

READING and WRITING in the

# DARIK

*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*

## This issue:

BOOK REVIEW:

*STILL WATERS*

*By Jenna Caldwell*

Page 6

FEATURE:

# For

*Love*  
**of  
writing**

Page 3

Also:

**How Black is**

**TOO Black?!**

It is understandable when white people shun works that are unapologetically ProBlack and even expected. But it is a curious thing when BLACK people do it.

Page 7

## NEWSLETTER

The countdown has begun! We are one month closer to the debut of the book that is sure to have everyone talking...

*And What  
of the  
CARGO?*



In this month's word search we keep the focuses on the 10 issue **KEEPIN' it a BUCK Series!**

Page 4

**News and Information about Completed  
and Upcoming Projects and MORE!**



# READING and WRITING in the DARK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors



## NEWSLETTER

### CONTENTS

WELCOME BACK! ..... Page 2

For Love of Writing! ..... Page 3

February Word Search ..... Page 4

Book Review: *STILL WATERS* ..... Page 6

How Black is TOO Black?! ..... Page 7

Slowing it Down ..... Page 9

Enough about ME! Books by Authors I Know ..... Page 11

### WELCOME BACK!

January was an interesting month for me. In comparison to the last ten months or so, January has been a fairly slow month in terms of producing new materials. I've been working to be sure, but I've been a little slower than before. That said, I'm once again picking up steam. I'm excited to report that the second edit of *And What of the CARGO?* has been completed (at least on the side of my editor), and I will be working with her soon to complete that leg of the editorial process. Those who have read the book in its raw form are excited to see the upcoming final project, and so am I! The release date for *And What of the CARGO?* is March 17, 2023 and the Kindle edition is presently available for pre-sale on Amazon for a mere \$3.99. The price will go up to \$9.99 immediately after the release date, so you'll want to scoot on over to Amazon and reserve your copy TODAY!

In the short story department, my anthology book *Paradigm VOID* (which is a compilation of the ten short stories from last year's *Keepin' it a BUCK!* Series) is being put together along with a special BONUS short story! *VOID* is presently in its first round of editing and does not yet have a release date, though one should be coming in the near future. As you wait for *Paradigm VOID*, you may want to sample a few of the short stories from the *Keepin' it a BUCK!* Series. They only cost a dollar each and are guaranteed to give you a good bit of reading enjoyment! I am excited that in March you'll be able to get your PHYSICAL copy of *Paradigm VOID* to join your paper copy of *MELANIN: A Novel* on your bookshelf.

Finally, along with the regular *Keepin' it a BUCK!* Series, which, in 2023 is going into its second 'season', I'll be periodically adding the horror/suspense series *Tales of the Monkey's Paw!* Short spine tingling tales that are sure to pull you in, and in some cases keep you awake at night! So keep an eye out for that as well as new episodes of my Kindle Vella series *Surviving the Worst!*

Well, I guess that's all for now. So as always, thank you, and until next time, I'll see you all NEXT MONTH!



#### 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

AVAILABLE NOW!

### MELANIN: A NOVEL

Buy it now by clicking the cover to the right

or

by clicking on the logo of one of the retailers below.



READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*



## FOR LOVE of WRITING



Of all the things we choose to do as human beings, writing is possibly the single most solitary endeavor that one can pursue.

Yes, we take to social media to connect with our readers and other writers (sometimes more often than we should), or we join or form support groups (we call them writers groups), in order to exchange stories, experiences, information, motivations and have general comradery with fellow writers.

We joy over our triumphs and commiserate over our setbacks. We lament the lack of motivation we sometimes experience when we even think about approaching the daunting keyboard that seems to be calling our name, but but gets drowned out by the call of Netflix, YouTube, Twitter or the Beach. We celebrate, smile widely and laugh as people read our work and give us the positive feedback we claim doesn't make any difference to us one way or the other, while secretly checking our ranking on Amazon several times a day (at least at first).

