

READING and WRITING in the

DARIK

A space for avid Black readers and Black authors



MAGAZINE

THIS MONTH:

Things heat up as:

Adrien M. Lane

gets us: **LOST in SECRET ARMS** Page 5
The Complete Prologue and Chapter One

Feature:

**From Iyapo's Medium
page: The 400 Year Head
Start Series: THE RACE**

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**Op Ed
VICTIM
MENTALITY?!?!**

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Also:

**This Month's
Crossword Puzzle:
THE BLACK
PANTHERS!**

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

READING and WRITING in the

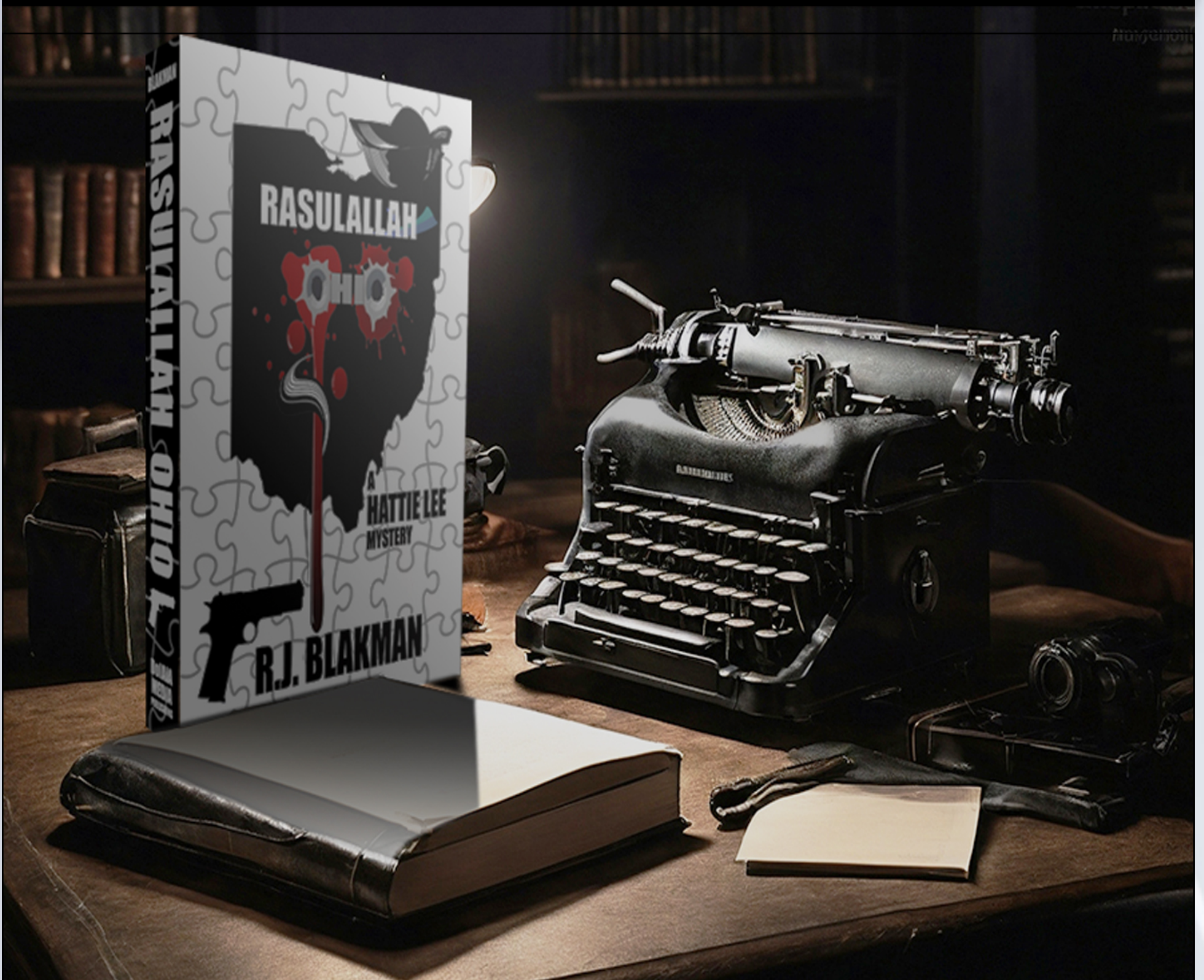
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1960s Ohio

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)



NOVEMBER 2025 - Volume 2 / Number 5



MAGAZINE

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WELCOME BACK!

Happy NOVEMBER!

One more month and we step confidently into 2026, and I'm looking forward to a BLESSED and PRODUCTIVE year!

A NEW feature of the magazine is that the table of contents is now active! You can just click on the story and be taken directly to it, and at the end of the story, article or feature, there is a hypertext that takes you back to the content page, if that's where you would like to go.

This month I also feature an article that is my first post on Medium. It's an extensive analogy titled *The Race* - which is part of the *400 Year Head Start Series*. You can read it here, and see my other articles and op eds on the platform.

I hope you enjoy the story and as always, you'll find an excerpt (Lost In Secret Arms by Adrien M. Lane), 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!

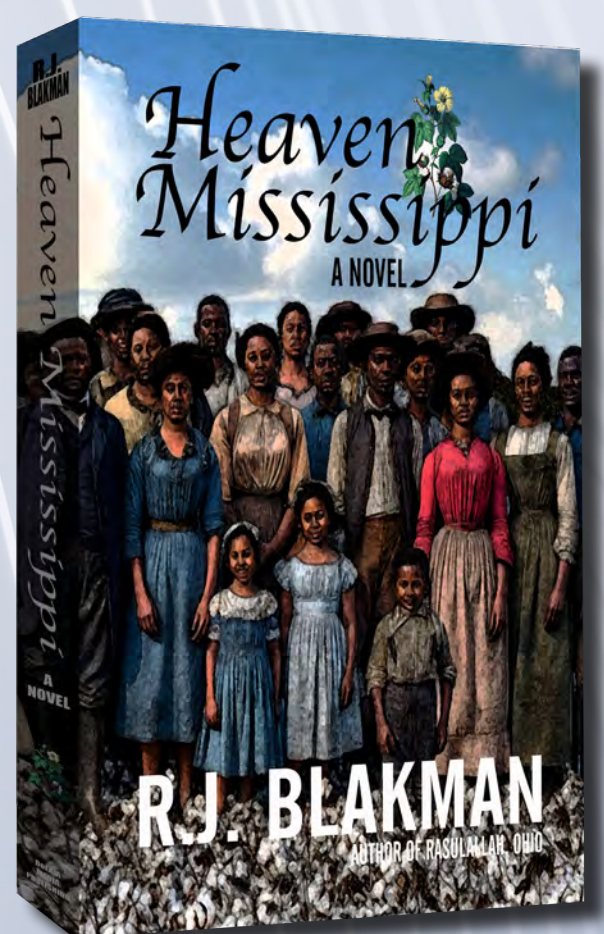
Ok, ok! Black people are sick and tired of reading and talking about our enslavement.

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.5
NOVEMBER 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?

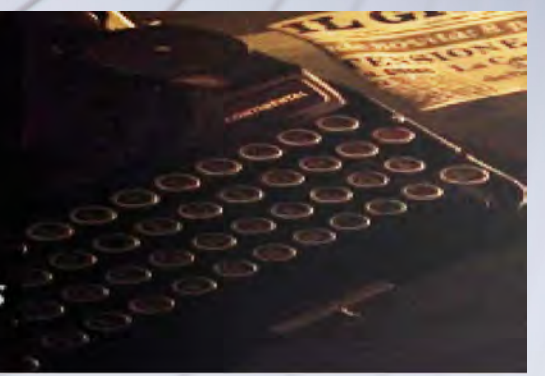
Amazon Customer

★★★★★ **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!



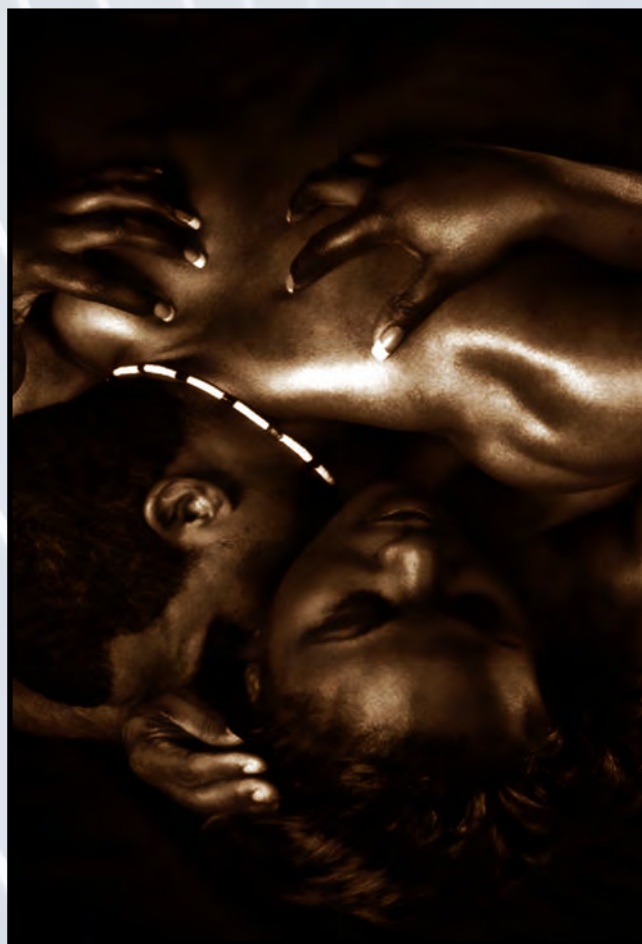
LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue

PROLOGUE

How things can come to this, it is difficult to ever know.

Robert “Bobby Boy” Seacroft lay silent on the table, both arms stretched outward on their own separate extensions. The room he was in was white for the most part. Sterile. He thought about how, before inserting the needle attached to the intravenous lines, the medical professionals wiped the spot of insertion with alcohol. Force of habit he guessed; it certainly couldn’t have been that they were concerned he’d possibly gotten an infection on top of the capital penalty.

Outside the walls of the prison, protestors were carrying signs and picketing, decrying both the inhumanity and the constitutional illegality of the sentence that was about to be carried out on Seacroft—most protesting that the penalty the condemned was about to pay, fell well within the parameters of ‘cruel and unusual’ punishment, if not dead center of it.



At first Lisa debated whether she was going to the viewing. She’d not missed a single day of the trial and sat, just as many of the family members of those slaughtered by Seacroft did. She

hadn’t missed a single day of the trial and through to the judgment and sentencing. She’d sat through every gory detail and listened as the prosecution laid out its case and presented every gut wrenching piece of photo evidence—one featuring the body of her husband, face down outside and ice cream shop, an open

and melting pint of double chocolate vegan ice cream beside him. The ice cream lay, oozing from the mouth of the hard plastic container and seeped onto the pavement, where it mixed with her husband’s blood.

The defense couldn’t argue whether Seacroft had committed the crimes or not. That part wasn’t even open to debate, but that, though guilty of the murders and injuries, both of which would leave lifelong trauma to the family, friends and



LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

loved ones of the victims, that he was acting at a diminished capacity due to a combination of his addiction to ‘orbit’—for which he was supposed to have been in recovery—and intoxication which reactivated it in his system.

Though it was true that individuals who were recovering from orbit would test positive for it for the rest of their lives, after nonuse—between three months for some and up to a year and a half for others depending on the subject’s genetics—the substance became dormant in the system. The withdrawal from orbit was about as bad as withdrawal could get, with a full 5% of people attempting to kick orbit, dying.

Seacroft nearly died while in the rehab center, but luckily, he survived.

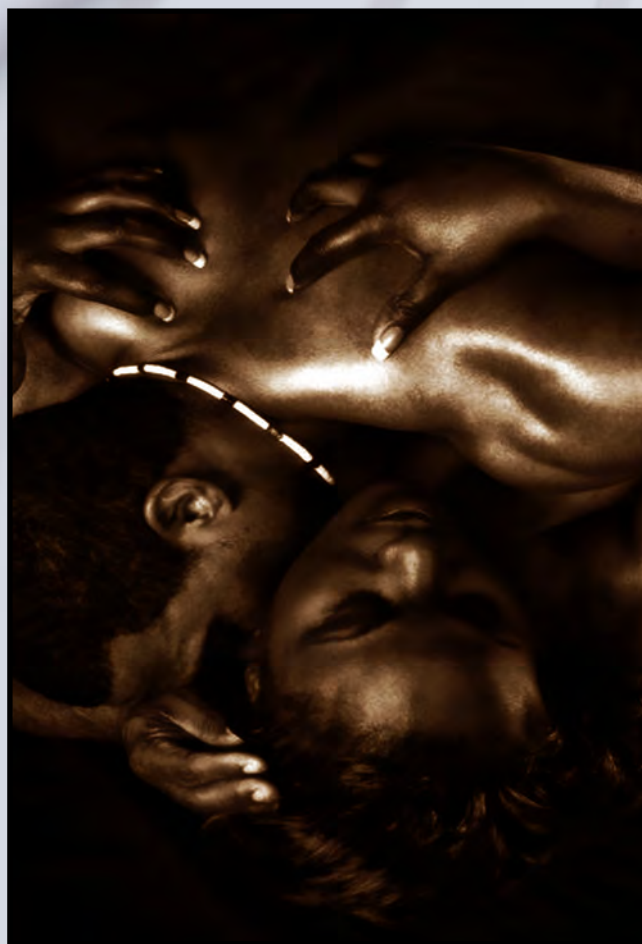
Lucky for him.

Not so much for twelve innocent people no longer among the living, seventeen injured, some of them with lifelong injuries—and for the families of all of them who have to deal with the aftermath.

Bobby Boy Seacroft had a hard life, his father Robert Seacroft Sr. was a drug dealer who was in and out of prison, mostly in (he wasn’t very good at his chosen profession), and his mother, though functional was also addicted to illicit drugs—namely various levels of a designer drug called ‘ceiling’ (a gateway drug to orbit, of which she was smart enough to have never taken that final step).

She wasn’t what one would consider a “hard” addict, she knew how to take just enough to “keep her head right”, but still be able to go to work every day at the call center, as well as maintain a good relationship with family and friends, as well as regularly attend church as both a member of the choir and serving on the usher board.

She was an attentive mother to her son Robert, who she was the first to start calling Bobby Boy, unfortunately she had no way to keep an eye on her son twenty four hours a day, and as happens with far too many little Black boys growing up in the ‘hood’, young Bobby Boy soon developed friendships with individuals any caring parent would rather he had not. It wasn’t long before Bobby Boy





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

was committing petting crimes, and selling drugs—and as the story goes, to the point of cliché, he graduated to armed robbery and regularly using various levels of ‘ceiling’.

Finally at fifteen years old, at a house party, because of a girl he wanted to impress—he moved from ceiling III to “orbit”, and that was it.

From there he was addicted and he at first sought to feed that addiction no matter what he had to do, but the day he fought with his mother about her giving him money, which she refused, Bobby Boy Seacroft would be on his way to recovery (by way of forced rehab in juvenile prison for having murdered his mother).

* * *

Lisa Jenkins sat in the gallery behind the curtain and waited for it to open for the show—the ‘viewing’, they called it. All that mattered to her now was to see a microbe of justice met out to this murderer who killed his own mother, his own child, and a number of innocent people—

including her beloved husband.

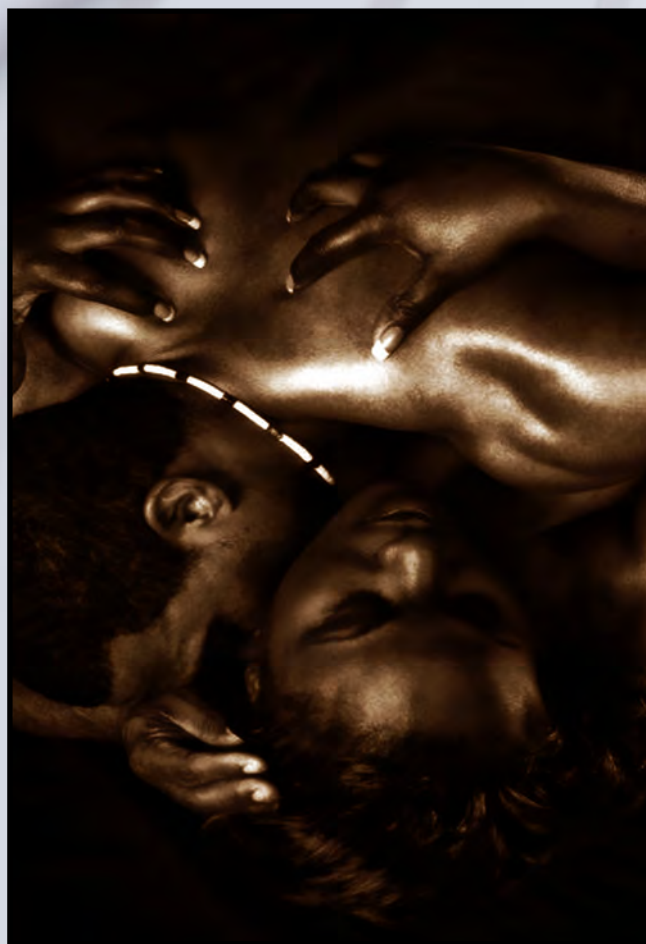
Seacroft was a prince among men, if not a KING—if that king were Leopold II of Belgium. The crime for which he was about to pay the ultimate

penalty was that of a shooting rampage that left seventeen people injured and twelve dead.

Bobby Boy, after an argument about a tv remote became heated; the young lady he was living with—Dora Kindleson, had had enough and told him he could keep the remote and watch tonight’s Final

4 to his heart’s content, but that he’d better enjoy it because the next day he’d be moving out.

She went upstairs to bed in the modest townhouse, so she could get some sleep, having to get up early for work the next morning. Bobby sat in his Piston’s jersey, preparing to enjoy some leftover lasagna and garlic bread while knocking back a succession of beers (something he knew was strictly prohibited for recovered addicts of ‘orbit’). He tried to get into his basketball game but couldn’t





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

get Dora and their argument off his mind. How DARE she give him grief about watching the Final 4?! And why should he have to leave?! He chipped in on the rent and utilities when he had the money and was paying for half the cable bill most of the time, and he couldn't sit down once a year and watch fuckin' Final 4 in peace?!

The more he thought about it, the more pissed off he got. He kept drinking beers, forgetting about the lasagna and garlic bread still on his plate, and unable to pay attention to the game.

