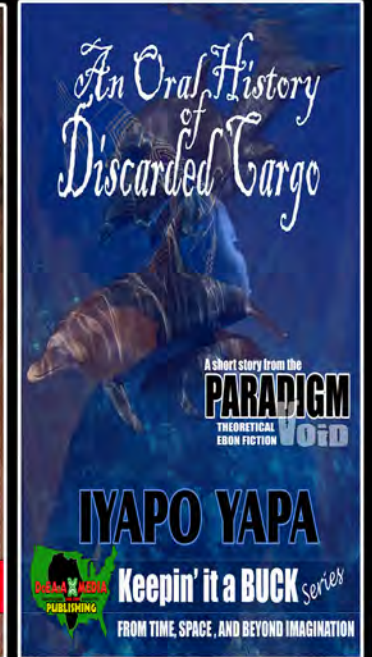
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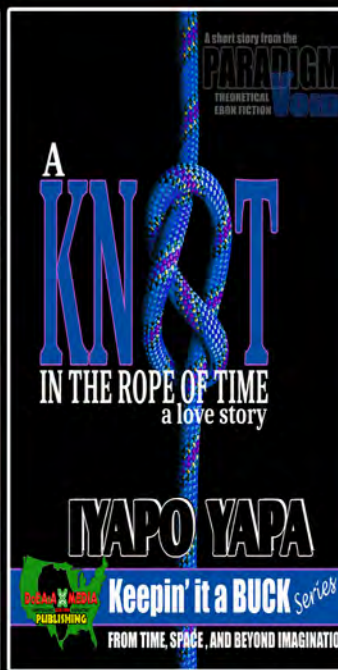


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Also, Keepin' it a BUCK series TWO: Stories from Further Journeys into the Paradigm VOID is out NOW!



**Also remember:**

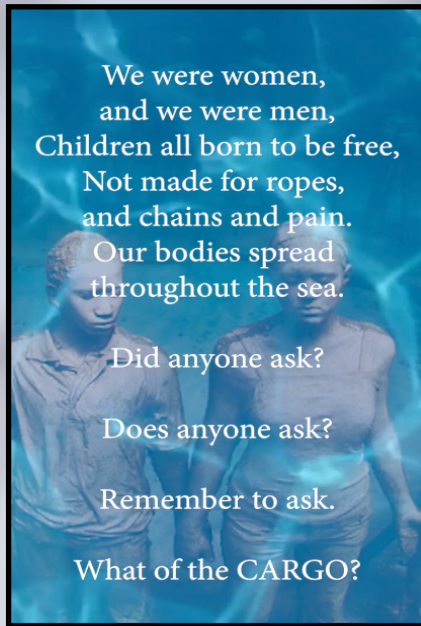
ORAL TRADITION talking books are also coming soon! Click the image to the right to hear a sample, of one of our talking books. Yes, it's still in its VERY rough form as we experiment with getting it right, but the story is still fun as all get out! So give it a listen and let us know what you think!

You can send your thoughts to: [comments@iyapoyapa.com](mailto:comments@iyapoyapa.com)



There are now **THREE** And What of the **CARGO?** Trailers for you to watch!  
 Just click on the image to view.

Original Trailer



Music Video Trailer

Full Extended Trailer



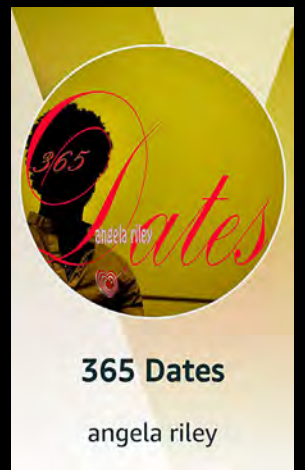
I'd like to say a big **THANK YOU!** To everyone who helped all three of my books to spend some time at number **ONE** on Amazon's **BEST SELLERS** list!



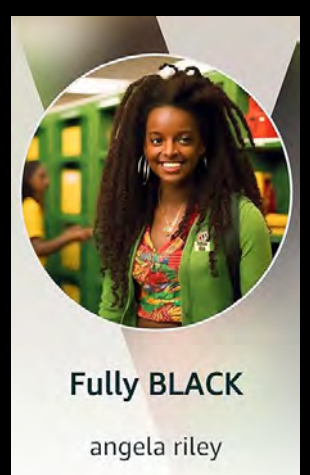
FIND AFFIRMING SELF LOVE AT:

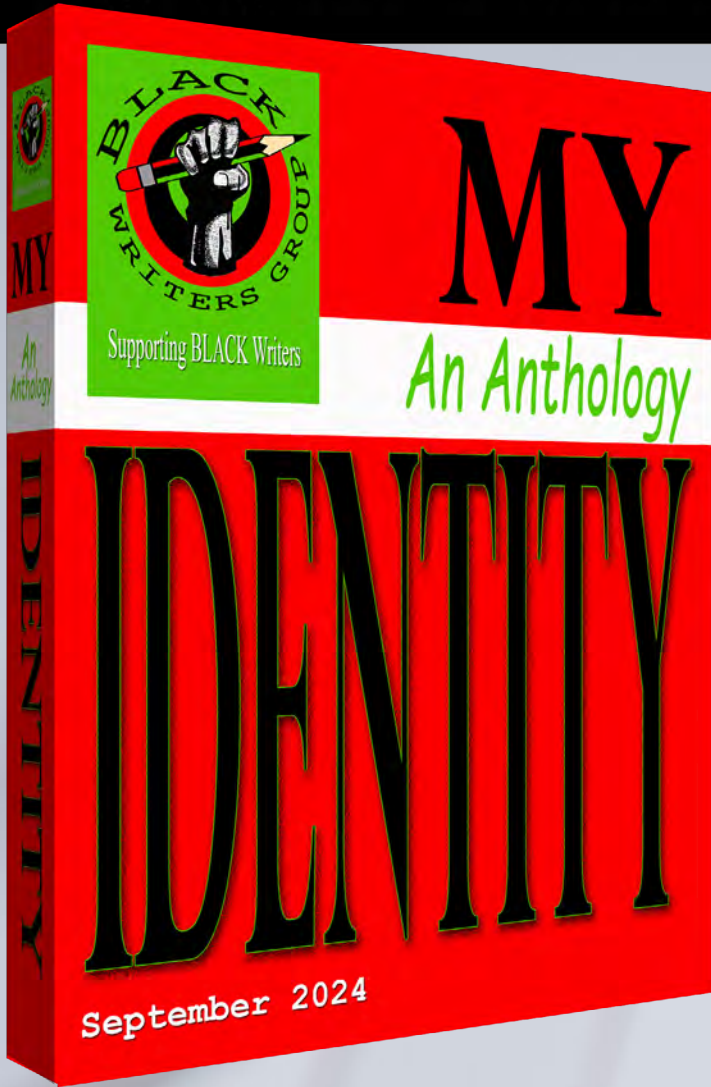


CAN LOVE SET US FREE?



**COMING SOON!:**





MY IDENTITY QR CODE  
OR  
Click the image  
to the left for  
the book.



Black LOVE QR CODE  
OR  
Click the image  
to the right for  
the book.



## MY IDENTITY & BLACK LOVE ANTHOLOGY

Talented Black writers give you their insights in these Black Writers Group publications, *My Identity: An Anthology* and *Black Love Anthology*. The subjects, writing style and personal observations are as varied as the writers themselves. From essays to poems to affirmations to videos, they are surprising, inspirational, & even possibly unsettling. One thing is certain: after reading and experiencing these volumes, you will come away with food for thought as it pertains to Black love and identity, what they are, and what they mean.

READING and WRITING in the

# DARIK

*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*

So, who knew I was a cartoonist before I became a writer?

Take a minute to check out some of my work online at:

<https://iyapoyapa.com/cartoonist-illustrator.html>

or just click the image below and it will take you straight there!



Everybody needs a hobby!

Mine is playing and composing MUSIC!

For me, playing and composing is one of the most relaxing and fullfilling things I do with my spare time (when I HAVE

some spare time). You're welcome to check out some of

my songs at: <https://iyapoyapa.com/music.html> or

you know the deal... just click the link below. ENJOY!



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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.

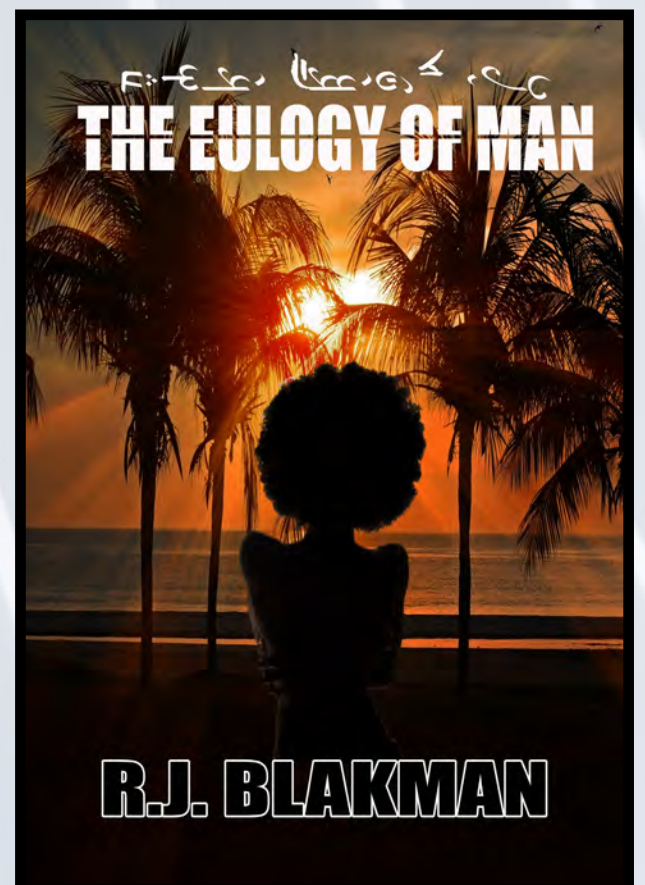
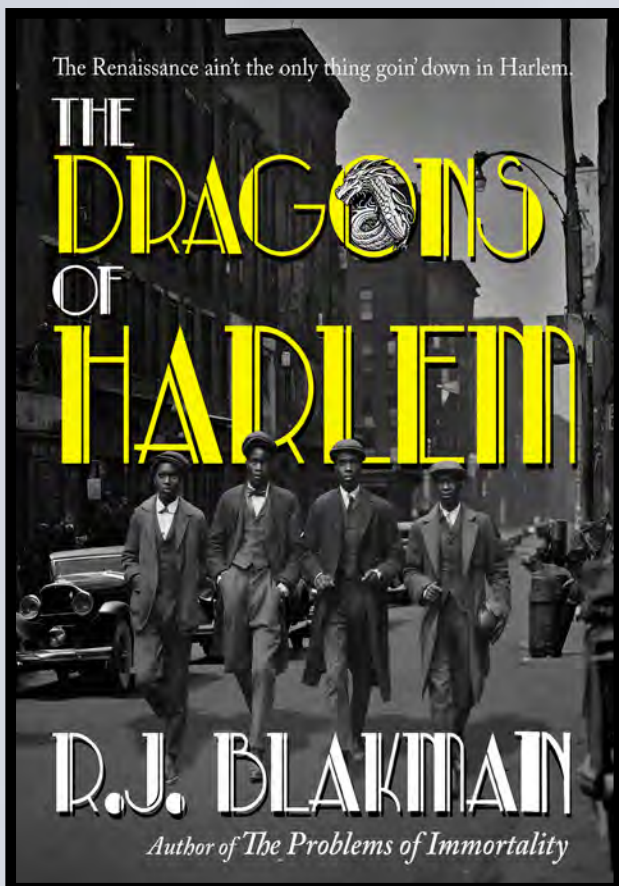
As a practice, Blakman seeks out truth and goes wherever that truth leads him, even if uncomfortable.