Then at the end of the day, after dispersing, we go back to our lonely keyboards to fill screens with as many letters, words, sentences, paragraphs and pages necessary to make us feel as if we have accomplished something and haven't completely wasted our day.

As I think about it though, perhaps writing isn't so uniquely solitary. Perhaps it is like any other thing that some seek to achieve. Maybe it is actually motive that separates it.

I think about actors, athletes, doctors, scientists, inventors, and so on.

Some seek to excel in a given profession because of the money and "security" being a success in the given field will bring. Some do it for the fame and notoriety.

Then some of us do it for the LOVE of what we do.

Though admittedly, more than one thing can be true at once, the question becomes, "Would you be doing this thing if you if you weren't getting (or trying to get) paid?" For me the answer is a resounding **YES!** Ever since I created my first story, read it to my third grade class and was met with a standing ovation at its close--I was the **ONLY** one of my classmates to

receive a standing ovation--I knew at that moment I wanted to tell stories. And I worked toward that goal.

It is a difficult thing to put blood, sweat and tears into a work, especially a long work, like a novel, working on it for months, sometimes years and in some cases, even decades, not knowing how, upon completion your work... your labor of love... will be received. It is understood that a writer like, say Walter Mosley had to pay his dues in the beginning, but now he knows (or should know by now), that he could write some scribble on a napkin and we would get a reasonable amount of sales and people wanting to read it.

The new writer, the unknown novelist has to wait, wait and wait some more. I've heard some writers start getting noticed into their third and fourth works. Some never get noticed. All of that was to say, if one is in this for the fame and glory or even the money, for most of us, that romanticized notion will disappear rather quickly. For most writers, our work is not greeted with fame, glory or money. Our labors are met with the harsh reality of a public that in general--let's be honest--isn't overly excited about reading anything longer than a tweet, text or headline. So ultimately, why write then?

In the writers group I belong to, I have met writer after writer who have written many pieces and enjoy the craft of writing, especially poetry and short essays, because they find it cathartic.

**"It is a difficult thing to put blood, sweat and tears into a work, especially a long work, like a novel, working on it for months, sometimes years and in some cases, even decades, and not knowing how, upon completion your work... your labor of love... will be received."**

I got sidetracked and spent the majority of my adult life cartooning and designing. If anyone were asked, they would definitely have said that being a cartoonist just HAD to have been my life's ambition, given that I drew all the time and created comic book after comic book, children's book after children's book. Little did they know that my learning how to draw, illustrate and cartoon, was actually just the vehicle I chose to use as an excuse to tell stories. (Kind of like the fact my favorite instrument is the harmonica, and I composed an entire song JUST so I could play the harmonica to it.).

Cartooning was pretty good to me. No, I never reached "household name" levels, but I did always manage to be somewhat of a local celebrity several times (pictures in the paper, radio interviews--back when people used to actually listen to the radio--and a couple television appearances). But for me... it was ALWAYS about telling stories! Always. Now that I've finished my first two novels, written a stack of short stories and a novella, now more than before, I have have had it confirmed that when I write, I really do do it simply for the love of telling a good story and having others enjoy.

So with all of that said, it's full steam ahead for me, and I don't see a time when I will ever stop writing as long as I have the ability to do so. Writing for me is enjoyable, important, cathartic and at times, a little frustrating--especially when I hit the dreaded "writer's block". Writer's block notwithstanding, I know that writing is what I do because being a writer is what I am, and I'm lovin' every minute of this writer's journey!

READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*

## FEBRUARY 2023

# WORD SEARCH

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

This month we continue the theme of the ten short stories in the Keepin' it a BUCK! Series. The awesome thing is that this February brings you a twofer! If you haven't yet done last month's crossword puzzle and you don't want to sneak over a few pages to the answers, ALL the answers to the crossword are words in the Word Search, but you still need to do a little work. The Word Search List is on the next page, and the Answer Key to the word search will be in next month's edition of the READING and WRITING in the DARK Newsletter.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD A PRINTABLE COPY!](#)

READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

## WORD SEARCH LIST

DOLPHIN	PARADIGMVOID	THEORETICAL	POWERSTAR	PATTENVILLE	KNOT
KENDERSON	SWATHA	SIXTEEN	ATTSWORTH	DAUGHTER	ODD
FALSTEAD	TELAX	TEN	IYAPOYAPA	STASIBASI	ALIENINVASION
PERSONZERO	TARTOKOPHSKI	MARIE	SHADOWHOUSE	DONNA	EYES
KAGOSHIMA	OSBORNE	EBONTON	DRAGON	EIDETIC	SABRINA
SPINKS	LOGANVILLE	MARCKJI	FEAR	KATHRYN	TIMESCAN
STINNEY	BADGERS	PIZANOS	SAGINAW	TWO	MARLOW



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

**VOID**

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**



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 resurgence 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?

PARADIGM VOID is presently in the editorial stages and will soon be available at your favorite book seller!

READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

## BOOK REVIEW

### *STILL WATERS* By Jenna Caldwell

There is only a handful of books (thus far), that I have started reading before going to bed and then ended up reading through the night into the next morning because I simply COULDN'T stop AND felt compelled to immediately write reviews upon completion.

*Still Waters* by Jenna Caldwell falls squarely into that category.

Yesterday my wife suggested I read *Still Waters* because she is (of course) familiar with subjects that interest me. One of them being the abomination that was the murder of a 14 year old Black child by the un-justice system. The second subject is near and dear to me, and one which I have constantly spoken with to people in my circle, written about, and made videos and podcasts about. Ironically, I don't want to say what it is, because in my opinion, it would serve as a spoiler to this well written, well thought out and cleanly constructed narrative.

The subject of the novel sent it IMMEDIATELY to the top of my reading list, like START-READING-IT-TONIGHT-top.

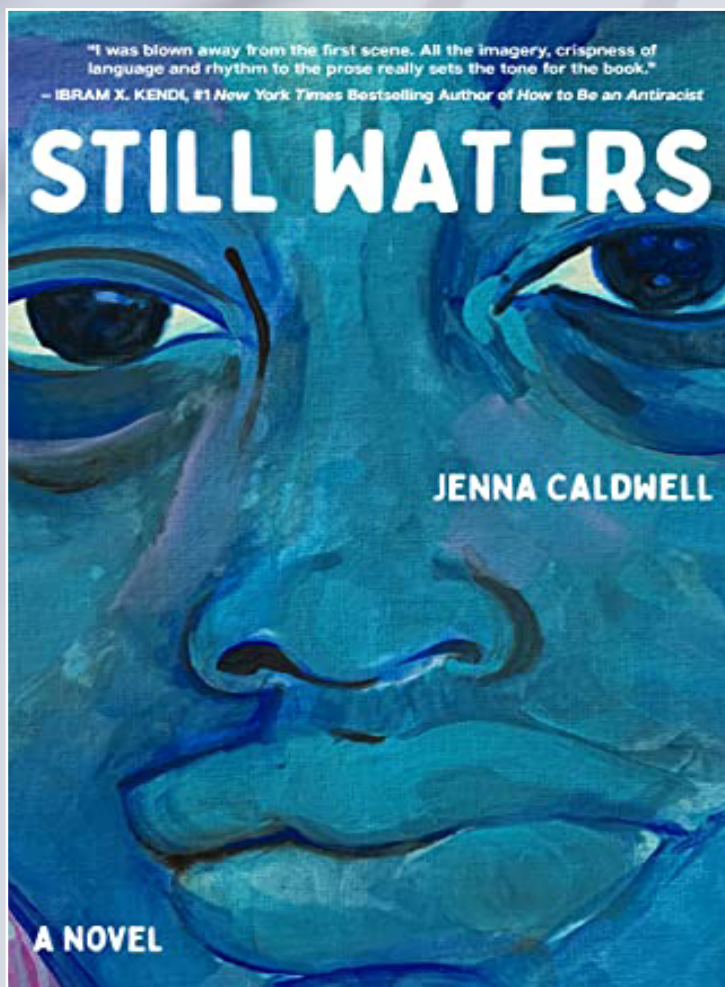
Not only did jump into reading urgently, but I stayed awake all night! (Full disclosure, I think I may have actually drifted off for an hour or hour and a half, but as SOON as I opened my eyes, I was RIGHT BACK ON IT).