He took a couple swigs of his fifth or sixth beer (who was counting?) and started whispering to himself about the woman who had just gone upstairs. "What's that bitch mean, 'Enjoy your basketball, 'cause tomorrow you're outta here?!" He looked at the screen just as LeBron scored a dunk on the Pistons, putting the Lakers ahead. "FUCK!" Bobby Boy yelled "How the fuck you let LeBron do you like that?!"

He turned his wavering head to face the screen, then in the direction of the staircase. Then to the screen again, and once more to the staircase, somehow

connecting in his inebriated mind that the Pistons were losing because he wasn't watching the television, cheering for them and sending his energy to the team.

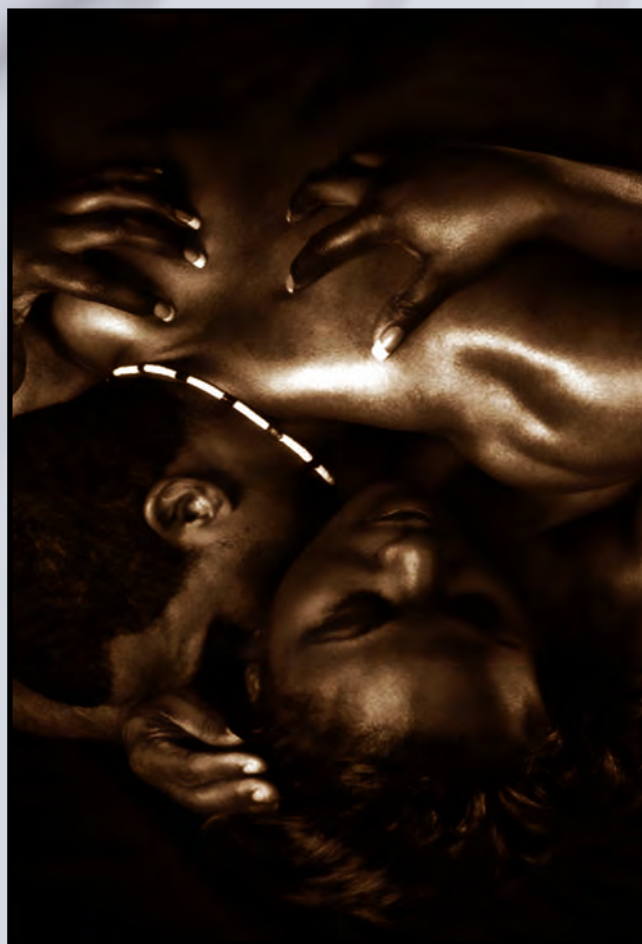
Makes perfect sense.

When you're drunk and going into orbit.

Staggering to the downstairs closet, he unsteadily reached up to the top shelf and the Nike shoebox in which he kept his loaded Glock 19 along with two magazines, both already filled with thirty three bullets each, and a couple extra boxes just in case—in case

what, even he didn't know. He took the entire box and sat it on the coffee table beside his ever cooling plate of lasagna and knocking a couple empty beer bottles to the floor, opened it and removed the weapon.

He looked at the weapon almost as if seeing it for the first time, perhaps thinking if for only a moment if what he was doing wasn't beyond the pale or not. From the screen Bobby Boy heard thunderous cheers. Catching his attention for a moment, he saw that LeBron had just scored a three pointer for the Lakers, widening their



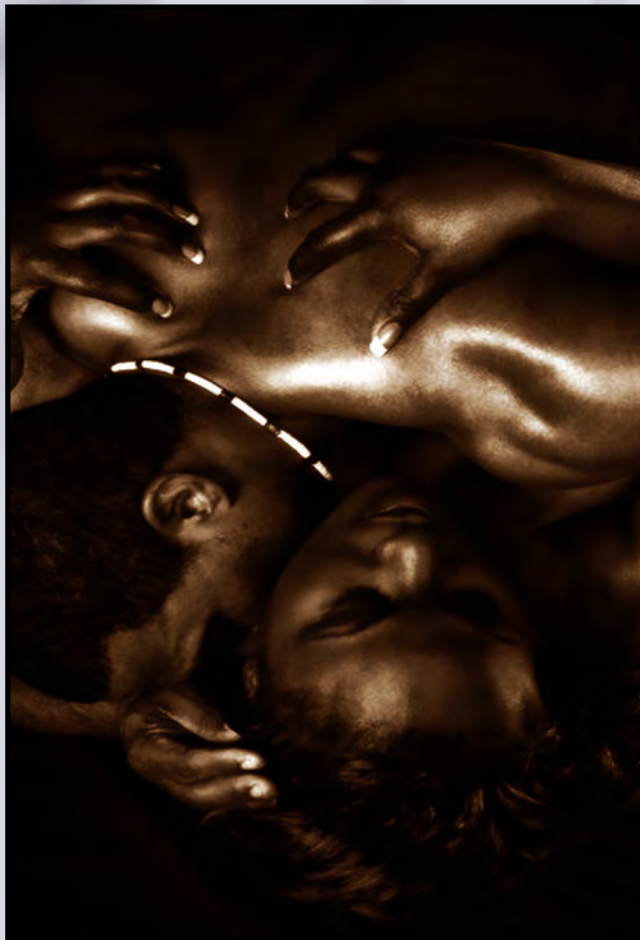


LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

lead.

“FUCK! WHY DON’T YOU JUST RETIRE DAMN IT?! JORDAN RETIRED AT FORTY, BUT YOUR OL’ BLACK ASS KEEPS HANGIN’ ON! DAMN!”

Bobby Boy turned and looked up the stairs. “Damn bitch.” He said. Holding the gun limply at his side, he grabbed the banister with his left hand to keep him steady as he staggered up the stairs. He had no intention of sneaking around—he was just doing what he was doing and was fully justified in his own intoxicated mind.



His and Dora’s bedroom was at the end of the hallway, leaving two stops before he would get to where she was sleeping. First was the room of her twelve year old son Tyree and beside that, their five year old daughter, Destiny. Upon reaching the top of the stairs, Bobby Boy looked down the hall at the closed door of the bedroom in which he suspected

Dora was already sleeping. He took a couple steps down the hallway, then stopped, thought about Tyree’s door, and went back. He put his hand on the doorknob and stood, once again,

thinking. “Fuck it.” He whispered, then gently turning the knob, he opened Tyree’s door, where even with the stream of light from the hallway landing across him, the boy didn’t wake from his peaceful sleep.

Bobby Boy walked into the room, looking around for some throw pillows, but didn’t see any, but there was one pillow it looked like Tyree had rolled his head mostly off of. Bobby walked as quietly as he could over to the bed, got a good fist full of the pillow and slid it slowly from underneath Tyree’s head. Once freed, he held it over the boy’s sleeping head, and buried

the barrel of the gun as deep as he could in the pillow—the way he’d seen it done in the movies—without letting it touch Tyree.

“I never liked yo’ ass anyway, boy. You look too much like your goddamn daddy.”

“Wh—What? Who’s that?” Tyree said, groggy from being just awake enough to know someone was standing over him.

Quickly Bobby Boy pulled the trigger. The sound from the gun, even muffled by the pillow, was louder than he



LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

thought it would be. Bobby Boy, not bothering to take the time to view his handywork, dropped the punctured pillow on Tyree's head, where he could see the beginnings of a stream of blood underneath it.

Tyree, lay spasming a couple times, then stopped moving altogether. After that, he walked out the room and closed the door slowly behind him.

His next visit was to Destiny's room. Just as with Tyree, he cracked open the door and looked in on the still sleeping five year old.

Destiny was his and Dora's daughter, and he loved that little girl. Daddy's little girl. He stepped into her room, painted in pink—the only specially painted room in the townhouse. The room had everything one would expect in a little girl's space, especially an abundance of stuffed animals and little Black baby dolls, toy phones, a table and chair set on which sat a five year and above rated tea set.

Bobby Boy walked over to where his daughter slept and stood over her bed. He looked down at her, a single tear making its way down his cheek.

“Baby, daddy loves you,” he said. “I don't want you to have ta grow up without your mom or havin' a daddy in prison.” As he stood, wavering back and forth, he thought what he had determined to do would be the best thing for his daughter. The only

way to prevent her from having to live with that kind of misery and trauma would be to kill her now.

Makes perfect sense.

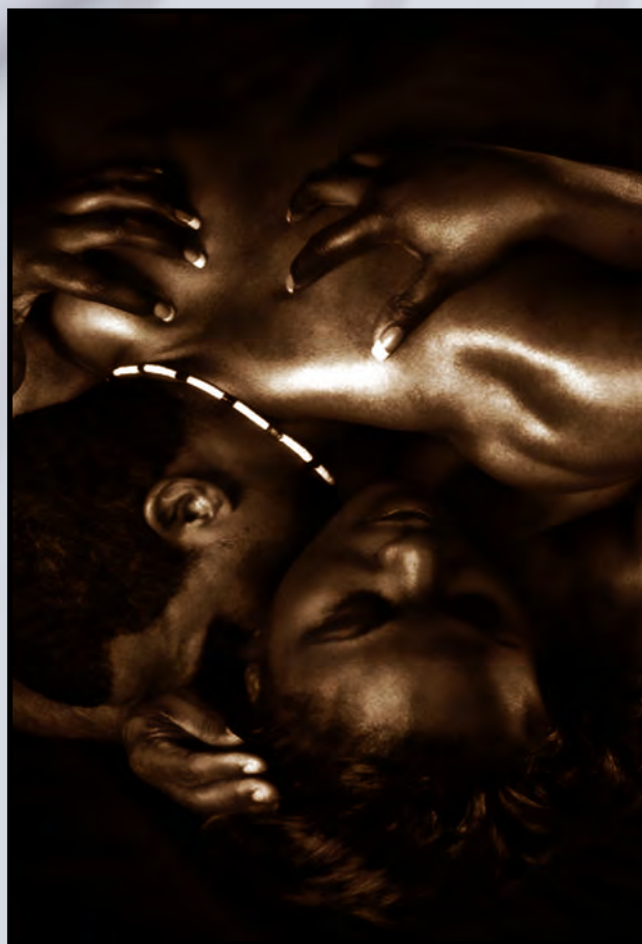
When you're drunk and in orbit.

Bobby Boy bent down. Kissed his daughter on the forehead, stood once again up straight—or as straight as a juiced man

can stand. Aimed an unsteady gun at the child, and fearing he might miss on the first shot, put the gun close to Destiny's temple—

and pulled the trigger.

This time there was no muffling of the sound of the gun shot. He walked quickly out the room. Dora burst from her bedroom and looked at Bobby Boy who was just stepping out of Destiny's room and about to close the door behind him. “Bobby! Did you hear that?!” She yelled. “It sounded like a gunsh—” stopping





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

in the middle of her sentence, Dora looked down at the still smoking gun in her live in boyfriend's hand. "B – Bobby? Oh Jesus! Bobby what did you do?!" She rushed to Destiny's room and pushed past Bobby Boy, where Bobby, stood out in the hallway with his back turned, unable to look at the lifeless body of his daughter within.

From behind him he heard a scream that he'd only heard one other time in his life—he'd heard it went with his mother to identify the body of his older brother who was gunned down while part of a drug deal that went about as bad as a drug deal could go. He almost felt sorry for Dora—they had been together for over seven years, and had a daughter together, and he did love her in his way.

But what she said, and what she planned to do was wrong!

And even if he was going to soften up now, he'd already murdered her bastard son, and his precious five year old daughter. No way she was going to live. Bobby Boy listened as the sounds of sobbing and occasional screams became thick within the

room, then as if like a switch, the weeping abruptly stopped.

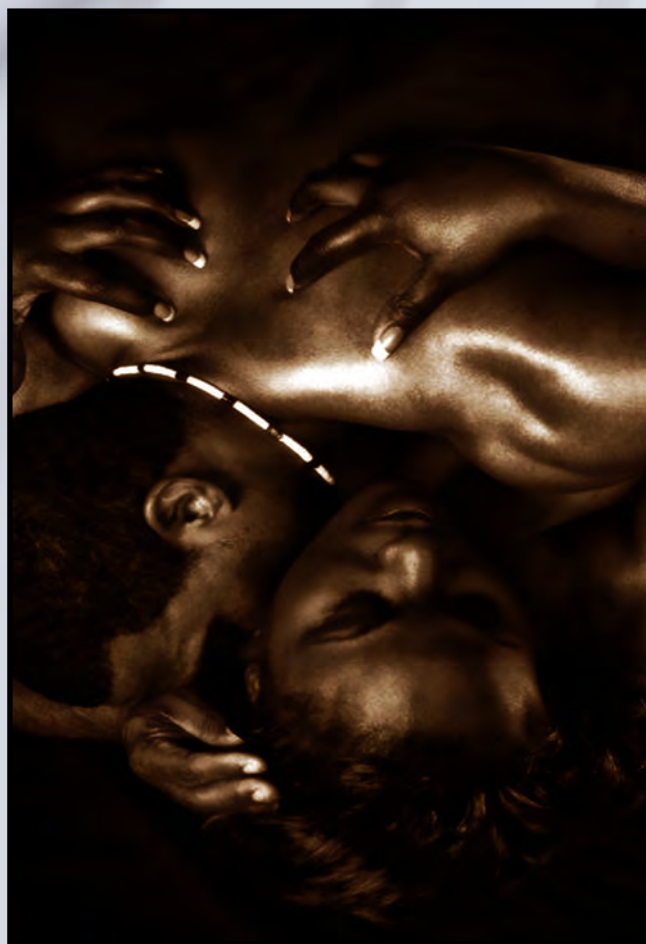
Had she fainted?

Bobby Boy turned around just in time to see Dora rushing toward him,

he thought she was coming to attack him. Instead, she pushed past him again and bolted in the direction of Tyree's door. Dora frantically opened the door and seeing the unmoving body of her son, with the blood soaked pillow covering his head, Dora said nothing and slowly closed the door. She then, dazed, turned to face the murderer. She looked at the man

blankly for a moment, then suddenly charged at Bobby Boy with a speed of which he would never have suspected she was capable.

"What the FUCK is wrong with you?! NIGGA I'll KILL YOU!" She yelled as she in only a few bounds had tackled the man to the floor. The gun, which Bobby Boy had pointed in her direction and was able to only get off one shot that missed her by a mile, fell to the floor with him, and slid near the doorway of the bedroom. Dora was by no means a large woman, but she was short and solid, and had





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

no trouble delivering blows to the face and body of the man she had just knocked to the ground. As she rained adrenaline and rage fueled punches down on the man, Bobby Boy managed to reach a hand over his head and get hold of the weapon.

So focused on the shower of blows she was delivering to the drunken murderer she was straddling, that she didn't notice the man beneath her had now brought the gun to his side and was aiming it at her midsection.

Bobby Boy pulled the trigger and Dora instantly recoiled, doubling over and holding her side. She lay on the floor on her side, rolling around, bleeding and screaming in pain and writhing. Bobby Boy scooted away, and then, using the wall for support, made his way to his feet.

Breathing hard and looking down at the woman he had once shared good times and bad with, late night conversations, holidays, picnics in the park, trips to amusement parks and the zoo, laughs and love making—and a child, Bobby Boy pointed his quivering hand, containing a still nearly fully loaded Glock 19 at her

head. Through her pain, Dora held up a blood soaked, shaking hand, and struggling to breathe and speak, she croaked. “Don't do it Bobby. Don't pull the trigger Baby. Please don't pull the tri—”



During the trial, Seacroft would later say he didn't recall hearing the sound of the shot to the head that killed Dora, and he was telling the truth.

Bobby Boy staggered back down the hallway, past the room of his dead daughter, past the room where Tyree lay motionless with a bloody pillow over his head and further

from his now deceased girlfriend. He leaned against the stairwell wall, sliding down, gun still in his right hand, arm dangling as if the gun now weighed a hundred pounds.

Trudging to the bottom of the staircase, Bobby Boy looked at the curtains in front of the living room picture window and could see them turning from blue, to red in succession. A cop car was outside. He walked over to his shoebox, stuffed the two magazines in his pockets and left the rest of the bullets.



LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

Over sixty six rounds should be enough.

He heard a knock at the front door, already knowing who it was. He cracked it open enough that only one of his arms was showing.

Two police officers stood at his door. One a Black man, the other a white woman officer. Both with hands on their firearms, without having them out.

“What’s the problem officers?” Bobby Boy said.

“We got a call from some neighbors about a domestic disturbance at this address.”

“You did? My bad ... I must have had the tv up too loud or been cheering too loud. The Final 4, you know?”

“Yeah.” The male officer said. “Lakers and Pistons. Wish I was home watching it myself.”

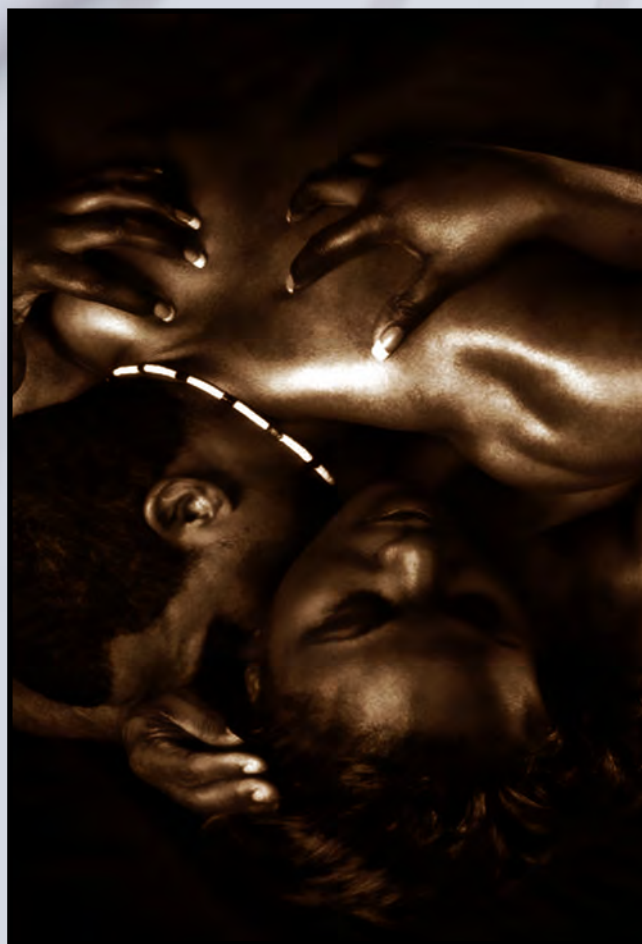
“The call said some of your neighbors heard something that sounded like an argument and gunshots. You know anything about that?” the woman officer said.

“No ma’am. Like I said, I was in here with the tv up, and screamin’ at it pretty loud. As far as gunshots ... probably somebody’s car backfirein’. Happens around here all the time.”