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](mailto:rjb@iyapoyapa.com)

### UPCOMING BOOKS BY

## R.J. BLAKMAN



ENTERTAINING,  
ENGROSSING,  
THOUGHT PROVOKING!

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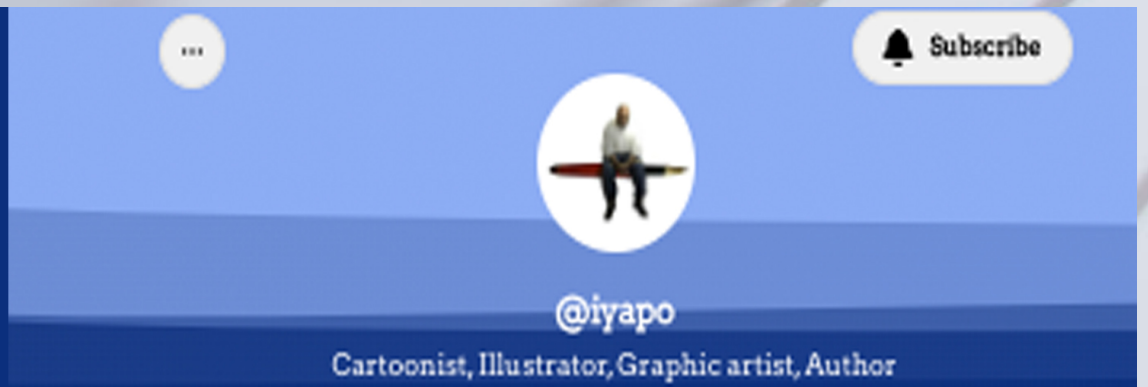
Find Iyapo at:  
**Linktree\***

At any given time I am producing some form of ProBlack centered content.

After releasing my work to the public, sometimes, locating it can be a challenge.

But now with LINKTREE, there are direct links to my books, art and my social media presence. Linktree is your one stop (1 CLICK) shop for all things IYAPO!

Just click the image to the right and it will take you directly to Linktree and all that I have to offer!



Books and Writing by Iyapo Yapa

Enter the world of  
IYAPO YAPA  
where you can find my  
books, art, and music!

The FULL website is best  
viewed on a computer or  
tablet. The site is ROBUST,  
so be prepared and ENJOY!

IYAPO'S WEBSITE



**What if becoming genetically and phenotypically Black was the only thing that could save your life?**

"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 Coater

MELANIN: A Novel



**It began during the transatlantic slave trade... but it ends NOW!**

**AND WHAT OF THE CARGO?**  
is a tale of love and hate,  
tears and triumph, suspense  
and horror that leads to an  
unimaginable conclusion.

And What of the CARGO?



**An anthology of short stories in the realm of Theoretical Ehon Fiction from time, space and suspense beyond imagination.**

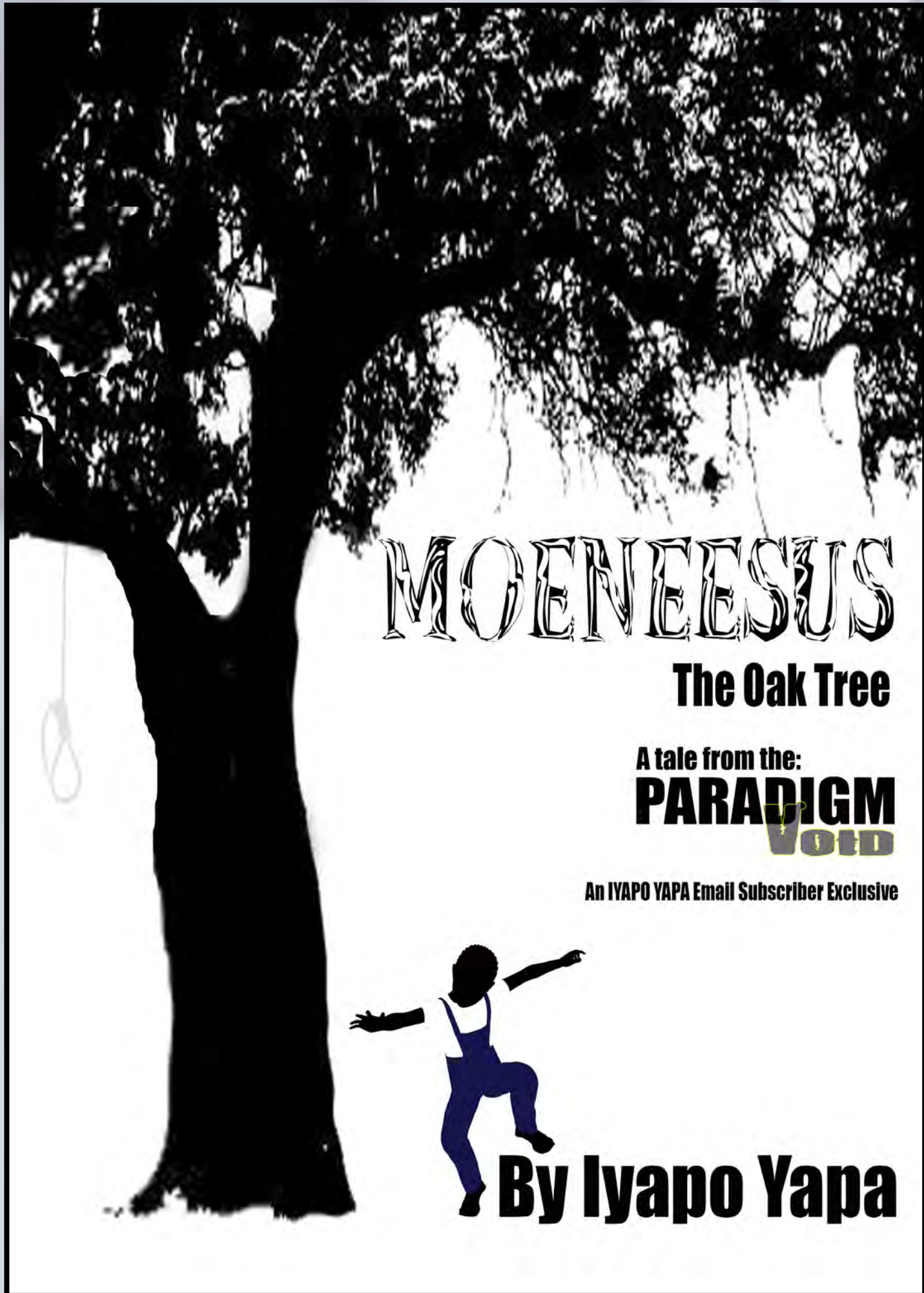
STEP INTO THE VOID!



READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*



If you are a **READING AND WRITING IN THE DARK** subscriber and haven't read your free copy of **MOENEESUS 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.

READING and WRITING in the

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Click Below For:

And What of the CARGO?



AVAILABLE NOW!

## And What of the CARGO?

Buy it now on Amazon

“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

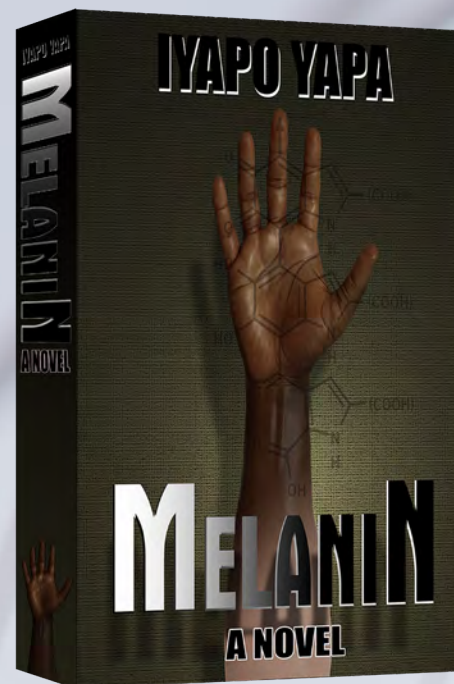
“Yapa weaves another story this time interwoven with historical references. I was on my seat with every chapter. I don't want to give it away but....revenge is sweet when served dead. And I can't get over how different each of his offerings are. Read his Vella's and you'll see what I mean. Another great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

- Amazon review

You can also read it for FREE if you have

### Kindle Unlimited!

You don't need a Kindle to read it, you can download the free Kindle app from your Android Store or from the Apple Store and read Kindle content on your favorite devices!



Click Below For:

MELANIN: A Novel



AVAILABLE NOW!

## MELANIN: A NOVEL

Buy it now on Amazon

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.

You can also read it for FREE if you have

### Kindle Unlimited!

You don't need a Kindle to read it, you can download the free Kindle app from your Android Store or from the Apple Store and read Kindle content on your favorite devices!

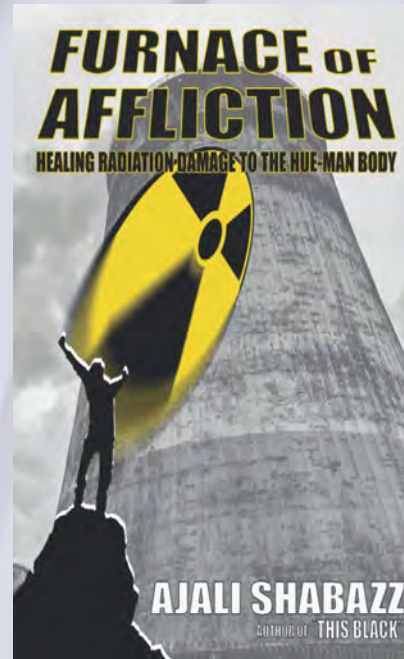
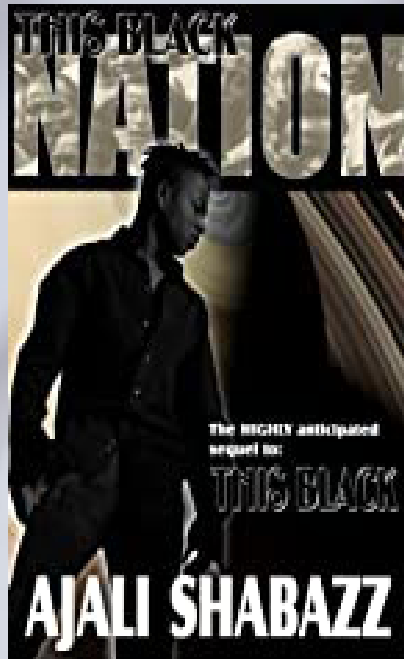
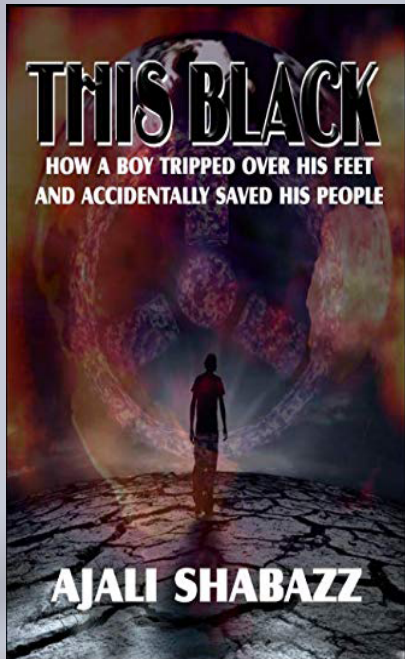
READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

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!