Caldwell weaves a story that is both fact and fiction, leaving breadcrumbs throughout, and has the touch of one of my personal favorite elements in fiction. (Unfortunately, to say what it is would be a spoiler of sorts. But email me at [iyapo@iyapoyapa.com](mailto:iyapo@iyapoyapa.com) after you read the book and I will happily disclose it!)

Her prose is tight and has a logical flow given the subject matter, the time period and the characters. (The characters themselves are vivid and well developed. Both lamentably and with a hint of irony, given the direction the story MUST take for those who are familiar with George Stinney and the atrocity that was his murder by the state.)

I feel that Jenna Caldwell has produced something quite insightful, touching, enraging, thought provoking, and with on-point speculation based firmly upon logic with *Still Waters*. So along with my FIVE STARS I want to encourage and HIGHLY recommend this genre defying work to ANYONE who likes good books that not only evoke emotional responses, but truly make one think.

I am definitely going to be on the lookout for more from this author. If her new novels are of this same caliber, she's in for some BIG THINGS. And so are WE!



#### About the Author

Jenna Caldwell is a journalist. She holds a Master of Science from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, with a focus on multimedia reporting and production. With contributions to TIME, NBC, VOA, and a variety of publications, she strives to cover under-reported stories and platform under-recognized voices globally.

*Still Waters* is her first novel.

READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

## How Black is TOO Black?!

Of late, I've been pondering what it means to be a Black writer, or more accurately a PROBlack writer.

Are the two things one and the same?

I think not.

A brilliant commentator and observer who calls herself "Gwen B" did an excellent YouTube video on the differences between "Black" writers and "ProBlack" writers (I will provide a link below). I don't think there is much more I can add to her analysis, and frankly I'm not going to try. What I am going to examine however, is the phenomenon I see of "anti-Blackness" among...

are you ready...

BLACK people!

It is disturbing and disconcerting, but not altogether surprising, to see how many Black people actually shy away from works, projects or other media they consider to be "too Black". Even the term "ProBlack" causes some of our people to wince, some secretly and many publicly.

In all candor, I reach out to a great many people, who, upon first connecting seem as if they are "all in" or rearing to go when it comes to project ideas, interviews (either of me, or by me), then suddenly--as if on a dating app--I find myself "ghosted". I give some thought as to why that has happened and even take into account that the suppression, shadow banning and silencing of voices the power structure does not want heard is a VERY real thing. (If you still are not convinced of it, just do a search for "the twitter files".)

That systemic silencing of Black voices is always my first thought. However, I also believe that my deep and overt love, honor and respect for my people is ironically, a repellent for some. Just because a person is Black, or even, in their own opinion, unapologetically Black, does not mean they can not still be used as a tool within a white supremacist system.

So what happens?

Do some of our people visit my website and see that I ONLY write for Black people and with Black people in mind, or that I'm profoundly for our people... ALL of our people... and get turned off by that?

Do some of our people in America look at my twitter profile, and since I don't wave a banner of ADOS, FBA, FREEDMEN or have an American flag on my profile, dismissed me as somehow ANTI-something? Do I look as if I am possibly from the continent? Do some assume I am a "tether" trying to tie myself in with "true" Black Americans? Are people checking my hairline before following or liking me or something I've said?

There are no shortage of arguments (especially on social media), when it comes to the so called "gender war" between Black men and Black women, as well as "diaspora wars" that have some factions of

the Afrikan diaspora at each other's throats. I believe that neither of these things are nearly as widespread as one who pays attention to social media would think. It is a case of the squeaky wheel getting the oil, and moreover, the system of white supremacy seeing clearly that the tried and true strategy of divide and conquer is still working and still every bit as effective as it has always been.