“Just the same, do you mind if we come in and take a look around?” The Black officer said, scanning the inside of the residence and spotting the now cold lasagna and the empty beer bottles littering the table and some on the floor in front of the couch, along with an open Nike shoe box that may or may not have been strangely out of place (tonight was Pistons and Lakers after all).

“No problem.” Bobby Boy said as he opened the door a little more widely and revealed his other arm.

“GUN!” the female officer yelled, and as the two were moving to take their own weapons from their holsters, Bobby shot the male officer in the head, and the female officer in the stomach. He ran past the unmoving body of the man, and the writhing woman, as he jumped in the squad car, slammed the door and peeled off down the street and into the early





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

evening darkness.

By the time it was all over the death toll stood at three children thirteen years of age and below, eight adults, and one infant, the Police officer David Bernard was declared dead on the scene, and after going on a shooting spree, Bobby Boy T-Boned a midsize vehicle carrying a father, mother and three month old infant.

Seventeen survivors sustained gunshot wounds and other injuries as a part of the killing spree. Officer Lesley Perkins survived and recovered from her injuries but left the force shortly after.

One of those murdered in the killing spree was thirty year old Jacob Jenkins who everyone close to called, 'Jersey', obviously because he was from New Jersey. He met the love of his life, Lisa Powell while in college, and they married two years after graduating. Jersey was working as a CPA and Lisa as a graphic designer for an ad firm called the Skollier Group.

Jersey was a hard worker, but not a workaholic. Both he and Lisa went

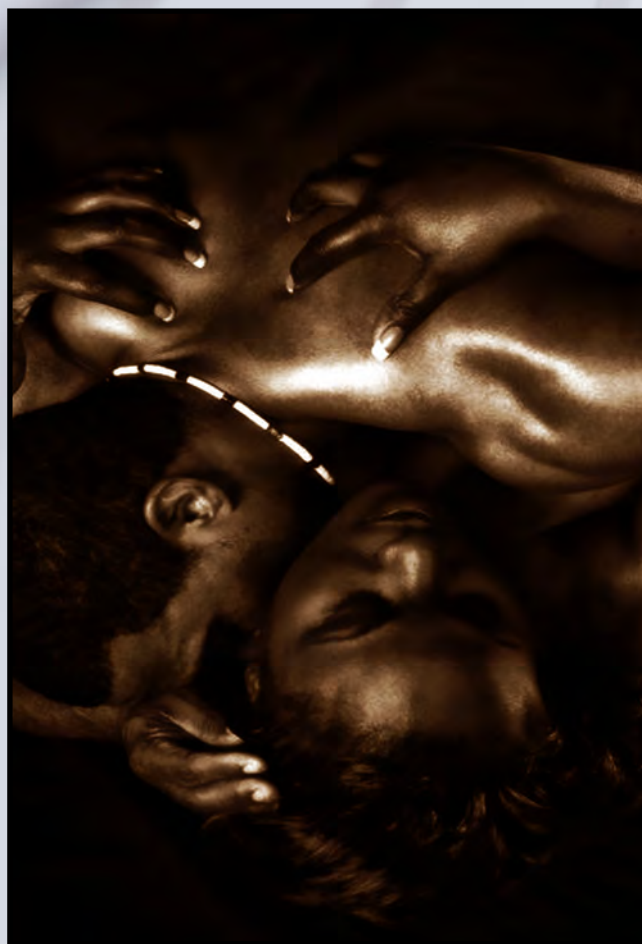
to great lengths to ensure they always spent enough quality time together and never—EVER took each other for granted. Jersey was active in the community and was well on his way to becoming a community leader, as he had a heart for Black people, Black youths in particular.

His funeral procession stretched beyond three city blocks and his memorial service was nearly standing room only.

Jacob "Jersey" Jenkins was well loved by all who knew him, and he touched the lives of people he would likely never meet. Jersey was murdered outside

Delila's Ice Cream shop. Delila's closed at seven o'clock pm, and Lisa had a strong craving for their vegan double chocolate ice cream. Delila's was one of Lisa's guilty pleasures and they usually kept it stocked in the house.

She had changed into her comfortable clothes, panties, no bra and oversized night shirt, and prepared to binge watch something on one of the streaming services. She went to the freezer to grab her ice cream, but evidently, she had run out and didn't realize it having had voraciously





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

consumed the last of it earlier that week. She knew Jersey hadn't eaten any of it because he didn't really care for it.

His thing was strawberry.

Letting out a yell as if having just stepped on a tack, Jersey rushed into the kitchen to make sure his wife was alright, letting out a sigh of relief upon learning that her exclamation was due to her vegan chocolate ice cream addiction having to go without answer.

Being the man he was, Jersey of course offered to go to Delila's and grab a restock for her. Lisa made a couple weak, unconvincing protests; she knew her husband was going to see right through. Jersey was still dressed and told Lisa not to worry about it, he looked at his watch—Delila's didn't close for another forty five minutes—he had plenty of time to get there.

As he grabbed his car keys from beside the hook on which they hung by the door, he kissed Lisa on the cheek and said, "I love you, Babe." Lisa of course said, "I love you too." Jersey walked out the door—

and that's the last time Lisa would see him alive.

* * *

Lisa Jenkins sat stoned faced, eyes red from the perpetual mourning of her husband, 'Jersey' who she found, from that day to this, to be the best man she had ever known. He was a loving and attentive husband, an excellent provider and loved and honored God in a way she had never known any man to do—including any church pastors she'd known. He was taken out by this non-working, child murdering, complete waste of human flesh.



Until that moment, Lisa never thought she had the capacity to genuinely hate a person—but she had gained a profound hatred for this man. Something that to her was almost alive within her. She watched, red eyes narrowing as he was delivered the last rites, thinking about the fact that neither her husband nor any of the other victims got the chance to make peace with their creator before they were dispatched to the next life.

When asked if he wanted to say any last words, Seacroft said, almost predictably, "Nah, I ain't got nothin'



LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

ta say.” To which there were a couple audible gasped from the observers present.

No apology.

Not that Lisa or anyone present cared for one.

No remorse.

And to what Lisa could detect.

No fear.

The warden looked at the wall clock. Seacroft lay silently, looking straight up at the ceiling as the warden finally gave the signal to proceed. Various fluids traveled down the lines of the intravenous and disappeared into the arm of the condemned. Within a few seconds, Seacroft took what seemed to be a couple deep breaths that weren't strained or gasping.

His eyes slowly, gently shut.

After about a minute, the curtain was closed.

That's all folks.

There were many mild sobs and

outright loud weeping from those seated in the gallery, not because of seeing the sentence carried out on the man, but because after the mayhem he caused, the heartache and absolute devastation he had brought to so many people, they had just witnessed what was tantamount to an infant closing their eyes to take a peaceful nap.

Though the victims and families of those killed in the rampage knew seeing this would bring them no closure, this anticlimactic display was beyond unsatisfying.

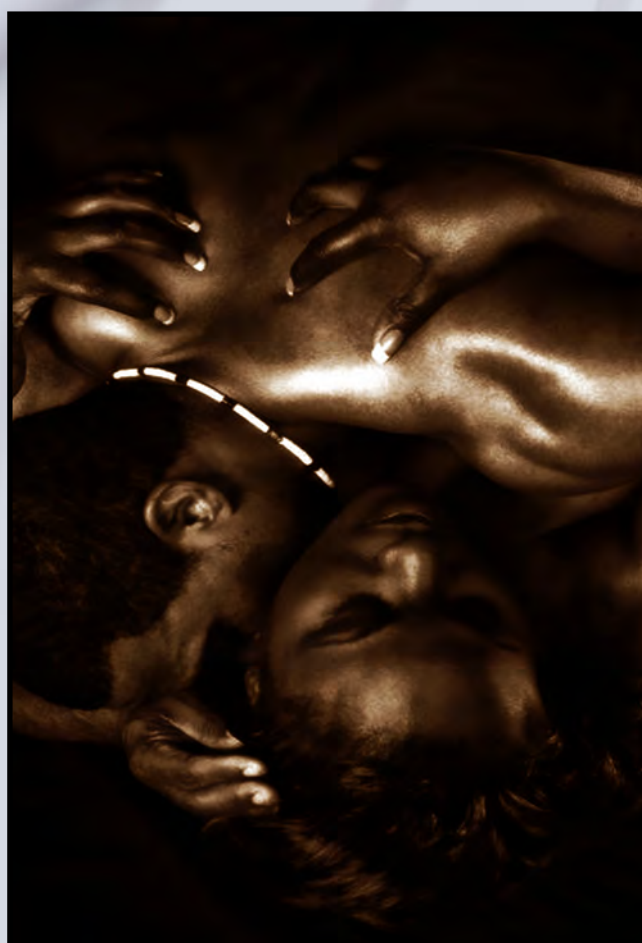
Lisa was a statue.

Her expression, with the exception of the narrowing of her eyes, went unchanged from the moment she had sat down for the viewing to now.

And she remained silent.

CHAPTER 1

Only a handful of people were on Lisa Jenkin's list of people she didn't necessarily care for and even fewer she flat out disliked. Lori Patterson, who worked in the art department of the Skollier Group advertising agency





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

where she was once employed was not her cup of tea. Lori wasn't a bad person really, there was just something about her that rubbed Lisa the wrong way. The most distressing part for Lisa was that she could never, for the life of her quite put her finger on what got under her skin so much about the woman.

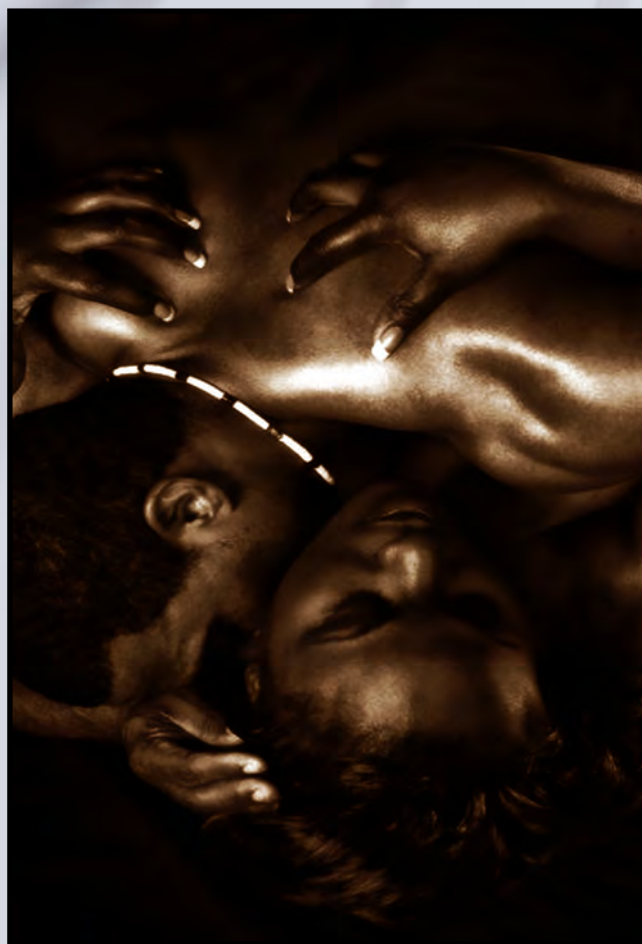
It wasn't that Lori was white, or that she was marginally self-absorbed—one of those people to whom EVERYTHING is a crisis—that she lacked a sense of self awareness that bordered on parody, or even that she was prone to micro aggressions when it came to Black people (whether knowingly or oblivious to it).

Nah—it wasn't that. Truth to tell, Lori was no different than any other white woman in those respects. Lisa believed they were all like that to greater or lesser degrees. That said, she knew and worked with other white women who, some of them, fell into the 'greater' category, but she didn't have the same uneasy, 'something I just can't vibe with' feeling when it came to Lori.

Even with all that—she didn't dislike

the woman. Lisa could tolerate her. She didn't dislike her.

Now, Anthony 'Tony' "The ladies call me 'Tone' 'cause they just love my high yellah tone skin and fine grade 'o hair", Hurston was a completely different story.



Lisa Lansing did not like that man. He fell well outside the parameters of her 'not my cup of tea' zone, the place where Lori Patterson lived.

He wasn't even in the neighborhood. Hell, he wasn't even on the same planet! "Tone" was one of that breed of Black men who could not comprehend any woman not falling at his feet upon seeing him, or not melting helplessly into putty when he spoke. He was one of those men who would deliver old pick up lines to women and say them with all the confidence in the world, as he were the first one to say it, and she was the first one to hear it.

The conceit and pickup lines Lisa could deal with, but her major issue with him was that he would proposition her at least twice a week—knowing full well she was a happily married woman—and that at least once a month, he would find some way to



LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

“accidentally” rub up against her—usually her butt. He was definitely slick and most definitely knew what he was doing because when she would go to H.R. about him, there was never any way to prove what the letch was doing, and he knew it. In time she grew a loathing for the man and several times called him out in front of God and everybody the next time he tried for one of his little planned ‘accidental’ feels. To which, Tony would, of course look around, innocent as a newborn, and insist he had no idea what Lisa was talking about.

The fact she was no longer at the ad agency was made so much sweeter by never having to ever deal with that P O S again.

Who DID she like?

George MacHenry.

George MacHenry was the mail carrier for her neighborhood and with the exception of dogs—who are genetically predisposed to hate cats and mail men—Lisa couldn’t think of anyone who didn’t like this older gentleman—her included. She genuinely enjoyed the man’s company.

When she first met him some five years ago, she found him comical, a little sad—in a little melancholy, and clumsily charming in his way. George always called Lisa “Lena”. Whenever anyone heard George call her that, typically they assumed he was mispronouncing her name, or that he, for whatever reason either couldn’t remember to call her Lisa or had some kind of speech impediment that prevented him from being able to properly pronounce it.

It was neither.

George was the only one who call Lisa, Lena, and was the only person she would allow to call her by the name because it was an inside joke to them.

Unable to bear living in the house in which she and her husband Jacob had planned to build their future, Lisa sold that house, invested the money and took a substantial amount of the life insurance settlement and moved to another county, purchasing a modest duplex in a ‘high end’ neighborhood. She paid for the house outright in addition to setting back five years’ worth of funds in escrow for property taxes.





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

As it turned out, the life insurance paid far more than the two hundred fifty thousand she thought it was worth. Jersey had, unbeknown to her, put a rider on the policy that paid out over three million dollars if he was ever murdered in a killing spree. Every six months the couple did evaluations of their finances, to include any life insurance policies they had. It was routine, but as a CPA, it was the type of boring thing Jersey genuinely enjoyed doing.

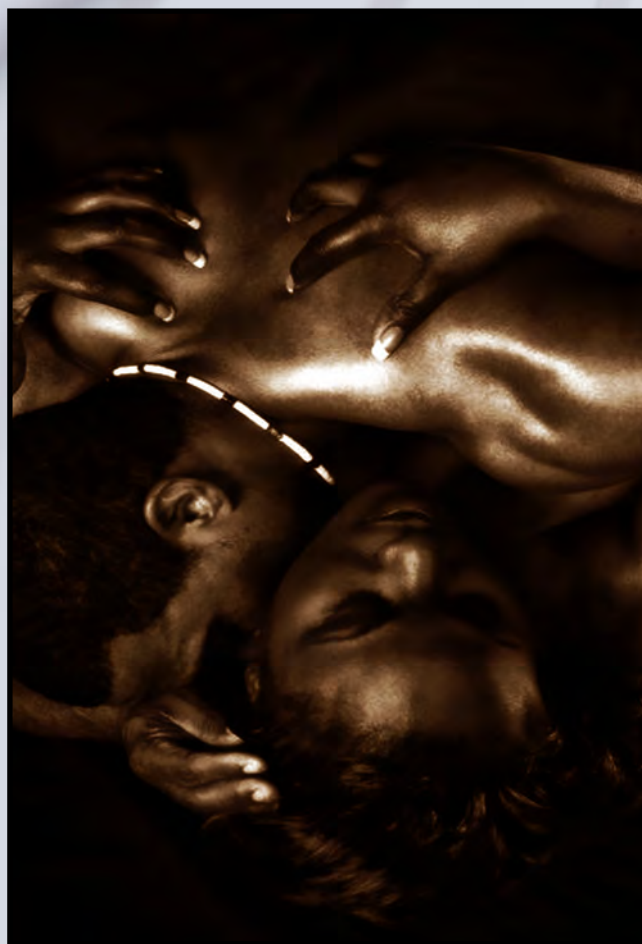
Every now and then, to see if she was paying attention, he would add riders to the policies like, a payoff of a million if he got killed during the ‘running of the bulls’, or four million if a ‘meteorite landed on his head’ and his all-time favorite ‘two and a half million if he were abducted by aliens’. Lisa would usually catch them—sometimes she wouldn’t, and he would have to tell her.

To Jersey, he considered it a little joke, but Lisa never found it particularly funny. It was a month or so before Lisa had the chance to go over the policy with her husband and caught that particular rider, and she likely would have had her husband not been murdered first. It looked like Jersey, in

his offbeat attempt at humor, actually set Lisa up for life—again—so fitting for his character.

So much like him.

* * *



Lisa purchased a new duplex straight out, a little over a year after her husband was murdered. The weekend after she moved in, she realized she would need to stock her refrigerator and freezer. That’s when Lisa met George for the first time on a Sunday afternoon, while shopping at the Big K Food Mart in the neighborhood of the

new duplex she had just purchased. He walked up to her in the aisle, stared for a moment, seeming extremely concerned (and nervous at the same time if one can imagine that), and asked if she was hurt? When Lisa said, “No, why would I be hurt?” George replied, “Earth from heaven’s a long drop, an’ you look jus’ like a fallen angel!”

Lisa stared at the man for a moment, then, face crinkling up as if she were about to cry, suddenly burst out laughing so loud she turned a few heads, and the man before her smiled,



LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

looking embarrassed and confused. Lisa, still laughing put her hand on the man's shoulder, as she couldn't seem to stop laughing. He stood, definitely looking embarrassed now, and even sweating a little.

"You ... you said I looked like a fallen angel!" She managed to say through her laughter.

George smiled at her, "You do ma'am! You're beautiful! You look like an angel that just fell outta heaven!"

When he said that, Lisa looked at him and laughed even harder, an older couple walking down the aisle, joining in the laughter.

"Ok, what's so funny?" George said.

The woman from the older husband and wife couple shook their heads laughing and as they passed by, the wife tapped George on the shoulder and said, "Georgie—" this man and woman obviously knew him. "You need to read your Bible more."