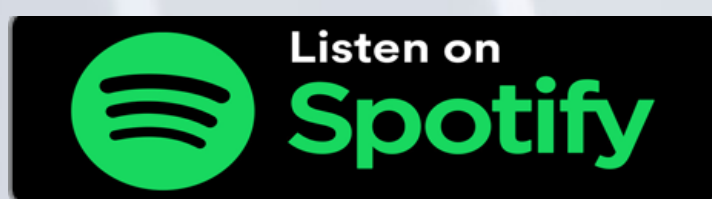
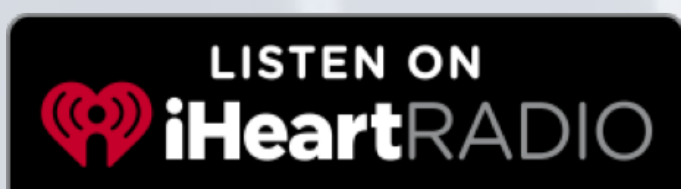
Listen to the interview on  by clicking the link below:

<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

# DARK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

## podcast!







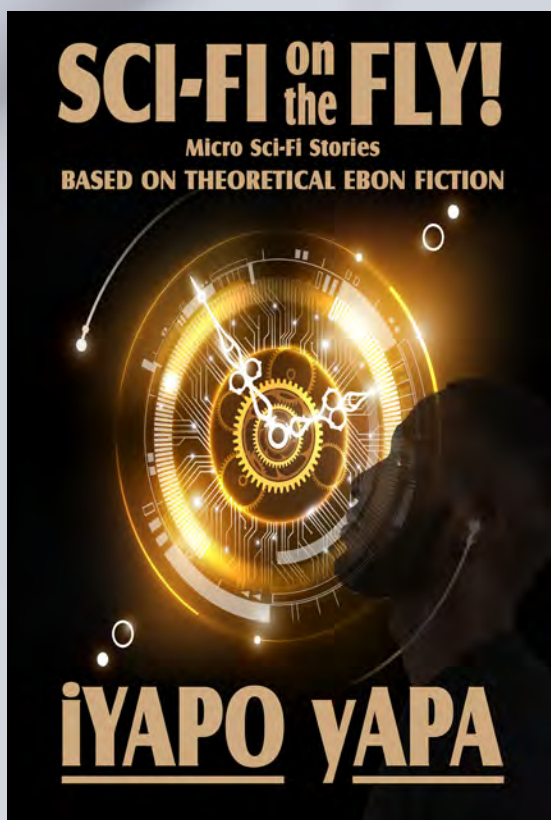
## Have You Checked Out My Blog Yet?

Catch up and keep up with what I'm pondering and seeking to figure out when it comes to this interesting experience we're all having here.

My blog is the place where I talk about what's on my mind and don't worry too much about the formatting or typos - it is, pretty much, my raw perceptions and analysis of what is going on around me.



[CLICK THE LOGO ABOVE TO VISIT MY BLOG](#)



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.

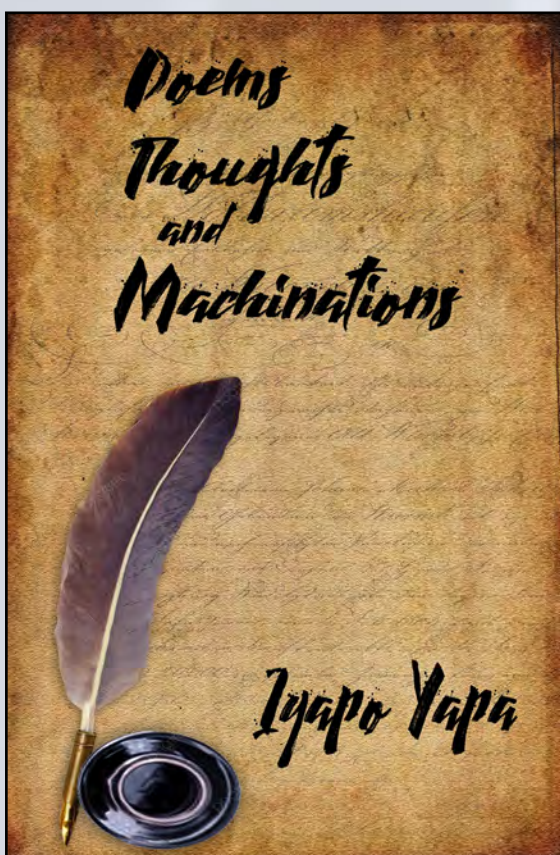


The title says it all.

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

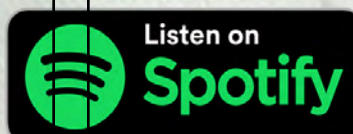
*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*

Two writers  
Two Mics  
&  
Plenty of Banter!



While Black

THE **PODCAST**



ANGELA R. RILEY

Author of *AFFIRMING SelfLOVE*

AYOKA B.

Author of *LOVE at SECOND SIGHT*

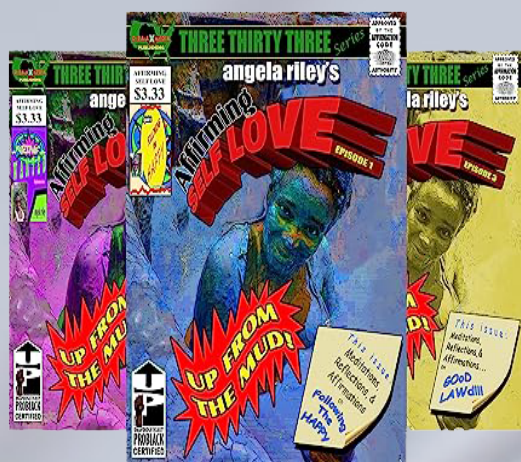
Click ANGELA to Watch or Listen on YouTube  
Click AYOKA to Listen on Spotify

# READING and WRITING in the **DARIK**

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## Alright, enough about ME!