What is the solution? Why and How did this happen? Is there a remedy?

Admittedly, I haven't the slightest idea, though I spend a considerable amount of time thinking VERY hard on that very subject (as my wife can attest to). I'm not going to even attempt to answer these questions. I will say that I do operate on the belief that sometimes it can be enough to just pose the questions and have people ruminate on them. Perhaps that is naive of me, but it is what I think.

**Do some of our people visit my website and see that I ONLY write from Black people and with Black people in mind, or that I'm profoundly for our people... ALL of our people... and get turned off by that?**

As far as my support of our people, I have heard from some that I shouldn't be so "ride or die" when it comes to my people because that is the kind of thing that opens the door to being used, hurt and so on. I fully understand that it is most definitely true that "not all skin folks are kin folks", but the question that blazes in my mind and heart and which I can not shake is this: *If I am not for Black people, who am I for?*

Of course I realize that doesn't mean I should be a doormat, push-over or someone oblivious to the users, charlatans, opportunists, traitors, coons and outright agents among us--because there is no shortage of them out here, to be sure.

The conundrum for me, as I suspect it is for many of us is this: if I don't support my own people. If I can not be FULLY for my people.

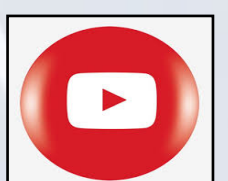
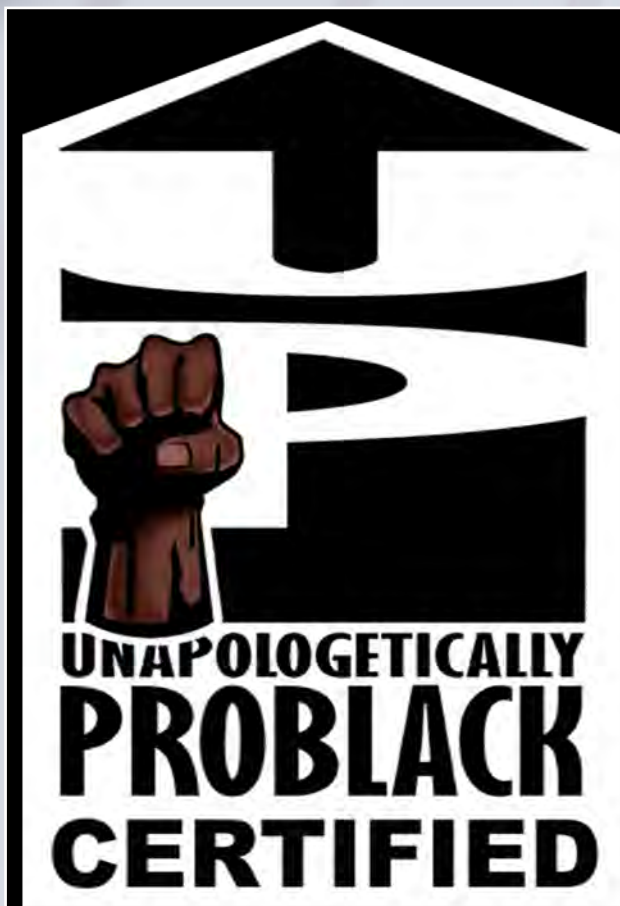
What is the alternative?

Running into the arms of the ones who oppressed our people and created this mess in the first place?

Nah.

I'm good.

**You can find GWEN B's brilliant video essay on the future of Pro-Black Fiction, as well as the difference between Black writers and ProBlack writers by clicking the YouTube button.**





READING and WRITING in the

# DARIK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors

## SLOWING IT DOWN

I had an epiphany this morning (as I tend to do many mornings).

It was about reading.