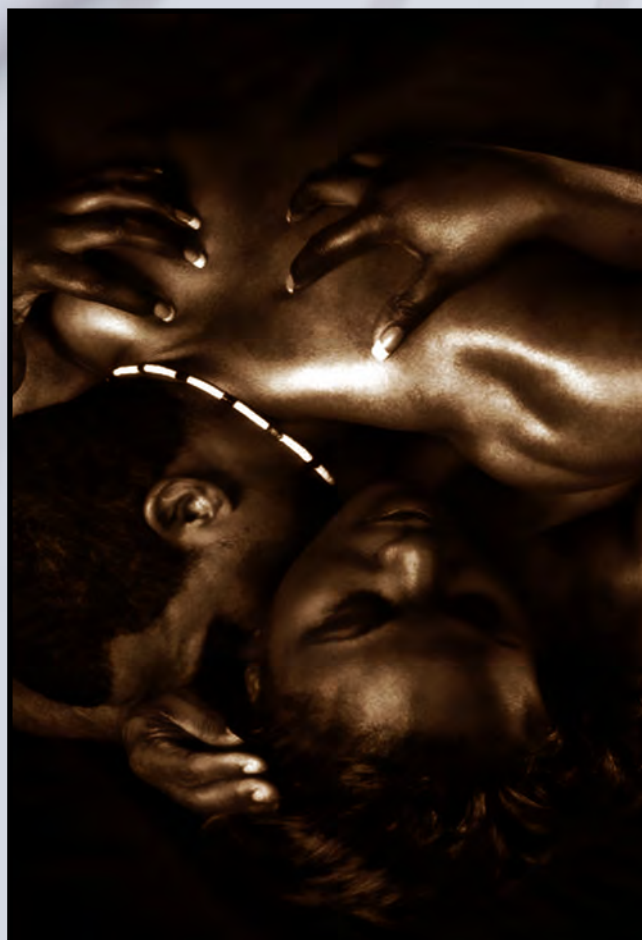
"Huh?"

"George, a fallen angel is a demon!" the husband said, chuckling and trying not to laugh too hard at his friend. "Damn man, if you're gonna use pick up lines, at least SAY 'em right!"

As soon as the other man explained George's faux pa to him, Lisa nearly doubled over her shopping cart, tears now flowing uncontrollably from her eyes, and George stood there for a moment, then burst out laughing himself. "Sorry Miss, I'm real rusty at this. It's just, you're so pretty, an' well, I wanted ta talk to you, and didn't know how ta' start a conversation. I'm gonna be on my way now, I'm glad I gave you a good laugh though. Looks like I accidentally traded your halo for a couple horns."

"You're fine." Lisa said through her laughter as she magnanimously waved the man away. "And thank you—I really needed that!"

When she met him the following Tuesday as her mail carrier, he saw her, surprised, and said, "Why hello, Horns!" From there, the name stuck for a while and for about a month, George called Lisa, "Horns".





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

Eventually he began saying things like, “Well, well, well if it isn’t Lisa Horns?” or “How you doin’ this fine day Lisa Horns?” Lisa became ‘Lena’, a reference the young woman didn’t get at first. The first time George called her Lena Horns, Lisa said, “Who’s Lena?” George, eyes wide, stopping in the middle of shuffling mail to prepare for his next delivery, said, “Who’s LENA?! Girl you ain’t never heard o’ Lena Horne?!”

“No Mr. MacHenry, I haven’t.”

“Come on, Horns! Stormy weather? Cabin in the Sky? Come on Horns—The WIZ?!”

“I’m sorry, I never heard of her.” she said hunching her shoulders, arms raised in the universal, ‘I don’t know’ position.

“You ever watch Sanford and Son?!”

“Yeah, I used to watch reruns with my Dad a long time ago before he passed.”

“Ok! The woman Fred was obsessed with? Tall ... lightskinned—“

“Oh yeah! I remember that ... and

one time she came over to his house for something and ended up kissing him!”

“Right! Right across the lips!”

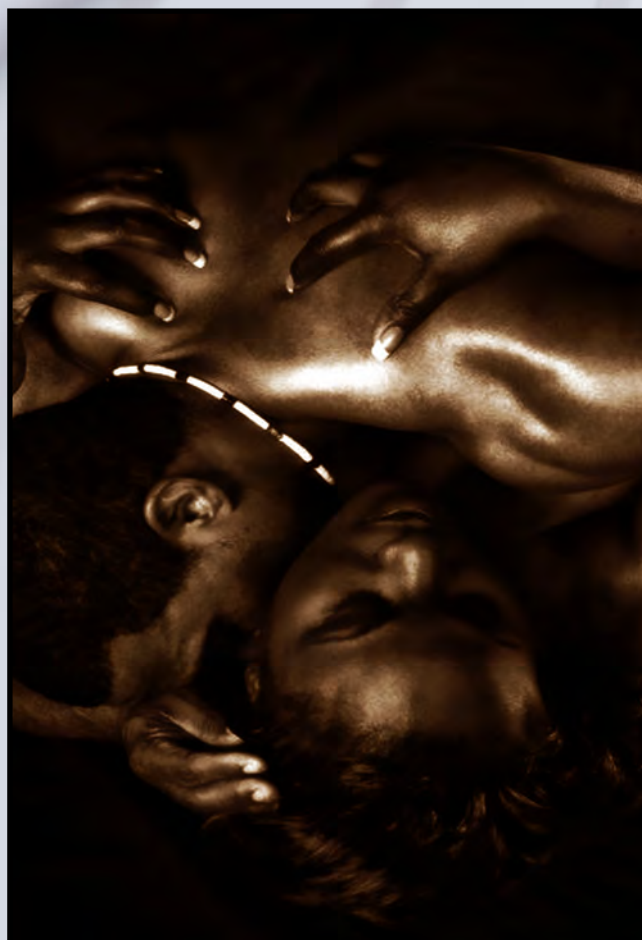
“I remember! Oh, ok. THAT’S Lena Horne.” she said, smiling widely and laughing a little at the memory of both the show and Fred Sanford’s catch phrase George delivered. George returned the smile.

“Ok, so now you got the reference.” George said with his wide adorable grin that revealed a couple missing molars it was obvious he was a little self-conscious about whenever he would laugh hard. Lisa didn’t mind them or focus on them, she just considered it part of the overall character that was George MacHenry—as a matter of fact, whenever she thought about it, she didn’t feel he would even look right if he had perfect teeth.

George handed Lisa her mail and she started sifting through it.

“Stack o’ Valentines?” George asked.

“Hardly. Speaking of which—do you have any plans for tonight?”





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

It is Valentine's Day you know."

"Nah, no plans, 'septin maybe sittin' at home and listenin' ta some John Coltrane tonight. How 'bout you? Got a hot date lined up?"

"Idunno.Maybe.Would you like to come over and have a Valentine's dinner tonight?"

"Aw come on Horns, you know you don't have to have a pity dinner for me."

"I'm not. It's not like we've never gone over to each other's houses for dinner before. We seem to like each other's company, and there's no reason either of us should just be sitting home alone tonight."

"Nah Horns. You don't have to do th—"

"Fried chicken, mac and cheese ... baked ... collard greens ... apple pie and—"

"I'll be here! I'LL BE HERE! What time?!"

"Around 7:30ish." Lisa laughed.

"I'll be here with the bells on. You need me to bring anything?"

"Nope, I've got it. Just bring your lone adorable self."

"Well, I'd better get back ta my route Horns before the neighbors start ta talk."

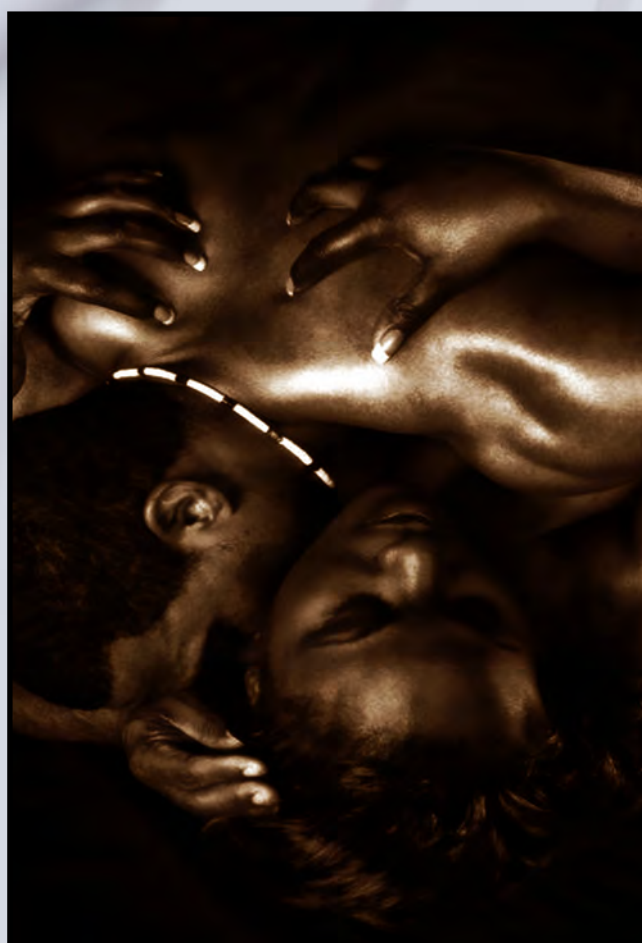
"Ah let 'em talk." Lisa said as they both laughed. "I'll see you around 7:30."

George turned to walk back toward the street. "See you then."

Fluffy, Lisa's Doberman was a very fast dog. Lisa had raised him from a puppy, and he was

now what would be considered in a human lifespan, a teenager; and like a teenager, Fluffy was full of energy, more or less unpredictable, and FAST!

Lisa was expecting an extremely important letter and was so preoccupied with flipping through her mail while still in the act of closing the door, that she didn't notice Fluffy bolting from the den to the living room and making a beeline for the front door. By the time she heard his panting and the sound of his paws on the sound dampening carpet, Fluffy had gotten past her and out the door!





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

“George, LOOK OUT!” Lisa yelled way too late for the hapless mail carrier to even have time to turn around. Before he could even react, Fluffy had reached George and jumped up on his back, nearly knocking him down, along with almost causing him to lose several bits of mail he was shifting.

George managed to turn around, the Doberman jumping all over him, Lisa running toward them so she could grab her dog by the collar. George yelled, “Git down! Down girl!” And then hastily shoving the letters in his hands back into his pouch (as best he could with the sizable animal jumping up and down, and clawing at him), George produced what he knew would end the onslaught.

“HERE!” George said, putting the dog biscuit in Fluffy’s mouth, as Fluffy stood on her hind legs, front paws on George’s chest, and wagging her clipped tail. “Dang girl don’t get so excited, it’s just a milk bone. It ain’t like I didn’t just give you one yesterday. Lisa finally reached the man and dog, apologizing to her friend.

“Aw, it’s no problem.” George said, smiling.

“I swear I can’t get over it George. Fluffy doesn’t like ANYBODY ... except me and you! And sometimes I’m not so sure about ME.!” Lisa laughed.

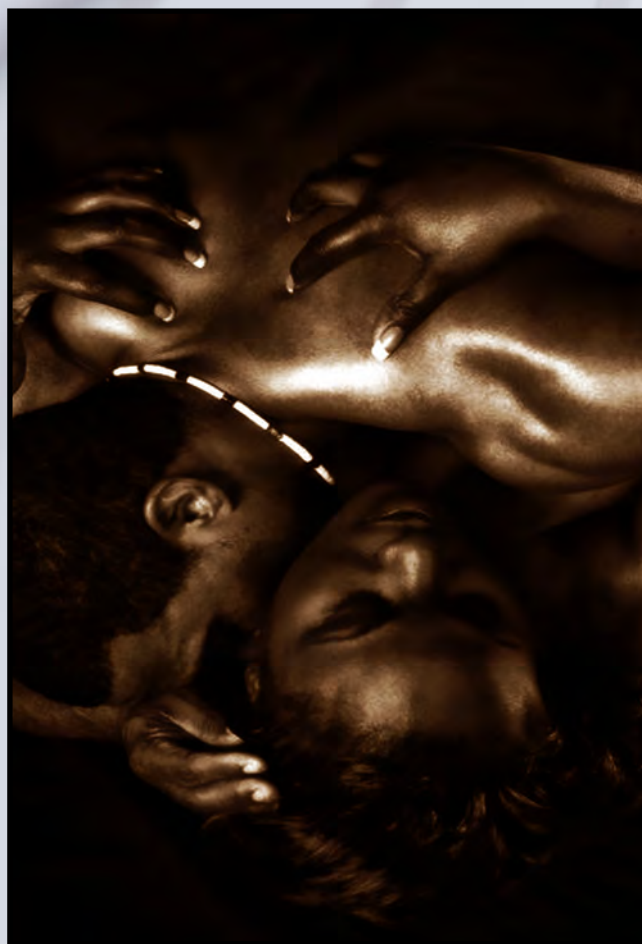
“Us dogs gotta stick together, ain’t that right Fluff?!” he said as he grabbed her cheeks and gently shook her head, as Fluffy growled playfully back at her buddy.

* * *

Dinner was better than George imagined it would be and the fact he sat across the table from a woman as beautiful, intelligent and charming as Lisa

Jenkins, talking and laughing in the candle lit room made it all the more delightful for him.

The couple deeply enjoyed each other’s company and the stories they’d tell each other. The twenty some year age difference didn’t even seem to matter when they were together. Though not bound romantically with each other, their relationship was definitely something beyond friendship ... but just short of a romance. It was something in between and something neither could define.





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

But both were comfortable and relaxed with it.

After dinner they retired to Lisa's Livingroom and drank wine as they listened to a John Coltrane album George brought over. As they both swayed gently to the music, both seemingly lost in their own thoughts, George said softly—unexpectedly—

“I know I've never talked about this, but, my wife's name was Marylyn. She was dark chocolate, had a smile that would melt a brick and a laugh that could make every trouble you had just float away. A lot like yours. A sweeter woman never walked the earth. Wanna see a picture of 'er?”

“Sure George, if you want to show it to me.”

“I'll be happy to.” George reached into his jacket pocket, it wasn't lost on Lisa that he had the photo close to his heart—and handed it to Lisa. The photo was in color, but it was chroma color and a tiny bit faded and discolored, obviously taken several decades ago judging by the clothes, but the woman in the photo was clearly defined, and she was every bit

as beautiful as the forlorn man beside her had said. Marylyn was beautiful alright, and perhaps Lisa thinking so was a bit self-serving, because she and the woman in the photo bore a striking resemblance.

No wonder George dug up the nerve to approach me. Lisa thought. I remind him of a woman he's still in love with. Upon realizing that, Lisa felt all the worse for George who was looking at her, looking at the photo.

“Ain't she somethin' ta look at?” George said solemnly.

“Yes George, she's very beautiful.” Lisa said as she handed the man the photo.

“Yeah ... guess that's why I went and talked to you and made a fool of myself that day. It was almost like seein' Marylyn again. I don't mean any harm by it though Lisa. I swear I don't. I'm just an old man, whose still in love with a memory.”

“What happened between you two, if you don't mind me asking? If it's too painful, you don't have to talk about it.”





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

“Nah, I don’t mind talkin’ ‘bout it. We were married for almost thirty years, had a son.”

“You have a son George? You never told me that.”

“Nah, I don’t talk about it too much. Me and him’s kinda on the outs.”

“Why?”

“He blames me for his mother leavin’. Never forgave me.”

“George ... truth now. DID you do something to make her leave? Were you abusive to her or your son?”

George looked at Lisa with a look on his face that she couldn’t figure out ... she only knew that she can’t remember ever seeing that kind of pain and confusion on the face of another human being in her life, and she had sat in close quarters of entire families of people whose loved ones had been senselessly and brutally murdered.

George was old school, he wasn’t going to sit in front of this woman and cry, but the pain on his face said everything. “Lisa,” he said finally, “I’d have sooner killed myself that ever

even think about laying a finger on that woman or my son. My world turned around those two. All I ever wanted was to make a good home for us. So I worked a lot, sometimes two jobs, but I always tried to make time for Marylyn and Michael. That’s my son’s name ... Michael.

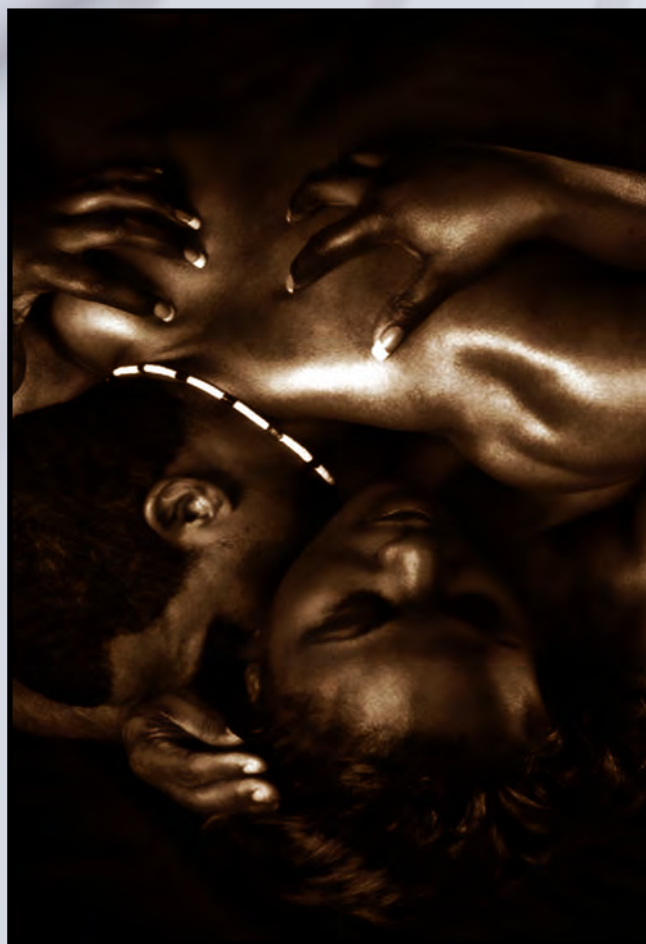
Last I heard, he graduated with honors from some high class college. He’s either a chemical or electrical engineer now. ‘Sposed to have gotten married and had a couple o’ kids. My grandchildren. I never seen ‘em or talked to ‘em though.”

George wasn’t going to cry, but Lisa was on the verge of doing it for him.

“Anyways, I thought we were doin’ fine. I was happy at least and I thought I was making her happy, but I guess not.”

“What happened?”

“Actually, she left me for another guy. Another mailman if you can believe that—that cliché enough for ya? I guess she had a thing for men in uniform.” George said, wanting to drop tears, but resisting as his eyes glistened by the candlelight. He looked up and





LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

gave the woman beside him an ironic—self debasing smile and chuckled a little.

Lisa returned to George a soft, melancholy smile—not saying it out loud, but somewhere inside feeling a bit of dislike for this Marylyn person ... or anyone who could hurt this sweet, gentle, loving man so deeply.