ENJOY READING & SHARING, for the first time or all over again,  
THESE OTHER AUTHORS & THEIR WORK.

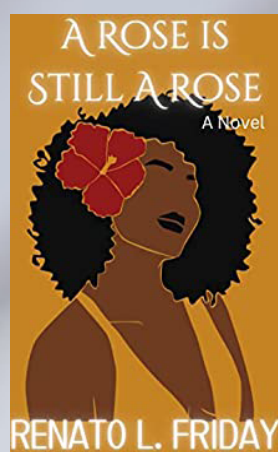


### **Affirming Self Love (Graphic Non-Fiction SERIES)**

angela riley

#### **SelfLOVE Meditation, Reflections, & AFFIRMATIONS Series...**

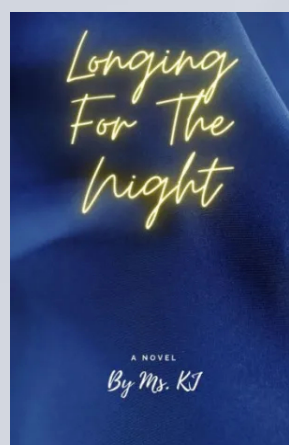
With a new book released each month, this “Graphic Nonfiction” series is filled with love for BlackUs. Each episode opens with a short essay exploring a theme such as “Following the Happy” or “Plan & Reflect” and culminates with a dynamic collection of affirmation. You’ll have a beautiful time meditating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



### **A Rose is Still a Rose**

Renato L. Friday

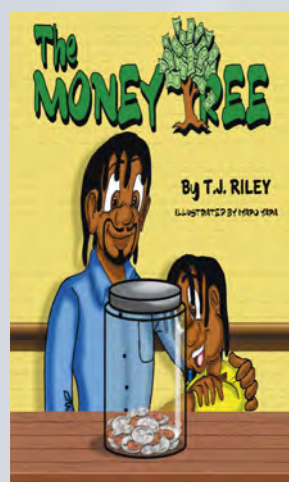
Rose thought life was going great: she was engaged, had a beautiful set of twin girls, a recent trade school graduate, and a new job right around the corner. Unfortunately, her fiancé, David, turned out to not be what she needed, and she chose to break things off. In the midst of her failing relationship,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

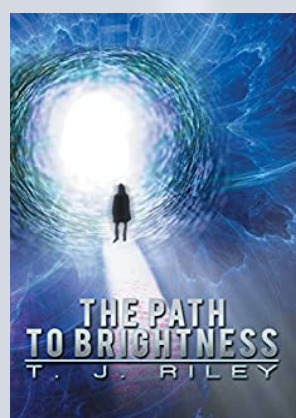
Inspired by the poem Goblin Market by Christina Rossetti, two young sisters face the trials and tribulations of the hood in this coming-of-age story about the harshness of living in South Central Los Angeles.



### **The Money Tree**

T.J. Riley / Illustrated by Iyapo Yapa

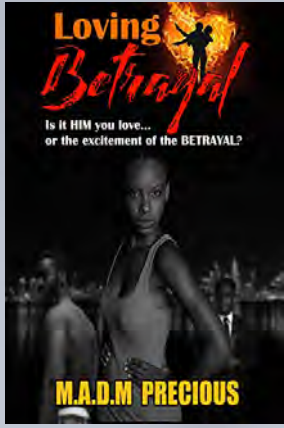
Every child wants money to buy something, right? Our hero does too. But, his father has a surprise, a Money Tree. Join the fun journey to find out how to grow your own money tree.



### **THE PATH to BRIGHTNESS**

T.J. Riley

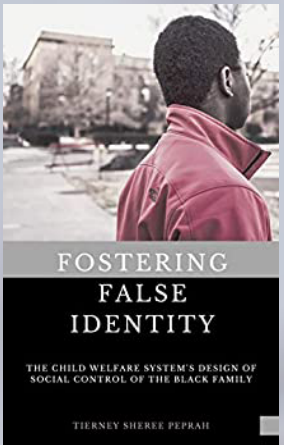
Fatima, a young woman, has a near-death experience. When she awakes from a coma and recovers, she has mystical powers. She begins to see auras and experiences life with her new abilities. For the clever character, Fatima, life is about to dramatically change. Follow Fatima's journey as she tries to convince 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

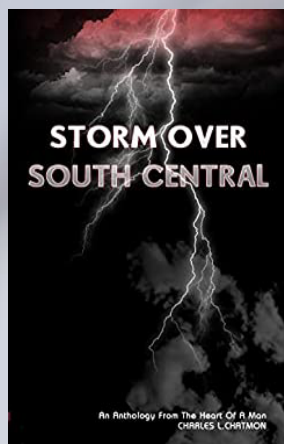
When Michelle met Michael, she thought that she found the love of her life. She was young and coming out of a bad marriage. A single parent of two children, she was scared, broke and had no self esteem. Michael seemed perfect, except for one little problem...



**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.



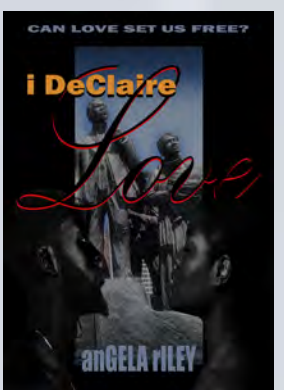
**RELAY**

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.

**ALSO KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THESE AUTHORS/STORIES -formally on KindleVella-IN OTHER PLACES!**



**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 to 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**

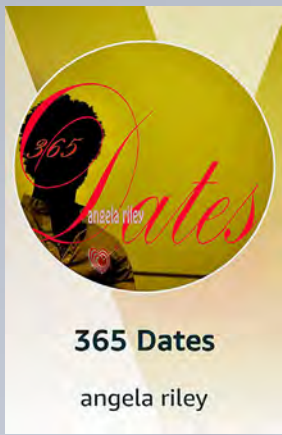
Angela Riley

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.