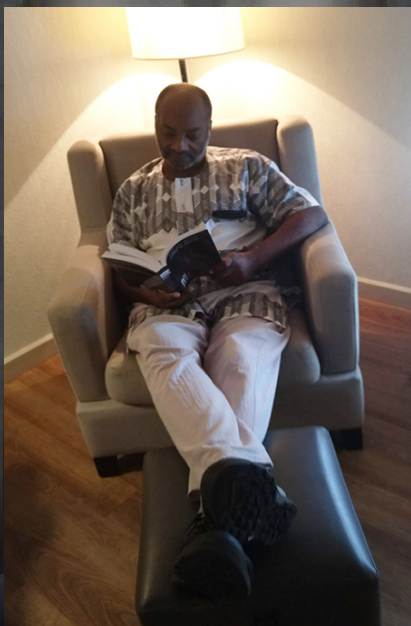
I have gotten to a point where I have at long last, rediscovered reading. I've always read books and enjoyed them. Three that jump out at me in particular are *This Present Darkness* and *Peircing the Darkness* by Frank E. Peretti (both works of Christian Fiction), and my all time favorite book, *The Book of the Dun Cow* by Walter Wangerin Jr. (A work of Christian allegory). Those books are all burned into my mind, not because they were Christian fiction, but I remember them as the first books I had a hard time putting down.

When I was home, I was reading them, at work, even when it was time to go to bed, I still could not tear my eyes away from them. As time went on I wasn't able to find any more books that hit me in that same way.

Fast forward several decades and I put a little story (a novella actually) titled *My Husband was a Mass Murderer* by LaTosha McCauley. That book pulled me back into the world of "can't put it down" stories. The only reason I stopped reading it that evening was that I became too sleepy to read any further. However, upon waking the next morning I was right

back at it until I was done!

As I sat and thought about it, in this microwave, soundbite world, I have to wonder if we even know HOW to slow down anymore. I think, at least for myself, that sitting down with a good book is a perfect way to slow things down and relax. For me, reading takes time, concentration and energy of a sort. Perhaps that's the point of it. As I would sit and watch a screen and have someone telling me things on social media, how much time was I spending actually processing what I was hearing? I pride myself on always seeking to look beneath the surface of things, but I'm only human and I can fall into the same traps of having things seep into my mind and saturate my consciousness without knowing it.



I have found that when I read—even if I'm reading something controversial or provocative—I have a different type of interaction than when I watch a video of it, or viewing it within the context of some social media space. Sitting and quietly reading a work, for me is a way to slow down and hear myself think. Thus far, it is serving me well. So, though I am not one to make formal New Year's resolutions, I have definitely determined that I will be spending much more time reading and less on activities I don't feel are as helpful. Actually it is a no brainer.

## Could YOU survive?!

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

Click on the Kindle vella link below!



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

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

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



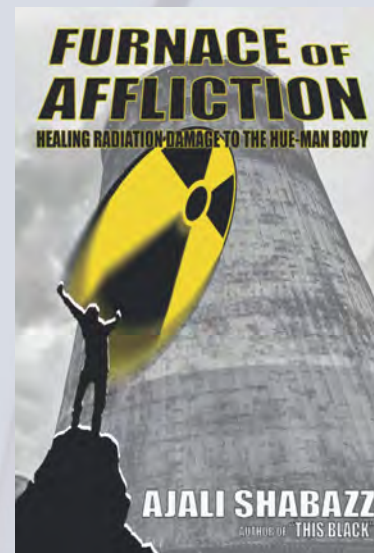
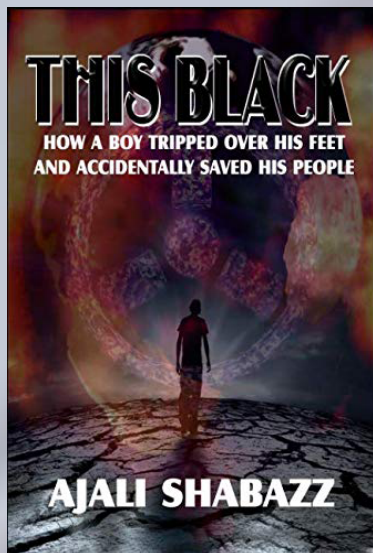
READING and WRITING in the