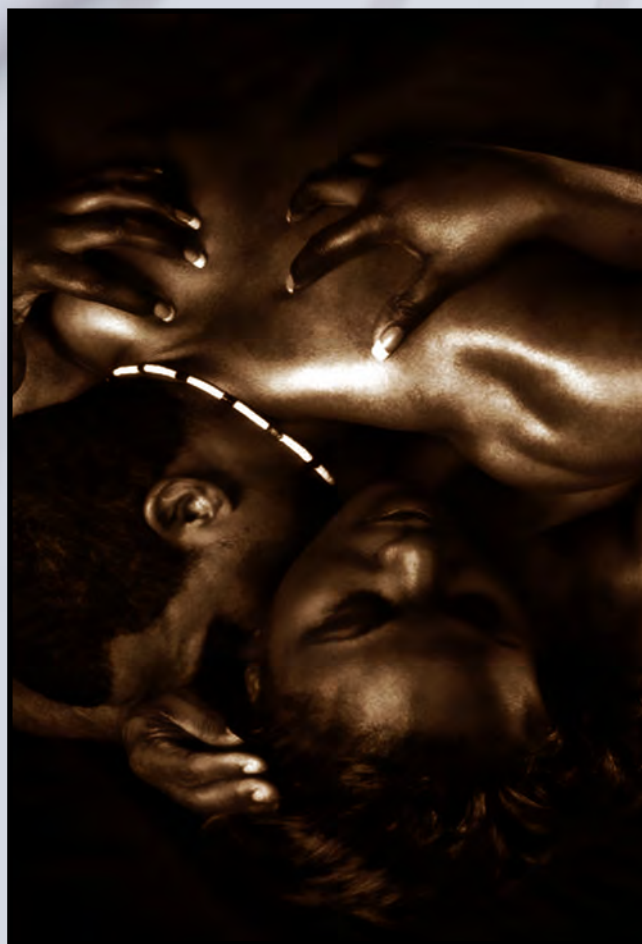
“We never quite got ‘round ta gettin’ legally divorced, but she run off and lived with the guy ‘til she passed on.” George looked down at the floor. Lisa could see the pain in his eyes even though he wasn’t looking at her.

These were the eyes of a man who had fallen in love, remained in love for decades, and even with all that had transpired, he never fell out of love. “She died from ovarian cancer ‘bout four years ago. I don’t even know if I’m actually a widower.” He said. “I feel like I’m one. I guess technically I am. I dunno.”

George looked down at the coffee table, staring at the bottle of sparkling grape juice, the two nearly empty glasses, and the Valentines the couple had exchanged, and sighed.

“Remember the day we met, and you tried to pick me up with that pickup line?” Lisa said.

“I try to forget it every day.” George said burying his face in one hand and shaking his head back and forth.



They laughed.

“That was the first time in over three years that I laughed like that ... maybe that I laughed at all.”

“Why? What were you so sad about Horns?”

“My husband.”

“What happened? Did he leave you for another woman? No ... I can’t imagine that, he’d have to be half out his mind.”

“He was murdered.”

“Murdered?! By who? What happened?”

Do you remember back a few years ago, this guy ... this scumbag ... Robert Seacroft murdered his girlfriend and her children and a cop, and then went on a killing spree?”

“I’ll never forget it! They say he killed



LOST IN SECRET ARMS: Complete Prologue - Continued

like twelve people.”

“My husband was one of them.”

“Oh God. Oh, my god. You’re husband was in that? Lisa. I – I’m sorry. I don’t even know what to say. I’m so sorry.”

“Thank you, George, ... it’s ok. I took the insurance money, bought this house and moved here. The day we met was the first weekend here and I was feeling so low. I didn’t know if I would ever laugh again, or really even smile for that matter. But here you came.”

“Yeah, here I came telling you, you looked like a demon.”

They both laughed again.

“I thought about that for the rest of the day.” Lisa said, and every time I thought about it I broke out laughing, a couple times I laughed until I cried. I knew it wasn’t because what you said was all that funny ... it was all that hurt, pain and tension coming out of me. Thank you, George.” They both sat silent and looked at each other. Lisa stared hard at George for a few minutes and said, “George, you know I love you, don’t you?”

George smiled, meeting Lisa’s gaze, and he said, “Without a doubt.”

George then tinkered around with his sparkling grape juice, acting like he was about to take a sip, but sitting it back down on the table before he did. “You know I love you, Horns. Right?”

Lisa looked at George with all the seriousness she could muster and said, “How could you not?”

They both stared at each other and laughed, leaned in and hugged each other, rocking back and forth, and kissed each other on the cheek. “You know

Lena, you’re ‘bout the best friend I ever had.” George said. “Me too!” Lisa said. Then backed away to see Georges full face and with less than passion, but more than a peck—

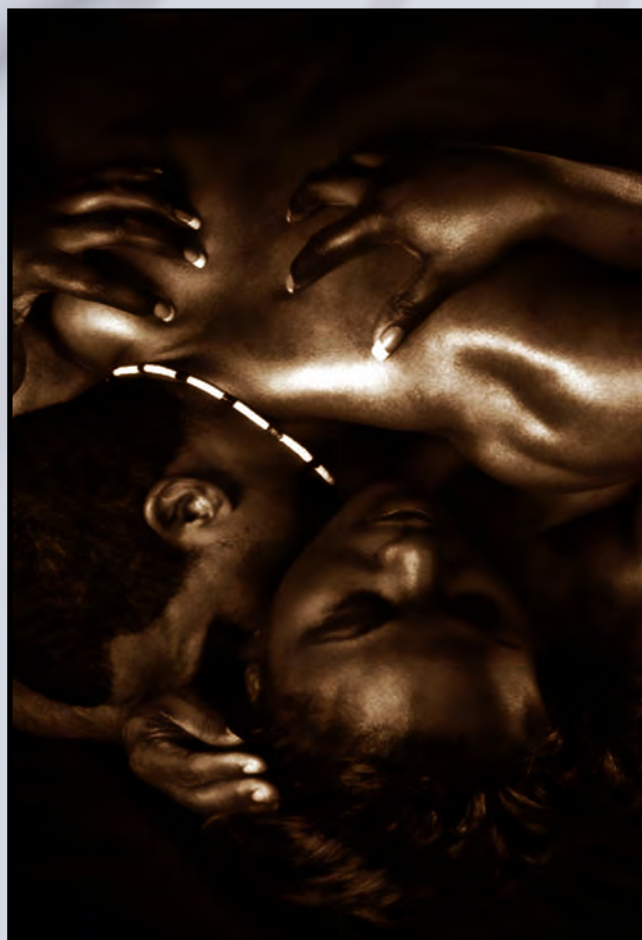
gave George ‘one across the lips.’

* * *

The book is: LOST IN SECRET ARMS by Adrien M. Lane. It’s a love story like none you’ve ever read before, and when Adrien says “Nothing is as it seems.” She MEANS it!

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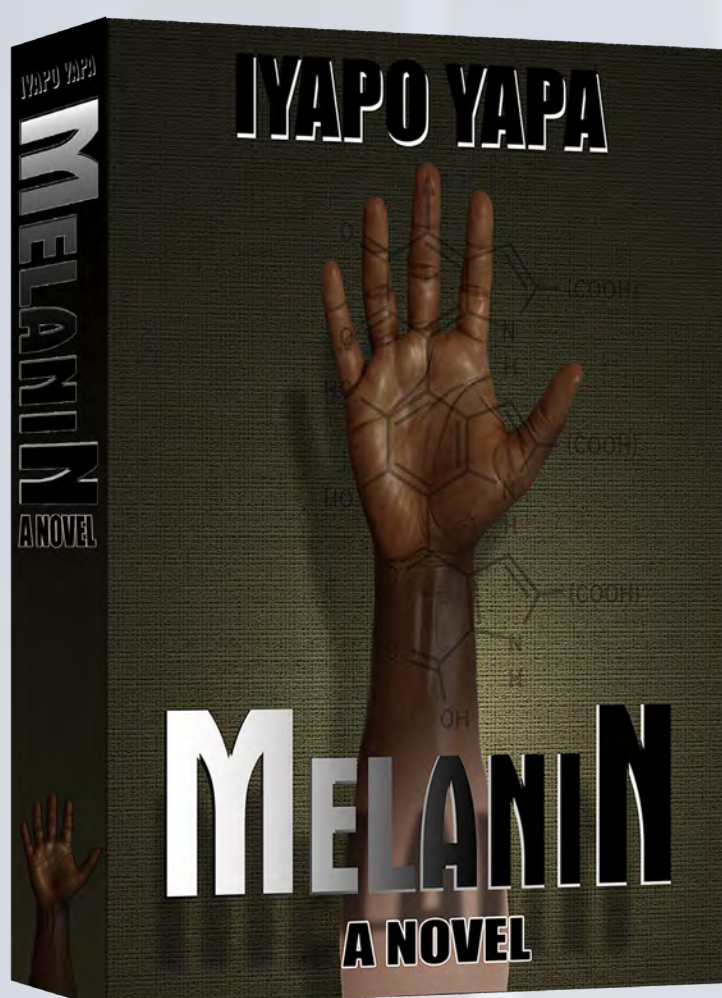
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The Redemption of
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A NOVELLA



Is it BEST to DIVEST?

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

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A space for avid Black readers and Black authors



Here is your NOVEMBER 2025 CROSSWORD PUZZLE!

This month's crossword puzzle is based on some of the original members of the BLACK PANTHERS!

Some will find it difficult, and others will find it a breeze. Which one are YOU?!

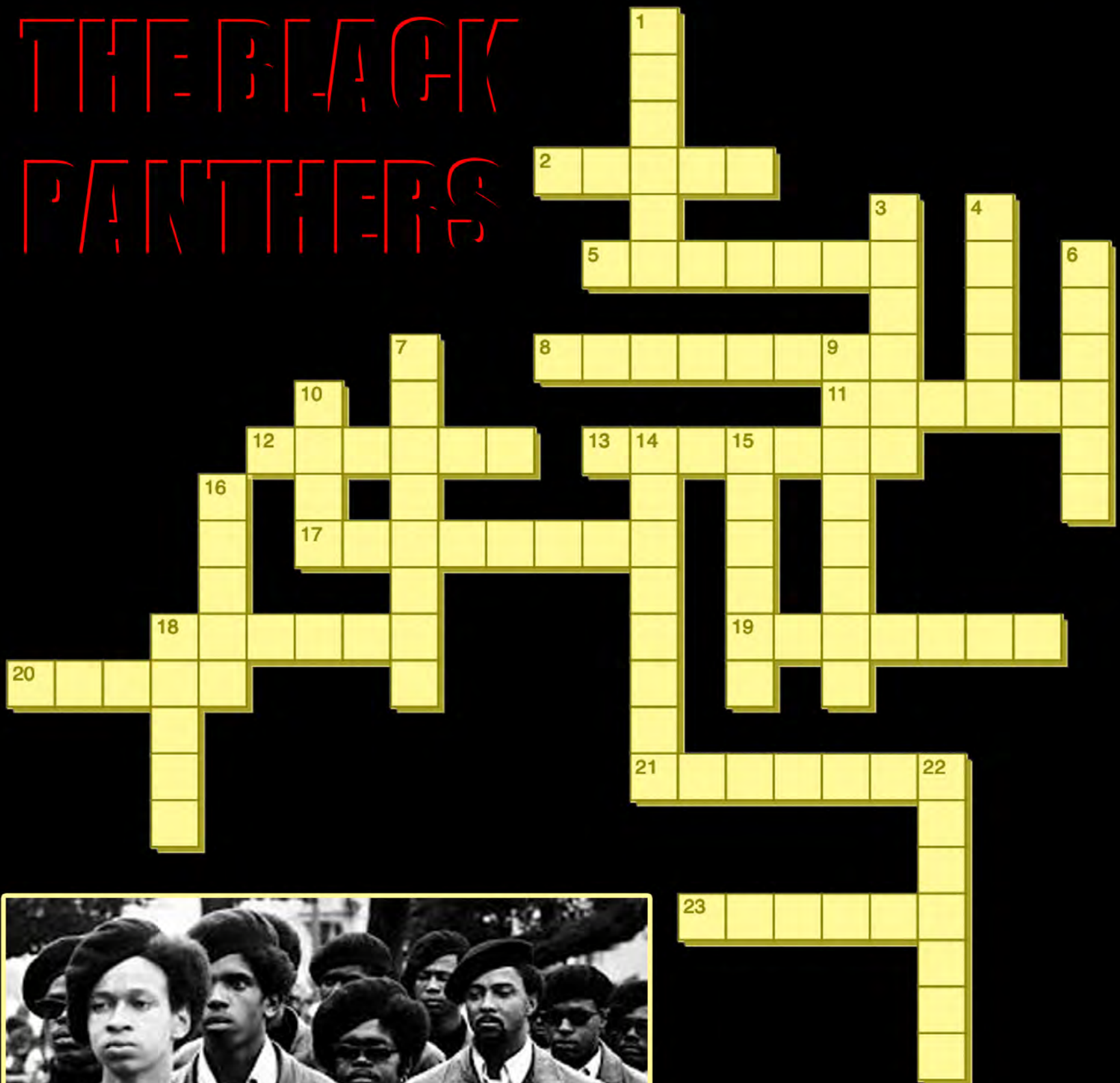
The solution to last month's puzzle, is at the back of the magazine.

So, there it is! HAVE FUN!

CLICK ON THE IMAGE BELOW TO DOWNLOAD A PRINTABLE COPY OF THE PUZZLE!

NOVEMBER 2025 CROSSWORD PUZZLE

THE BLACK PANTHERS





Across

2) A Defense Captain of the Illinois chapter, killed alongside Fred Hampton. Mark _____ .

5) An author and prison activist who joined the party while incarcerated and influenced its intellectual framework. George _____ .

8) Minister of Information, a prominent voice and editor of the newspaper. _____ Cleaver.

11) Founding member and first editor of the party's newspaper, The Black Panther. _____ "Big Man" Howard.

12) The first recruit and Treasurer, killed by police in 1968. Bobby _____ .

13) A leader in multiple chapters, including Oakland, and worked to establish the party's international presence. _____ Easley-Cox.

17) Chief of Staff and a central figure who helped manage the party's operations. David _____ .

18) Became the first and only female Chairwoman of the party in the mid-1970s, after the original founders' departure. _____ Brown.

19) Deputy Chairman of the national party and leader of the influential Illinois chapter. Fred _____ .

20) While a leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), he was named Honorary Prime Minister of the BPP in 1968 but later left due to ideological differences. Stokely Carmichael (_____ Ture).

21) A respected leader and prominent member of the New Haven and Oakland chapters. Ericka _____ .

23) One of the "Panther 21" who was arrested in New York City and became a prominent activist. Afeni _____ .

Down

1) A member of the New York chapter and an activist who later went into exile. _____ Shakur.

3) A prominent activist and scholar closely associated with the party, though sources dispute whether she was a formal member. _____ Davis.

4) An early member of the Oakland chapter. Reggie _____ .

6) Co-founder and Minister of Defense. Huey P. _____ .

7) Communications Secretary, serving as a powerful spokesperson for the party. _____ Cleaver.

9) A high-ranking member who served as the Minister of Defense for the Los Angeles chapter. _____ Pratt(Geronimo Ji Jaga).

10) A co-founder of the Illinois chapter who later became a U.S. Congressman. Bobby _____ .

14) Former SNCC leader who served as the BPP's Minister of Justice. H. Rap Brown (Jamil _____ Al-Amin).

15) Founding leader of the Southern California chapter in Los Angeles. _____ Carter.

16) Co-founder and Chairman. Bobby _____ .

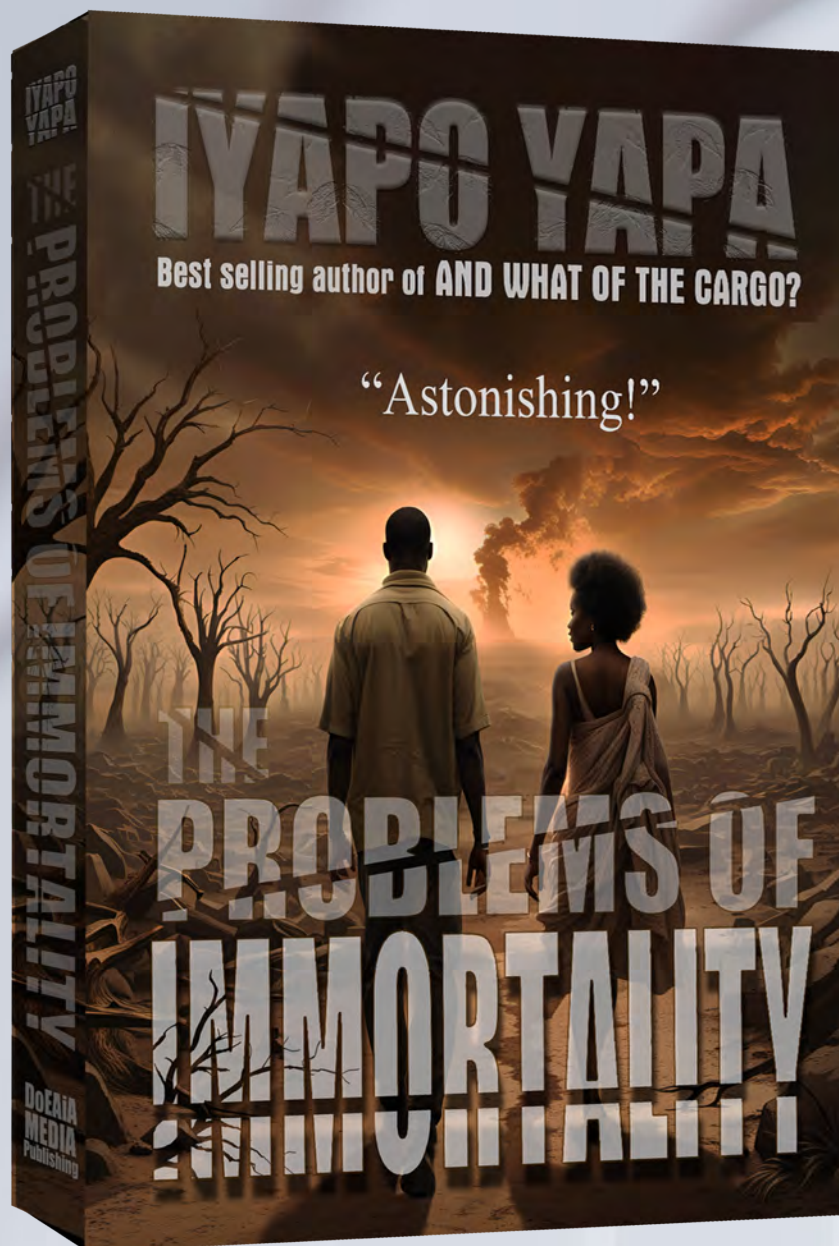
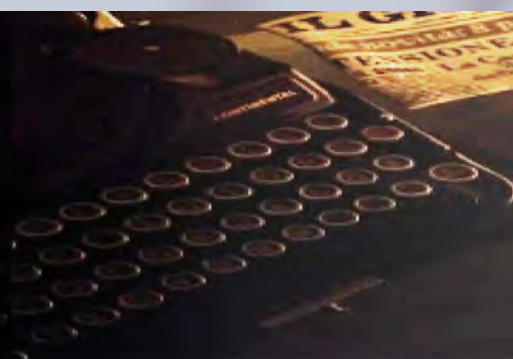
18) Minister of Culture and the revolutionary artist who created the party's iconic graphics. _____ Douglas.