READING and WRITING in the

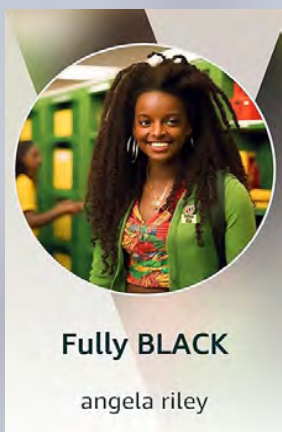
# DARIK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors



**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.



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  
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# YSBOOKS



Unlock All My  
**AudioBooks**  
For the low price of a cup of coffee



READING and WRITING in the

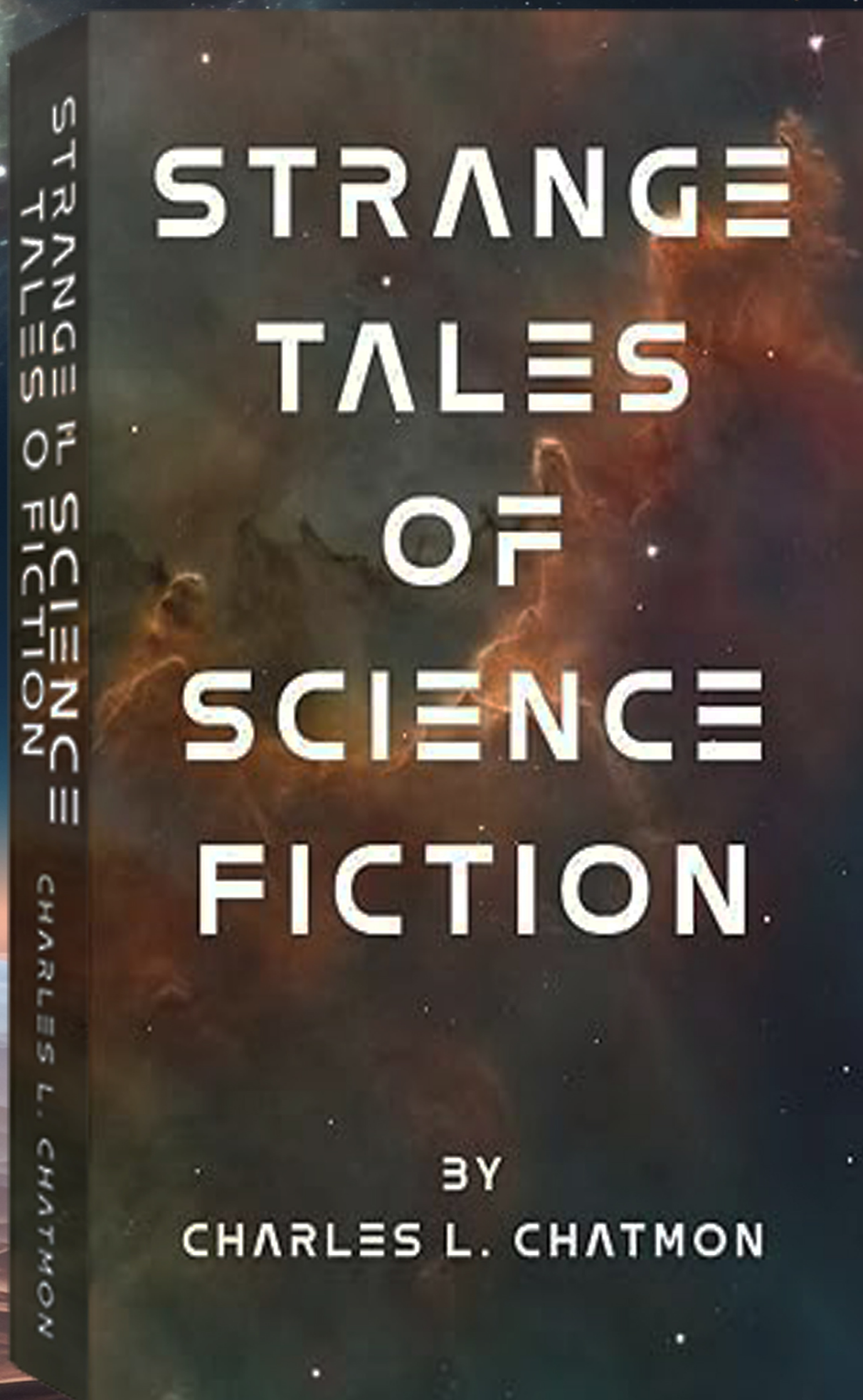
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**STRANGE TALES OF SCIENCE FICTION IS AVAILABLE NOW!**

In this anthology of weird tales of sci-fi, you will discover:

Who would have thought an alien species of warriors would have the fight of their lives against an army from earth? What's going on behind the walls of a movie studio that looks suspicious? Why are two highway patrol officers chasing after a stranger escorted by a couple up the California coast? What is up with a man who suddenly turns invisible and how it changes his world - plus, who are the men from a corporation chasing after him?