# 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!

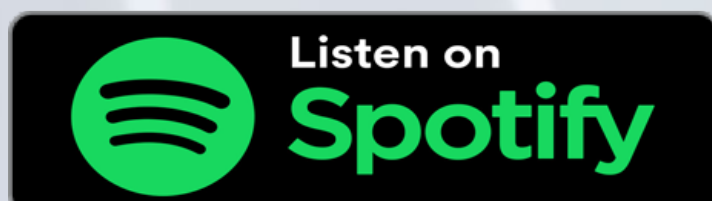
Listen to the interview on  by clicking the link below:

<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!





READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*

## 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

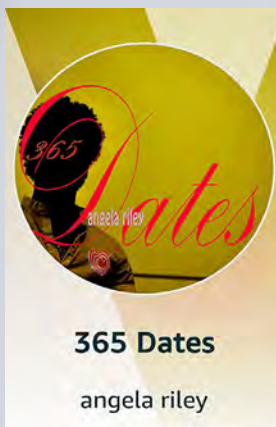
DeClaire and Tyrone meet and sparks fly. They fall in love with each other quick, fast, and in a hurry. It seems too good to be true. But is it? Is it safe to love? Are there any “good” rules when it comes to love? Do we have to fight for love? Are there always games being played when it comes to love?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



### The Love X TamuTamu Agency

Angela Riley

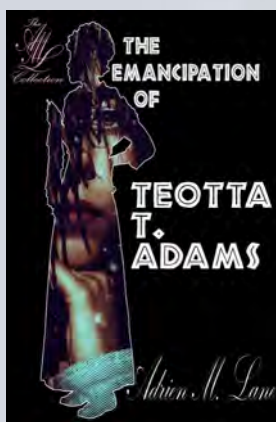
Love is natural but it ain't always easy. And Mama Tamu should know! She is a 91 year old match maker who has run “The Love X TamuTamu Agency” for FIFTY years. She has personally experienced and been a witness to all kinds of love. And, as she says, “Love is more than a notion!” Follow along as she stands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



### 365 Dates

Angela Riley

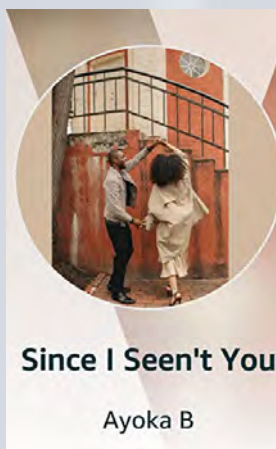
Single again, after my first divorce, one day I had a new thought: I WANT TO DATE. And... NOTHING. No one came knocking on my door to woo me. No one approached me when I was out wanting to court me. Nobody asked friends/family to be set up with me. Just crickets! So, thinking that maybe my goal was to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



### The Emancipation of Teotta T. Adams

Adrien M. Lane

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



### Since I Seen't You

Ayoka B.

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



**The Match**

Ayoka B.

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

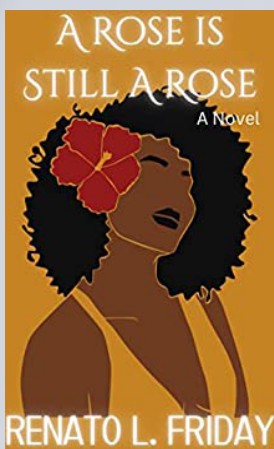
**ALSO AVAILABLE on AMAZON and OTHER PLATFORMS!**  
**Below are stories and books by some authors I know!**  
**Just click the cover art to purchase their book.**



Meditations, Reflections, & AFFIRMATIONS on SelfLOVE.