22) One of the six original members. _____ Forte.

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COMING SOON!



FEATURE: THE 400 YEAR HEADSTART: THE RACE

(Analogy for the Condition of Black people and the Reputation we have.)

The fastest time for 500 miles on a standard road bike was set by Christoph Strasser in 18 hours, 20 minutes, and 26.46 seconds on July 17, 2021. A below-average person can expect to ride a bicycle for about 8 to 10 miles in an hour, traveling at speeds between 8 to 12 miles per hour on a flat surface.

For this analogy: Cyclist Two represents Black people (specifically Descendants of Enslaved Afrikans in America).

Cyclist One represents Europeans (specifically members of the social construct who are called “white people”), who is riding for a team that has never competed fairly and is prone to cheat at every turn, as is made manifest by their interactions with every other opponent to which they have had contact.

Cyclist Three represents Black conservatives, Republicans or MAGA conservatives, who are ready and willing to defend and zealously act as an apologist for their chosen team, while categorically excusing the vile and heinous acts of their adopted team (both historically and present day). Simultaneously they hyper focus on

the superficial “failings” of their native team, while offering ZERO context for why their people are in the condition in which they find themselves.

The chains and labor represent the Enslavement of Black people.



The beatings and destruction of the bike represent: (Beatings) Sharecropping, Convict leasing, Black codes, Red lining, Covenant laws, Jim Crow, Voter suppression, Intimidation, Marginalization, Campaigns of violence and terror, Lynching, Targeted “war on drugs”, Three Strikes law, Mass incarceration, Stop and

Frisk, etc.

(Destruction of the bike) Land theft, exclusion from being able to purchase land (like in Oregon until all the land worth having was purchased by, or given to whites via the “homestead act”) burning down of thriving communities like Ocoee, Rosewood, Oscarville, The Greenwood District also known as “Black Wallstreet”, Elaine and others, that resulted in stunted growth due to having to constantly start from scratch, and an inability to build generational wealth through land and home ownership.

THE 400 YEAR HEADSTART: THE RACE (Continued)

And now... the analogy:

There is a 500 mile bicycle race and there are two tracks:

Track one is for someone of a specific race, ethnicity and culture.

Track two is for another specific race, ethnicity and culture.

Track two: Cyclist Two, (who never signed up for, or agreed to be in such a competition, but was forced into it), is chained to the ground and forced to build the bicycle for their opponent. Once built, Cyclist One, not only mounts the bike and takes off down the road, he flaunts the beauty, engineering and construction of his bicycle.

Cyclist One is given assistance with flat tires, aching muscles (via massage and so on), energy drinks, food and water, and in some cases, loaded onto a pickup truck, and driven a few miles all along the track.

As Cyclist One rides, he breathes deeply the clean air around him and admires the smoothness of the track that was built by the enslaved ancestors of Cyclist Two. Each time he stops for food, water or comfort of any kind, it is at structures that only exist because of

the free labor of Cyclist One's enslaved ancestors.

After Cyclist One has covered over three hundred miles, Cyclist Two is released from the chains and has bicycle parts poured out in front of him. He must now build the bicycle himself, with no instructions and only two worn tools.

He manages to put it together incredibly fast but discovers there are missing parts. When he voices that parts are missing, and that it will hinder him, he's told to stop complaining and having a "victim mentality".

He is told to stop begging the sponsors of the race to be given something for nothing, and constantly asking for handouts. Meanwhile, Cyclist One doesn't need to beg, nor even ask for anything because he receives what he needs automatically.

Cyclist One is periodically stopped and interviewed by media. Cyclist One doesn't hesitate to talk about the great stock he comes from, and how his ancestors built the beautiful track on which he is cycling, along with the structures for the rest stops. He mentions in passing the unfortunate time when a handful of lone wolves



THE 400 YEAR HEADSTART: THE RACE (Continued)

forced Cyclist Two's people to assist in the construction against their will, but he was happy that those times were in the past, and since he didn't directly have anything to do with what was done, his hands and conscience are clean, and everyone needs to just let that past stay in the past. In his opinion, there is no reason to discuss it at all anymore, because he doesn't want himself, or his team or possibly the children of the people on his team to hear about what was done to Team Two and possibly feel a twinge of guilt about it.

The better option was for them to move on, erase that past time from memory, and continue enjoying the fruits and benefits of it. (While excluding Team Two's people from it of course—unless they decided to move over to Team One to be of service to them.)

Cyclist Two finally takes off down the road, holding his cycle together as best he can, down the unpaved, uneven track that was designated for his side of the race. After about fifty miles, it is noticed that despite the inferior bicycle, and torturous, unpaved side of the track... Cyclist Two is moving at

four to five times the speed of Cyclist one. So, a gang of the race's sponsors ambush Cyclist Two, knock him off his bike beat him, destroy the bike and take a few parts with them as they leave him unconscious and bloody.



After awakening and giving himself about a half hour to heal from the physical injuries (while still carrying the psychological trauma of what he has been through from the beginning to that moment – and with zero medical or psychological assistance), Cyclist Two begins rebuilding the bike. Since he is refused the parts he needs, or replacement of the stolen parts, he uses ingenuity to fashion missing parts. He gets it rebuilt and is once again underway. Unfortunately, every twenty miles or so that he travels, the same thing happens again and again - (beatings, cycle destroyed, needing to be rebuilt, each time with scarcer resources). But he doesn't give up, though he is now angry and swearing ... almost every mile of the way.

The officials determine that Cyclist Two is still too much of a threat, even

THE 400 YEAR HEADSTART: THE RACE (Continued)

with the obstacles that are put before him. He always manages to come back strong. They decided that a good option would be to recruit someone from Team Two and persuade them to join Team One. That way, the Team Two defector can more freely chastise, malign, and talk down to Cyclist Two.

The goal of which would be to demoralize Cyclist Two enough that he will just resign himself to remaining in the race but understanding he will never win – not if he unapologetically remains with his people on Team Two. The other option is to shame and humiliate Cyclist Two before the cameras and the crowd, or ultimately making Two so frustrated with their sad state and believing that it is his own fault that he decides to take his time, energy and considerable talent to use for the purposes of uplifting, praising and reinforcing Cyclist One and the team that backs him. In effect, weakening Team Two and losing his own identity.

While Cyclist Two is riding along, a pickup truck rolls up beside him on

the parallel track. A Cyclist (Cyclist three) is let out from a ramp behind the pickup, and Three proceeds to start peddling. He is obviously a member of the race, ethnicity and culture of Cyclist Two, but is dressed in the colors of the opposing team. Three is fresh and has a very nice bike, complete with two water bottles and provisions.

He looks over to Cyclist Two and says, “You look beat down, and you’re riding that ragged bike! You don’t have any pride in yourself! All I hear you doing is complaining

about how you were chained up at the start of the race and forced to build the other guy’s bike. Well, that was several hours ago and over a hundred miles back! You need to stop playing victim and come join the team over here so you can get cleaned up, get a new bike and some refreshments!

Cyclist Two responds that this is the road for his people’s team, and he is not willing to veer from it. He wants to continue embracing his culture, and if anything, become more deeply



THE 400 YEAR HEADSTART: THE RACE (Continued)

involved with and identified with it. Besides, the team Cyclist Three is riding for now has a history of cheating and rigging competitions, even as they full throatedly scream from the rooftops about meritocracy. Why would he want to be a part of, or party to that?

Cyclist Three immediately mocks the other man and tells him that that's his problem. He's just jealous because his culture is shit, low class and demonic. He praises Cyclist One for being so far ahead in the race! Cyclist Three touts how no one helped Cyclist One and how his position in the race was due to his hard labor and training—THAT was the reason Cyclist One was nearing the finish line! Three talks about how everyone has had it hard and had to peddle, there was nothing special about Two's plight. He should seek to be more like Cyclist One—like Three decided to do!

Cyclist Three says that Cyclist Two just wants to stay on that side and to wallow in self-pity and wrongness, and complain as he waits around for the officials to give him something in compensation for the bike he built for Cyclist Two and the side of the track his ancestors built, but he is prohibited from accessing!

If anything, he should be thanking God,

Three tells Two, that he was forced into this race, because if Team One hadn't done that, he'd still be someplace playing in a mud pile and doing nothing with his life. If you want to have something nice..." he lectures while wagging his finger... "all you have to do is adopt the beliefs, culture and world view of Team One, and they'll allow you to get what you need and, in some cases, help you, like they did me!

"No thanks." Cyclist Two says.

"Suit yourself!" Cyclist Three says before pulling ahead, "You can go on and stay back there blaming the officials for the way they chained you down and made you build your

opponent's bike. Yeah... I agree that was wrong, but that was a long time ago! Look at you now! You look unkempt and disheveled, and your bike is a wreck! You don't even have enough pride to take care of it." Three says this without giving a single thought to the fact that Two looks as he does because he is constantly being beaten, and that his cycle looks as it does because it is regularly being taken apart and pieces of it stolen so that the best Two can do is Jerry rigged patch jobs built with missing parts. It falls on deaf ears when Cyclist Two speaks out about the sponsors of the race knocking him off his cycle and beating him up every twenty miles, and him having to rebuild this bike



THE 400 YEAR HEADSTART: THE RACE (Continued)

each time, which put him even further behind. Three purely focuses on the effect while refusing to acknowledge the cause, and on the contrary, castigates and ridicules Two if he brings up the matter of exactly WHY he and his bike are in the condition they're in, even to the point of denying that it is presently happening and, in some instances, that the attacks NEVER happened at all.

Furthermore, neither Cyclist Three nor the Cyclists he has allied himself with, take into consideration the fact that in the face of all that was done to Two, he is still riding. He is STILL riding! That Two is even able to ride along at ALL is just this side of a miracle! It shows and proves his ingenuity, resilience, determination, and pride, contrary to what his opposition says.

Eventually Two realizes that this was never his race to run and that those who have sabotaged him from the beginning never had any intention of giving him a fair chance to win, let alone allowing him to participate. Therefore, the only option would be to drop out of that race and begin his OWN quest—his way—on his own terms. Two has no way to know what that future will hold, but

he does know the glorious past of his people, and he understands his own resilience and creativity, as well as his people around him. Together they can go into the unknown with confidence. It didn't matter that he didn't know what he was stepping into. He could step into the unknown and fail...

MAYBE.

If he continued attempting to operate within the present rigged, anti-Black system while maintaining his identity, he would fail as a CERTAINTY!

OUTSIDE of the rigged system is where he would find his power and

autonomy.

Nowhere else.

* * *

Fallacy 1: Telling Black people that if we accept that it is the system that holds us back or that we need the field leveled is tantamount to saying Black people are inferior.

Just as with my example of Cyclist number two, not only is the cyclist not referred to as inferior – they are actually





THE 400 YEAR HEADSTART: THE RACE (Continued)

recognized as being far and away above average and an elite class cyclist. The fact they have absolutely no hope of catching up or winning has ZERO to do with that individual and everything to do with the construct in which they are being forced to compete.

(Listen to the average conservative or Republican who's life is being decimated by corporations that have taken manufacturing overseas, taxes them into oblivion and does everything it can to pay them a wage that became stagnant in the 70's, and they will complain (and rightly so), that the system is RIGGED for them to lose.

They aren't saying they aren't hard working. They aren't saying they're lazy. They aren't saying they are in their positions because they're inferior or something is wrong with them. They are recognizing (and I repeat—rightly so), that the SYSTEM ITSELF is designed to benefit the wealthy and ultra-wealthy and to leave them behind.)

Curious how they can so clearly see THAT where they are concerned, and all but ignore and ridicule it when our people have been recognizing and saying

exactly the same thing for centuries (and rightly so). From their position within this construct, even if every single restraint were removed from our people (and they haven't been, but even if they were), without the remedy of moving us forward so that we are at the same

place on the track, white society knows full well there is no way for our people to ever catch up to them, let alone surpass them. That is why they fight so hard against:

Affirmative Action

CRT (Critical Race Theory)

DEI (Diversity Equity Inclusion)



The truth of history displayed in museums, like the Smithsonian.

Books like the 1619 Project
Ans a host of other things that would actually level the playing field.

Fallacy 2: Black people have the same opportunities as white people in this system.

Where do I even START?!

If someone has been oppressed, disadvantaged and robbed of all they

THE 400 YEAR HEADSTART: THE RACE (Continued)

have but say, a hundred dollars. And what was stolen from them was ten thousand dollars. One day there is a deal to purchase a brand-new Lexus for a promotional price of two thousand dollars, and it is open to literally anyone to purchase it. The person with the stolen ten thousand would immediately go and get the car. Then when the person who had only a hundred dollars left from what was stolen begins to complain that what happened wasn't right or fair, they will promptly be told to stop having a victim mentality! The ad very specifically said that ANYONE was able to purchase the Lexus no matter who! NO ONE was excluded. However, opportunity was not the issue—the ability to take advantage of the opportunity is the problem! Another trick in the trick bag. Tell Black people we have the same opportunities, without taking into account that systemically and systematically, the means have been adjusted at best and completely cut off at worst, our ability to capitalize on those opportunities.

Fallacy 3: Black people are inherently a people who are in perpetual disarray, and do not take pride in the things they have.

The truth? The reason Cyclist Two and

his cycle looked as they did was because of the endless attacks and beatings, his appearance is a direct reflection of it. Cyclist Three was no longer susceptible to those beatings and sabotage. Now Cyclist Three, who has adopted the world view of the competitor downgrades and ridicules his own, once, team member in order to receive accolades from the team he has chosen. The criticisms of his own people however are rooted in non-sequiturs that are based purely upon making observations about the present state of his opponent while cynically, overtly, or genuinely ignorantly of the causes that brought about the effect, and a willingness to turn a blind eye to it and rest the full weight of Two's present state and that of his equipment, squarely at HIS feet and no place else. Even the very suggestion that it could have something to do with his chosen team is called out as "victim mentality" or seeking to "blame the white man" or "refusing to take accountability".

Never ONCE bringing into question his new allies' complete and utter abdication of responsibility or accountability for Two's state.

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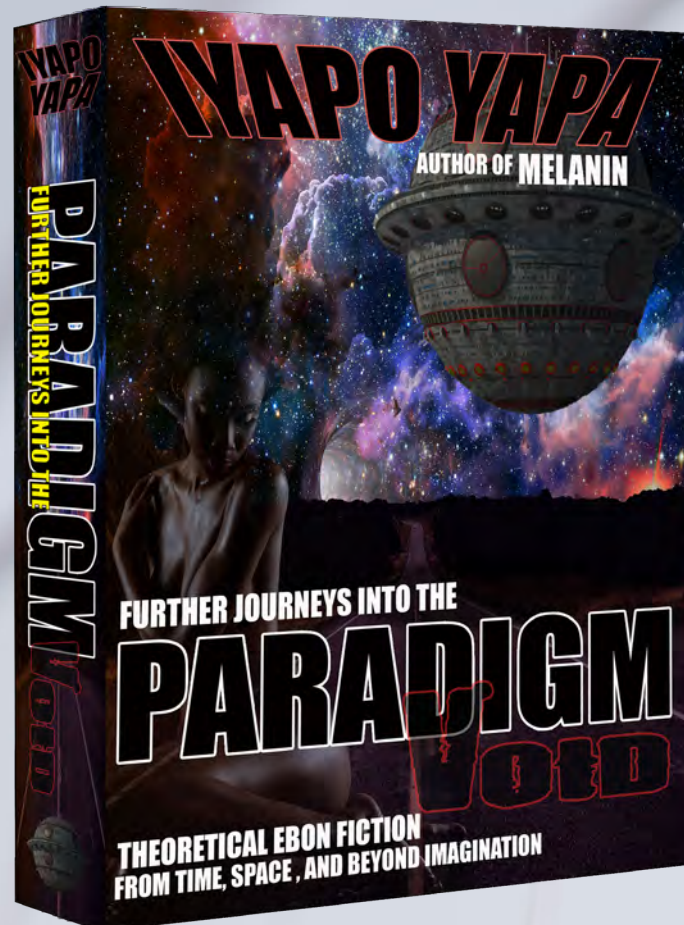


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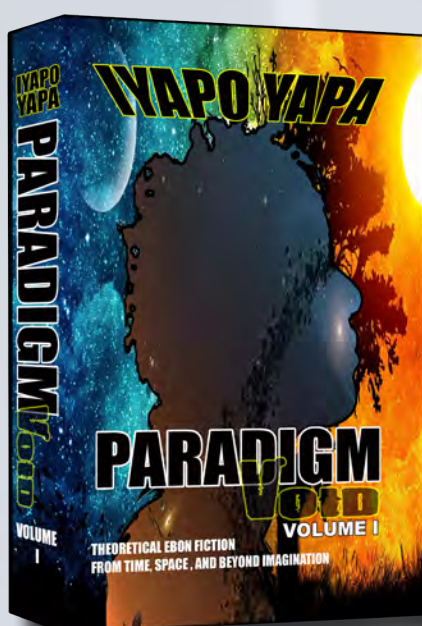


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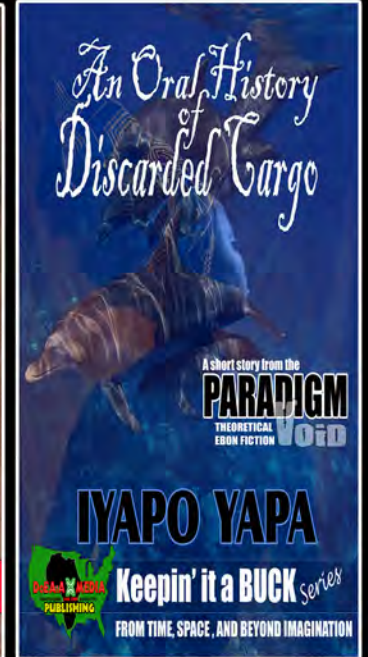
Stories from Time, Space and Beyond Imagination,
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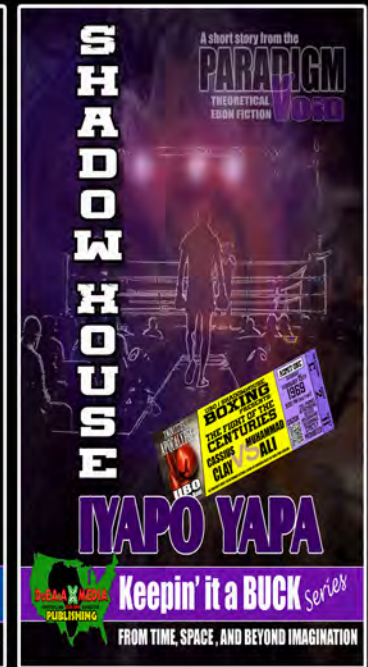
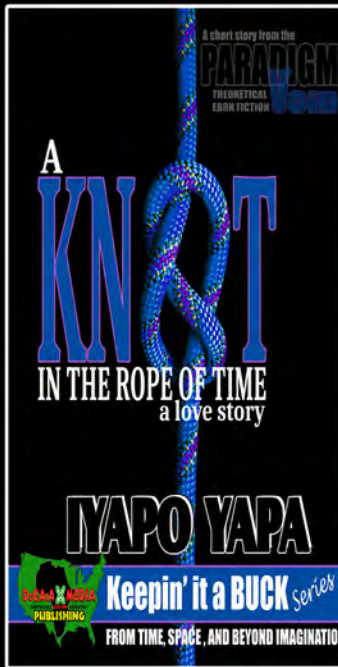


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Op Ed: VICTIM MENTALITY?!?!