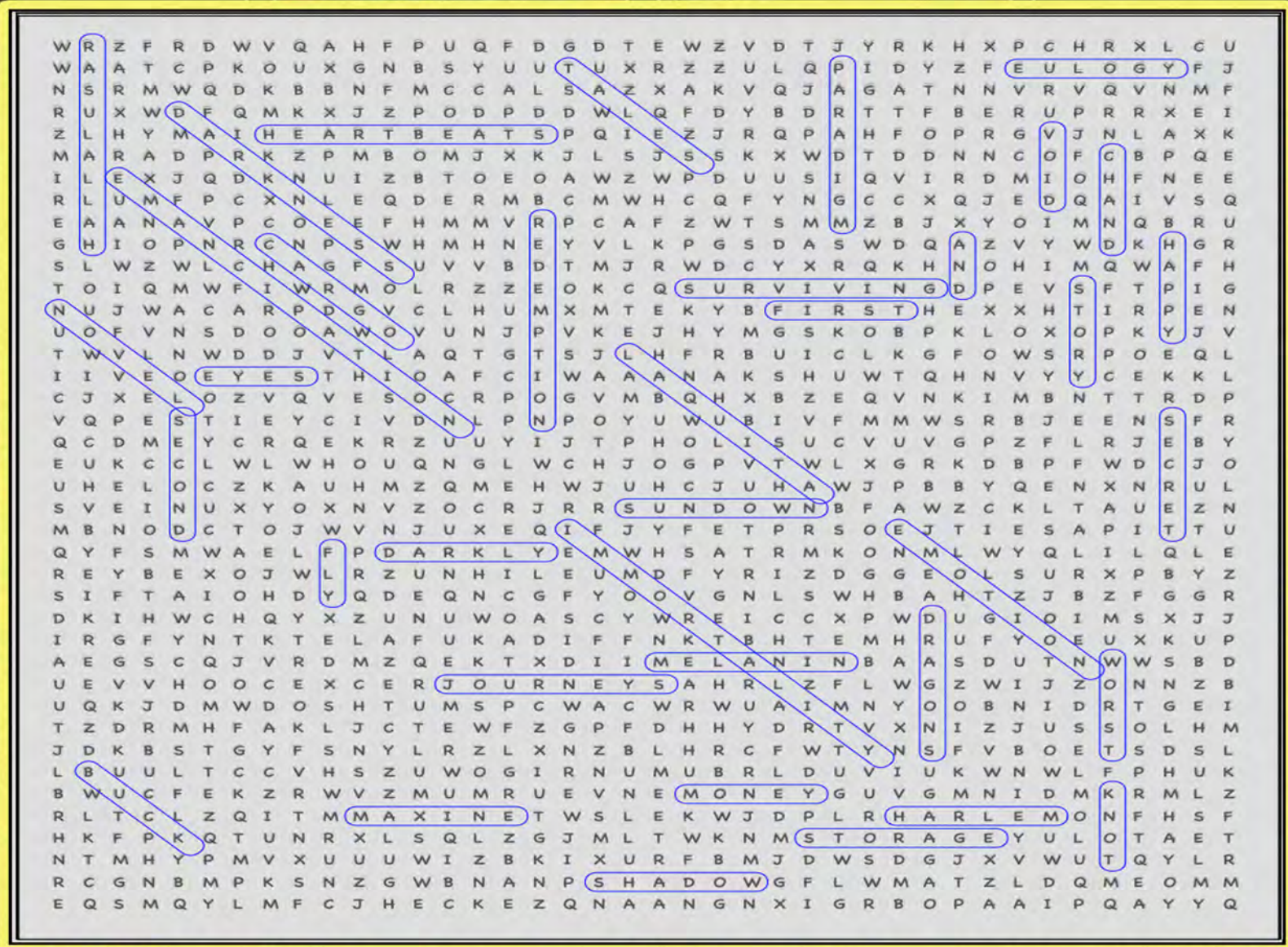
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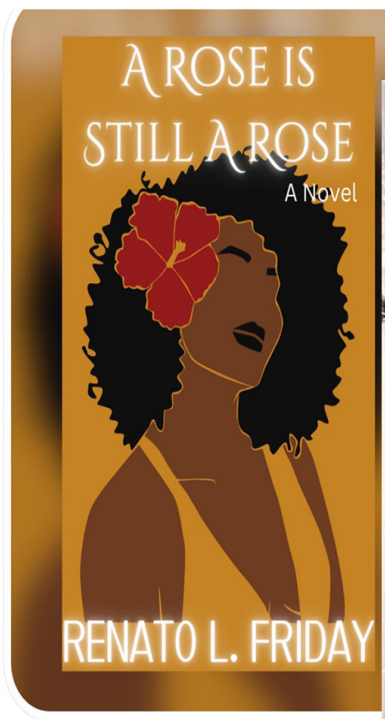
# DARIK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

## SEPTEMBER WORD SEARCH 2025



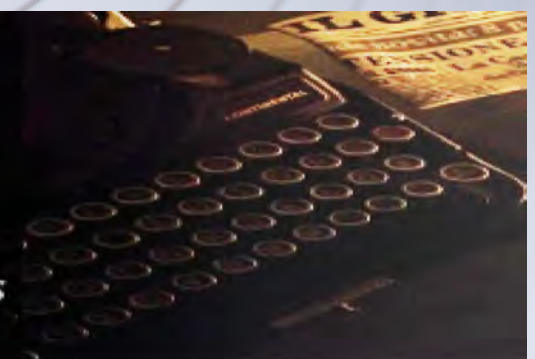
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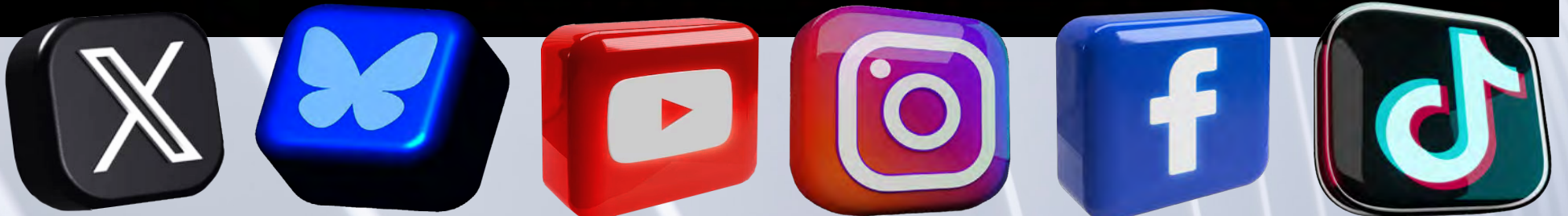
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