**Following The Happy: SelfLOVE Meditations, Reflections, & AFFIRMATIONS**

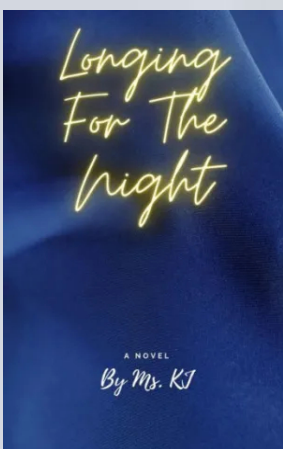
Angela Riley



**A Rose is Still a Rose**

Renato L. Friday

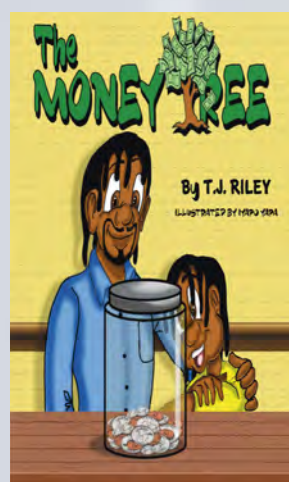
Rose thought life was going great: she was engaged, had a beautiful set of twin girls, a recent trade school graduate, and a new job right around the corner. Unfortunately, her fiancé, David, turned out to not be what she needed, and she chose to break things off. In the midst of her failing relationship,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

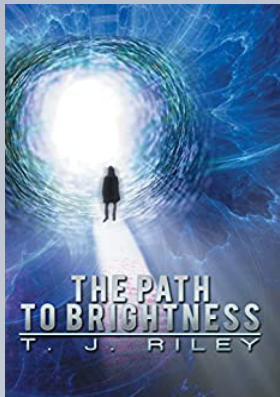
T.J. Riley / Illustrated by Iyapo Yapa

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.

READING and WRITING in the

# DARK

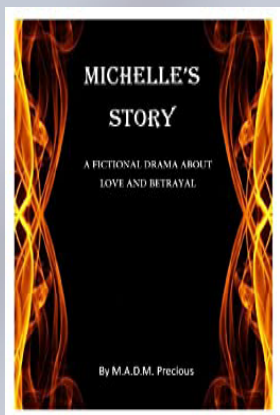
*A space for avid Black readers and Black authors*



## THE PATH to BRIGHTNESS

T.J. Riley

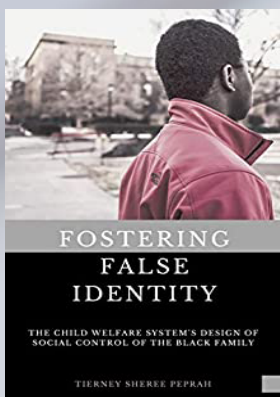
Fatima, a young woman, has a near-death experience. When she awakes from a coma and recovers, she has mystical powers. She begins to see auras and experiences life with her new abilities. For the clever character, Fatima, life is about to dramatically change. Follow Fatima's journey as she tries to convince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



## MICHELLE'S STORY

M.A.D.M. Precious

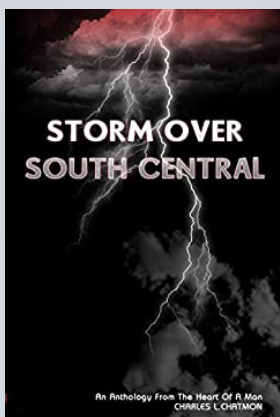
When Michelle met Michael, she thought that she found the love of her life. She was young and coming out of a bad marriage. A single parent of two children, she was scared, broke and had no self esteem. Michael seemed perfect, except for one little problem...



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

Tierney Peprah

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



## Storm Over South Central

Charles L. Chatmon

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

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

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

**And there will be more authors to come, who are working to**

**TAKE CONTROL OF OUR NARRATIVE!**

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

You can also find Iyapo Yapa on:



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter



YouTube

# WAPDO WAPDA

Tales of the  
MONKEY'S PAW



NOT EVERY WISH GRANTED MAKES DREAMS COME TRUE

IN 2023  
BE CAREFUL WHAT  
YOU WISH FOR!



Keepin' it a BUCK *series*

SHORT STORIES of HORROR and SUSPENSE