My best friend since childhood, may he rest in power, was just about one of the most squeamish people I'd ever known. He was the type who would become extremely upset by having something involving blood or gore described to him. For example, I tried to describe a medical procedure I watched on PBS. He quickly stopped me as I went into a description the blow by blow. Being younger at the time, I continued to attempt to tell him about it and he got visibly upset. We didn't fall out over it, but I definitely got the sense that if I kept talking, we might.

So I let it go.

Now, let's imagine that my friend, Mark was the one who PURPOSELY CAUSED the injury that led to the operation I was telling him about. What if he had the same reaction to my description of the procedure. Insisting that I stop talking about it because it was too much for him to take and made him feel ill.

Soooooooooo. Let me get this straight.

What you're telling me is that YOU caused all the pain and suffering of the victim on the table, but you find it too painful to hear about or see. Taking into zero consideration that the person on the table had to EXPERIENCE it thanks to you.

I think you all can see what I'm getting at.

This movement (which actually began WAY before Trump), to remove Black history, or to minimize the enslavement of Afrikans and the effects of it are fought against—especially in schools. Why? Because it hurts their feelings or may hurt the feelings of their precious non-

Black child. The fact that our children LIVED it aside.

Would anyone dare, I wonder, talk to someone with a sever limp that caused them to stride almost comically, or with the aid of a cane or some other means of helping them put one foot in front of the other. I wonder if someone would ask them why they walk as they do, and after the reply, "Well sixty years ago, when I was three, I was in a very bad car accident. I lived, but it crushed my pelvis, and it left me walking like this, and to this day it still hurts to walk. And every day, there are neighborhood bullies who come with baseball bats and hit me across the hip every day."

Now having heard the explanation, what jerk would reply, "WHAT?! That happened SIXTY YEARS AGO and you're STILL whining about the pain and limping?! You need to stop playing the victim...

no one's coming and hitting you with baseball bats every day (with absolutely no point of reference, or way to disprove what the injured man just told him). They'd say, "...and get rid of those damned crutches and straighten up and walk like everyone else! Look at ME! I broke my big toe almost a decade ago, and now I'm walking around fine and I'm not complaining! I just sucked it up while my doctor had me on bedrest for several months as my toe healed, and I'm walking around like everyone else now... even BETTER than some! You don't hear me complaining about my toe having been broken, do you?!"

Admittedly, this is a clumsy and in places, flawed analogy, but any honest person understands the point.



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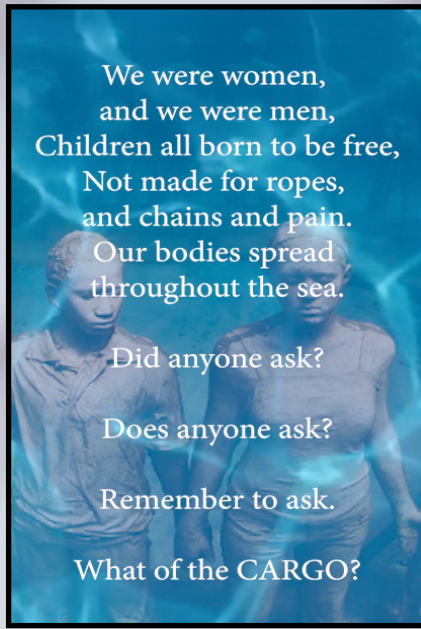
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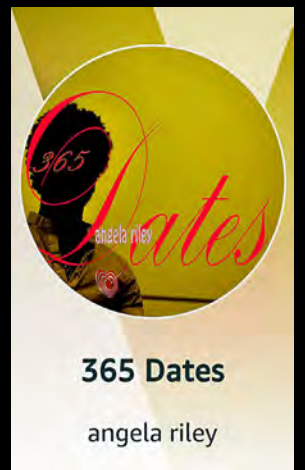
I'd like to say a big **THANK YOU!** To everyone who helped all three of my books to spend some time at number **ONE** on Amazon's **BEST SELLERS** list!



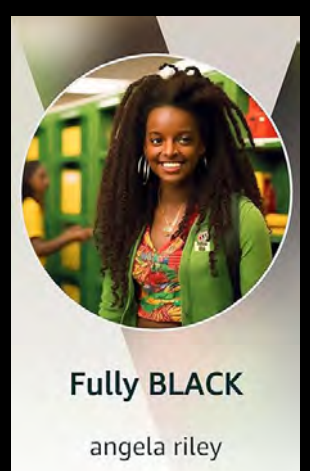
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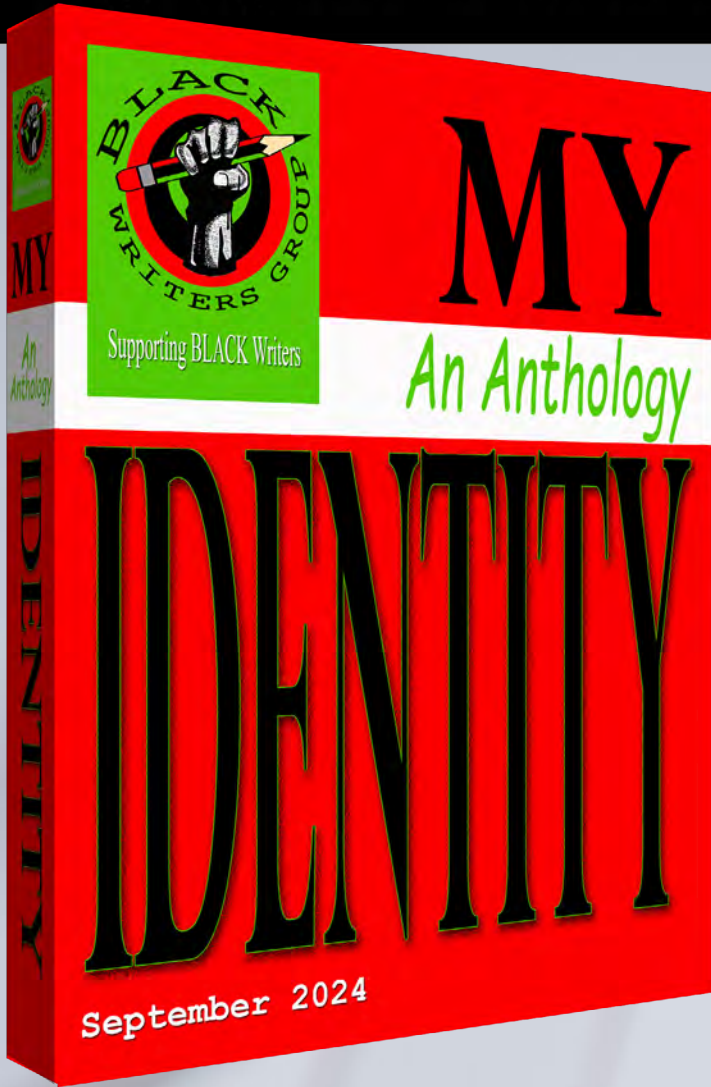


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Talented Black writers give you their insights in these Black Writers Group publications, *My Identity: An Anthology* and *Black Love Anthology*. The subjects, writing style and personal observations are as varied as the writers themselves. From essays 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.

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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.

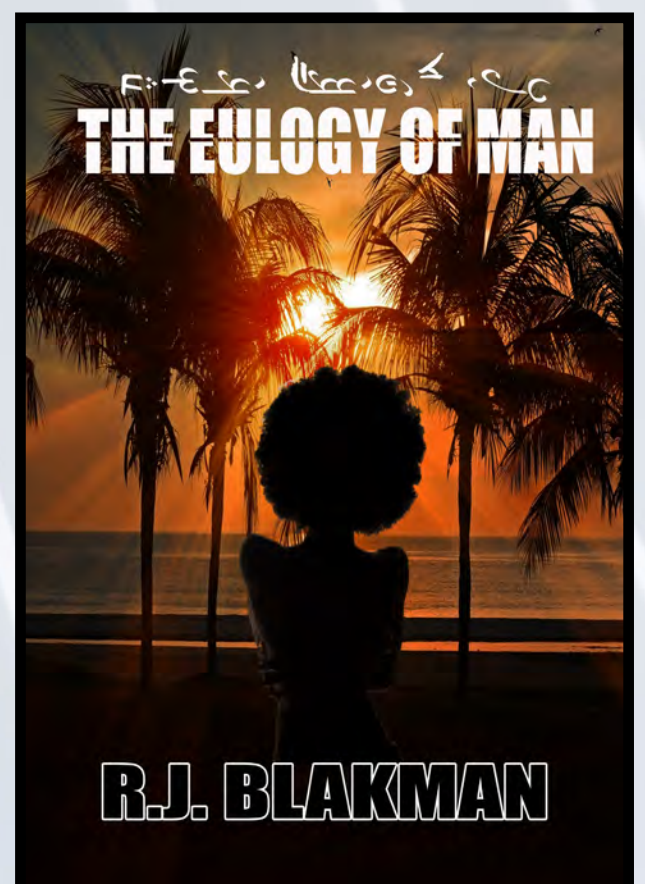
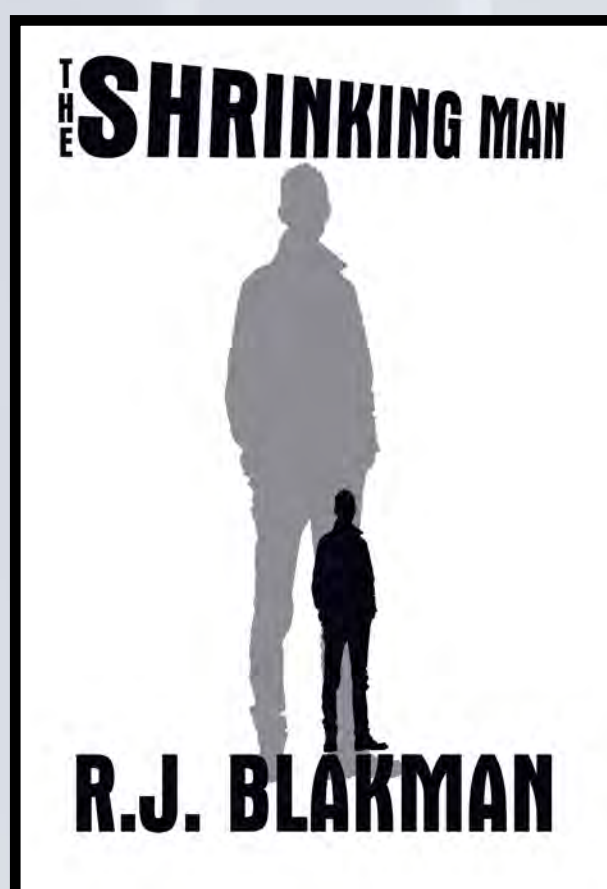
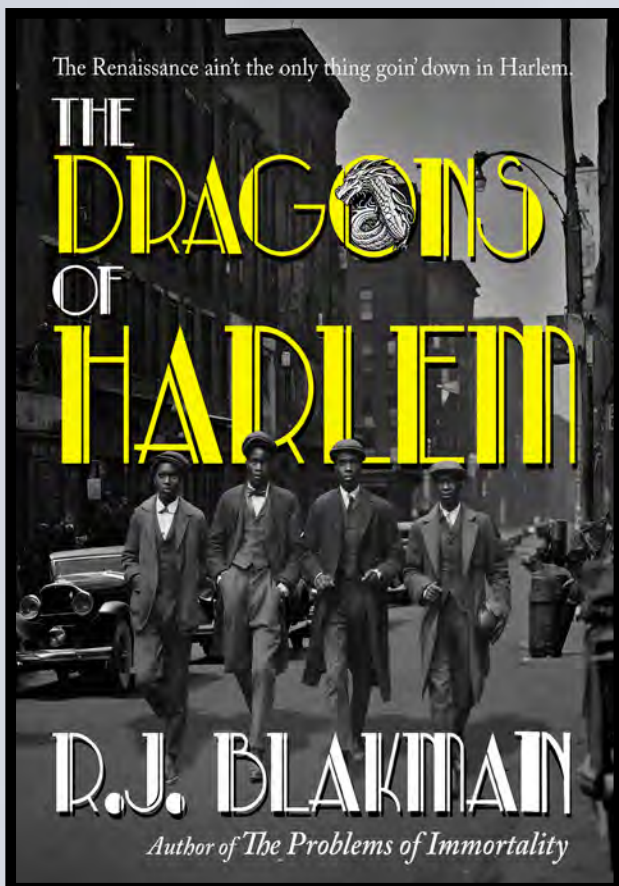
As a practice, Blakman seeks out truth and goes wherever that truth leads him, even if uncomfortable.

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

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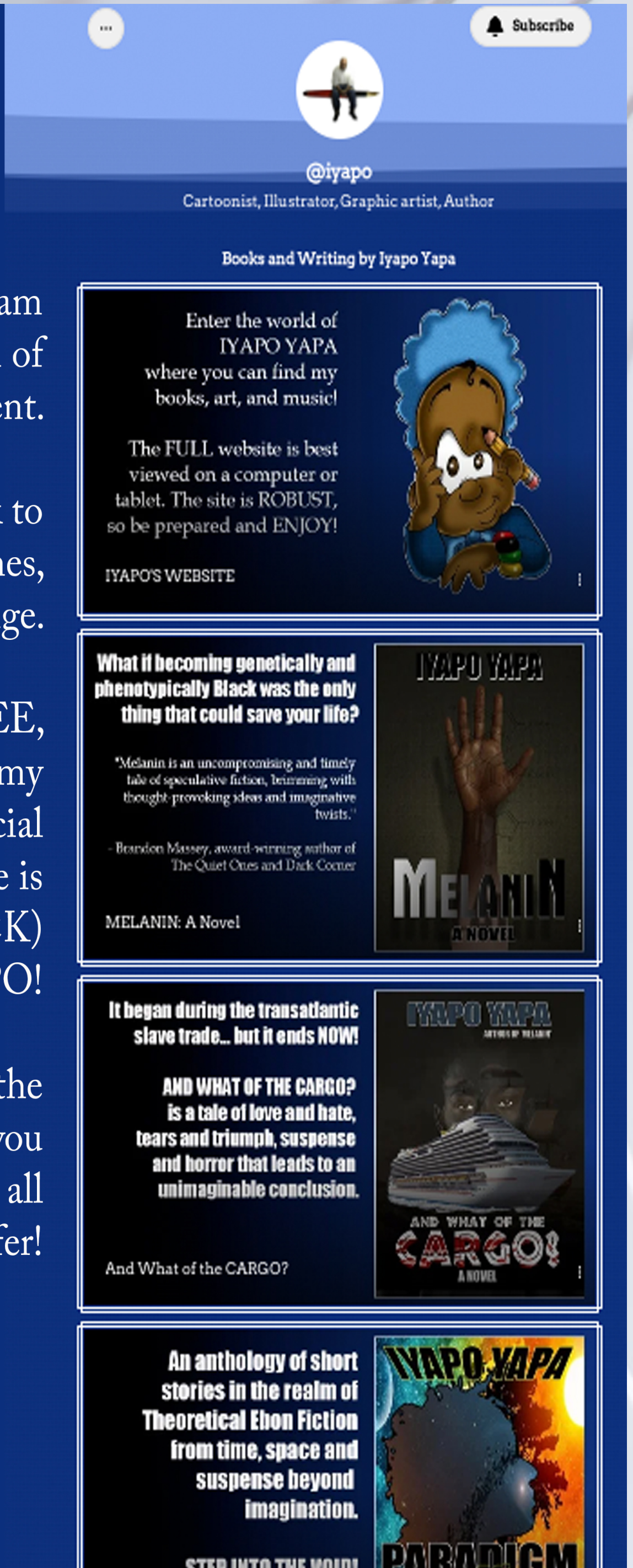
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And What of the CARGO?

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

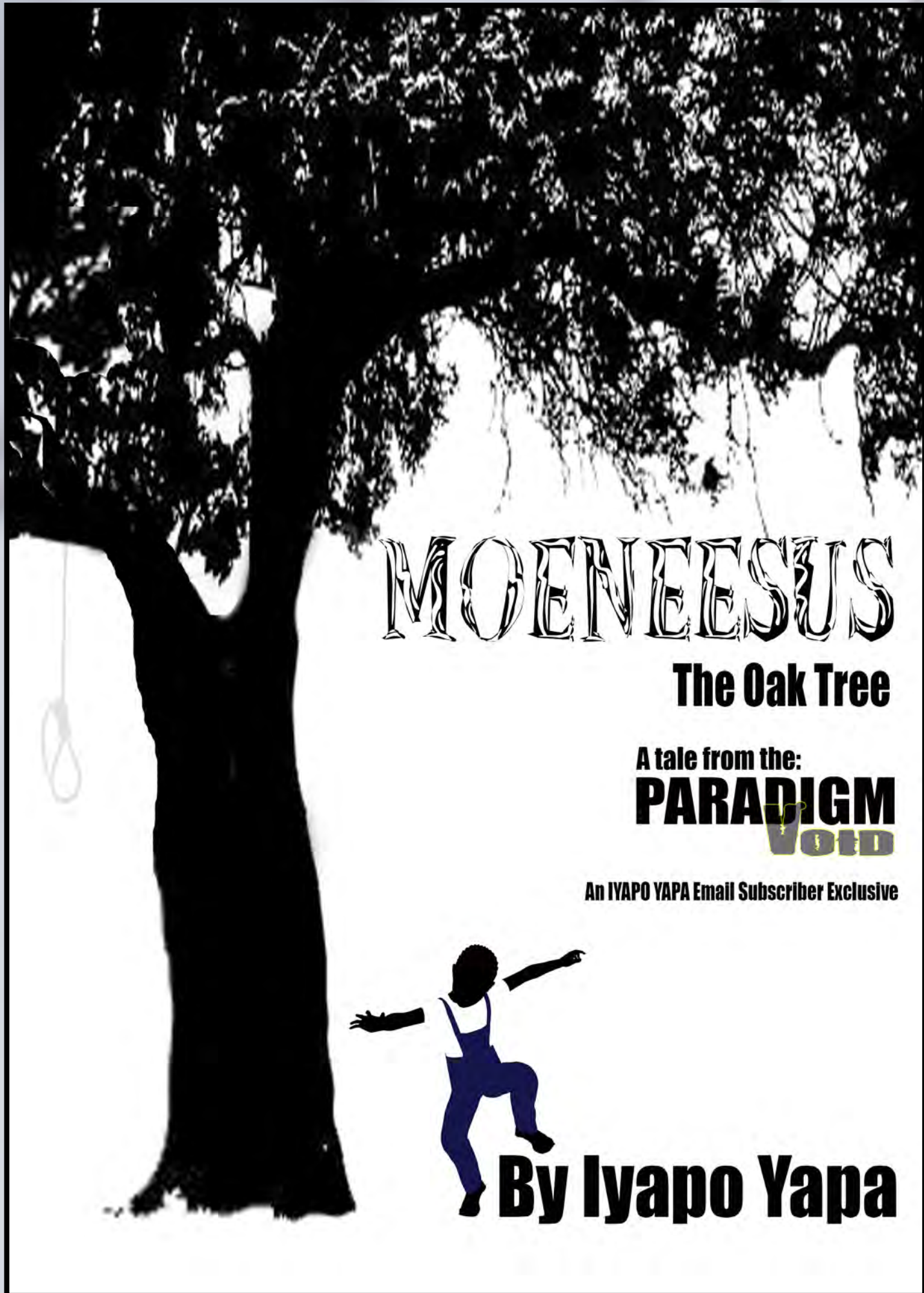
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If you are a **READING AND WRITING IN THE DARK** subscriber and haven't read your free copy of **MOENEESUS THE OAK TREE**, what are you waiting for?! Relax and take some time to read a great story from the the **Paradigm VOID**! It may make you smile,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

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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

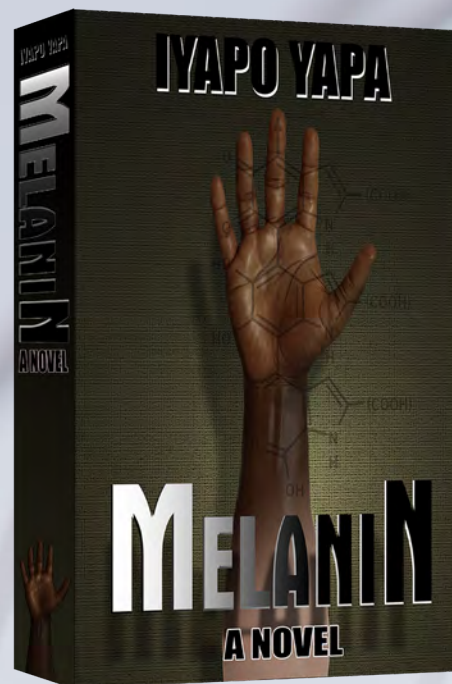
“Yapa weaves another story this time interwoven with historical references. I was on my seat with every chapter. I don't want to give it away but....revenge is sweet when served dead. And I can't get over how different each of his offerings are. Read his Vella's and you'll see what I mean. Another great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

- Amazon review

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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!

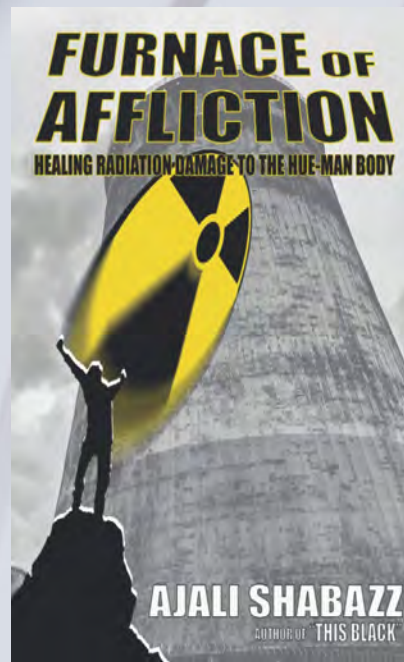
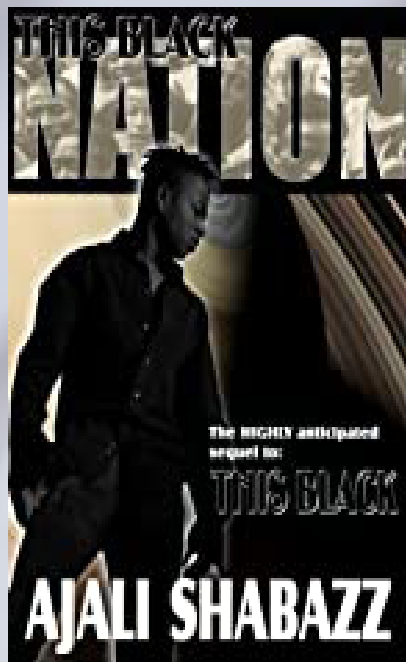
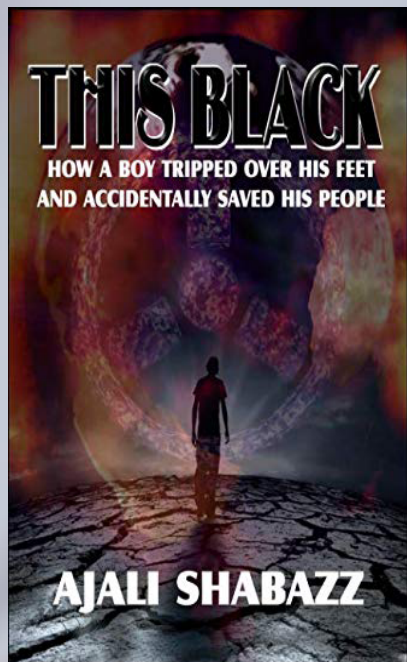
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Books by:

AJALI SHABAZZ



Author of: *This Black - This Black NATION* and *Furnace of Affliction!*

The Reading and Writing in the DARK Podcast Interview!

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

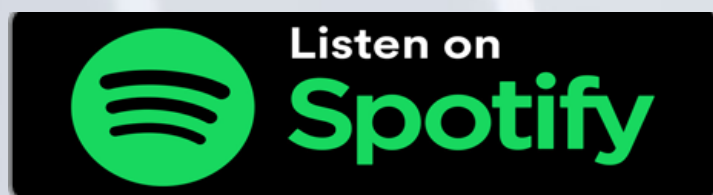
Listen to the interview on  by clicking the link below:

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



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

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



CLICK THIS BLOCK TO LISTEN TO THE

READING and WRITING in the

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podcast!







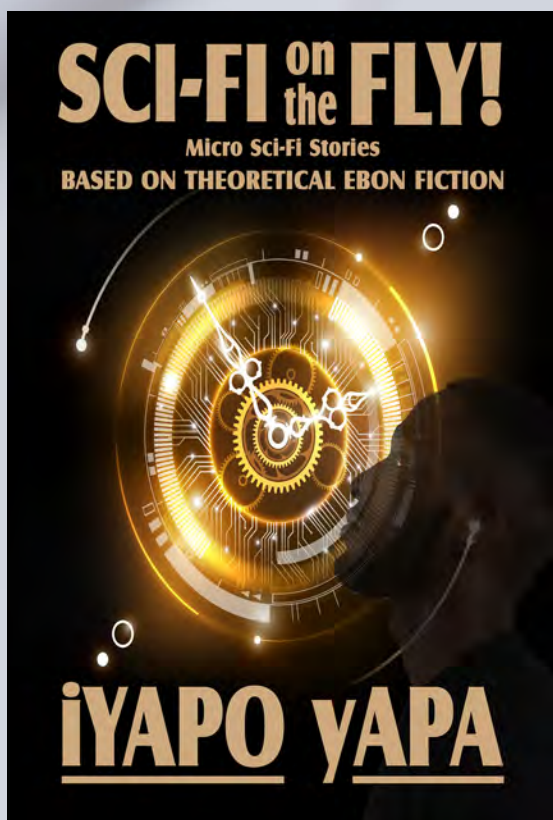
Have You Checked Out My Blog Yet?

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.

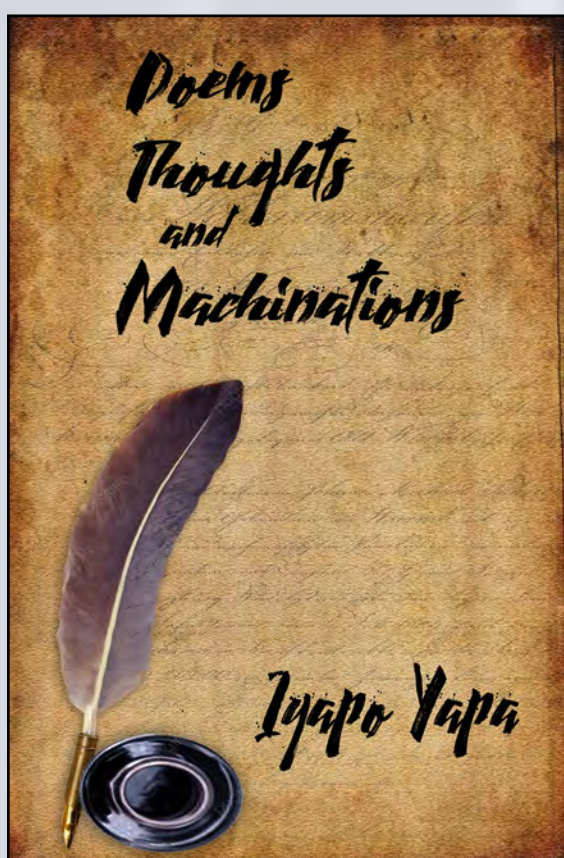


The title says it all.

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

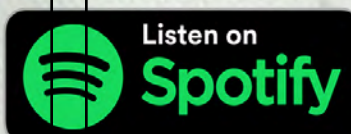
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Two writers
Two Mics
&
Plenty of Banter!



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.

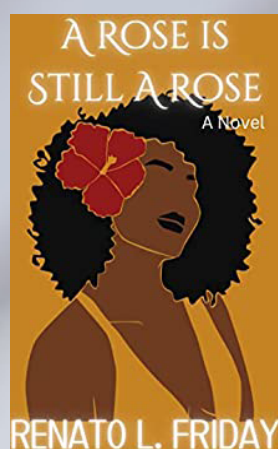


Affirming Self Love (*Graphic Non-Fiction* SERIES)

angela riley

SelfLOVE Meditation, Reflections, & AFFIRMATIONS Series...

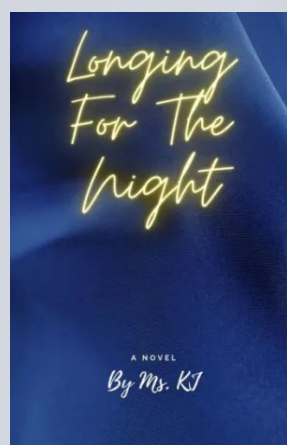
With a new book released each month, this “Graphic Nonfiction” series is filled with love for BlackUs. Each episode opens with a short essay exploring a theme such as “Following the Happy” or “Plan & Reflect” and culminates with a dynamic collection of affirmation. You’ll have a beautiful time meditating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



A Rose is Still a Rose

Renato L. Friday

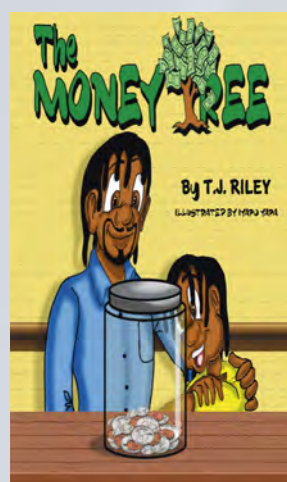
Rose thought life was going great: she was engaged, had a beautiful set of twin girls, a recent trade school graduate, and a new job right around the corner. Unfortunately, her fiancé, David, turned out to not be what she needed, and she chose to break things off. In the midst of her failing relationship,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

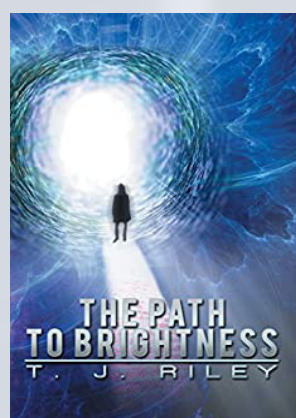
Inspired by the poem Goblin Market by Christina Rossetti, two young sisters face the trials and tribulations of the hood in this coming-of-age story about the harshness of living in South Central Los Angeles.



The Money Tree

T.J. Riley / Illustrated by Iyapo Yapa

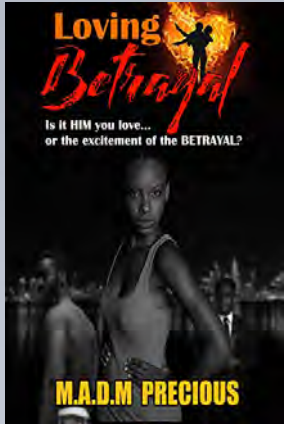
Every child wants money to buy something, right? Our hero does too. But, his father has a surprise, a Money Tree. Join the fun journey to find out how to grow your own money tree.



THE PATH to BRIGHTNESS

T.J. Riley

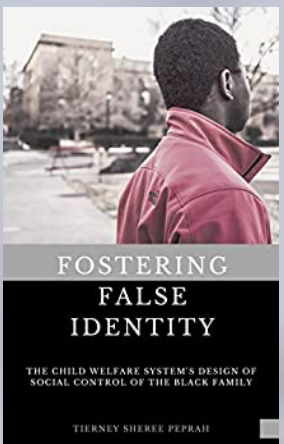
Fatima, a young woman, has a near-death experience. When she awakes from a coma and recovers, she has mystical powers. She begins to see auras and experiences life with her new abilities. For the clever character, Fatima, life is about to dramatically change. Follow Fatima's journey as she tries to convince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

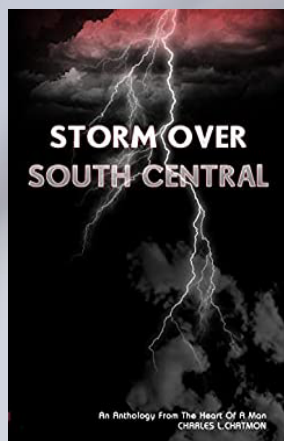
When Michelle met Michael, she thought that she found the love of her life. She was young and coming out of a bad marriage. A single parent of two children, she was scared, broke and had no self esteem. Michael seemed perfect, except for one little problem...



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.



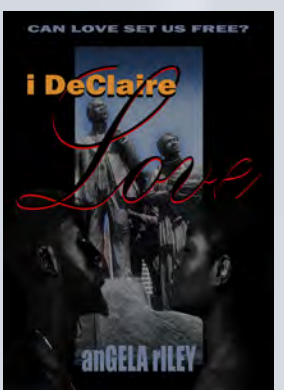
RELAY

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!



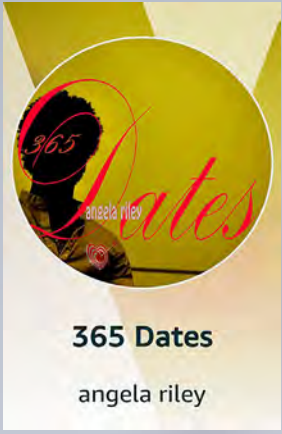
The Love X TamuTamu Agency

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.

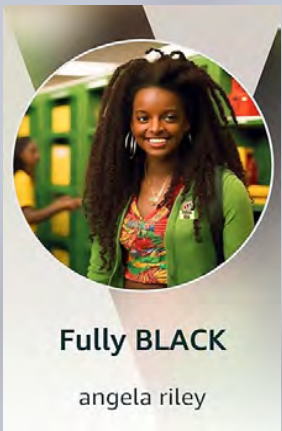
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365 Dates
Angela Riley

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.

[BACK TO CONTENTS](#)



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!

UP
UNAPPROPRIATELY
PROBLACK
CERTIFIED

FURTHER JOURNEYS INTO THE PARADIGM VOID
THEORETICAL EDGEM FICITION
FROM TIME, SPACE, AND BEYOND IMAGINATION

I have always enjoyed SciFi and what is now called "speculative fiction", but missing from the genre was any real representation of our people within those landscapes. Certainly, there are the Octavia Butler, Stephen Barnes and Tananarive Due out there, as well as the Brandon Montoye's lovely horror and suspense, and now, new on the scene is April Shabazz and others. But still, our people have been woefully underrepresented in the genre. When we are present, we are listed in the category of "Minorities"—a category I have rejected. Why? Because just as with the much celebrated, fictional "Mulan" of Black Panther—the hero was coined by a white man (Mark Dony Ross, exactly how did THAT happen?! It is odd and disturbing to me that every other race seems to have the ability to control their own narrative and terms pertaining to them, but when BLACK people seek to do so, it's seen as some kind of a problem. That said, part of being Unapropriately Black, or PRO Black means that we seek our own terms and control of our own narrative, future and direction, thus, I use the term "THEORETICAL EDGEM FICITION" to describe much of my work.

Books by IYAPO YAPA

MELANIN
A NOVEL

PARADIGM VOID
SHORT STORY COLLECTION

The Redemption of Maxine Allison
NOVELLA

And What of the CARGO?
NOVEL

INTERCEDERS
NOVEL

FURTHER JOURNEYS INTO THE PARADIGM VOID
THEORETICAL EDGEM FICITION

WE STORY A.R.
IMAGINE A WORLD...
with the "LANIN" UNIVERSE

BOOKS BY & ABOUT BLACK US!

in the works

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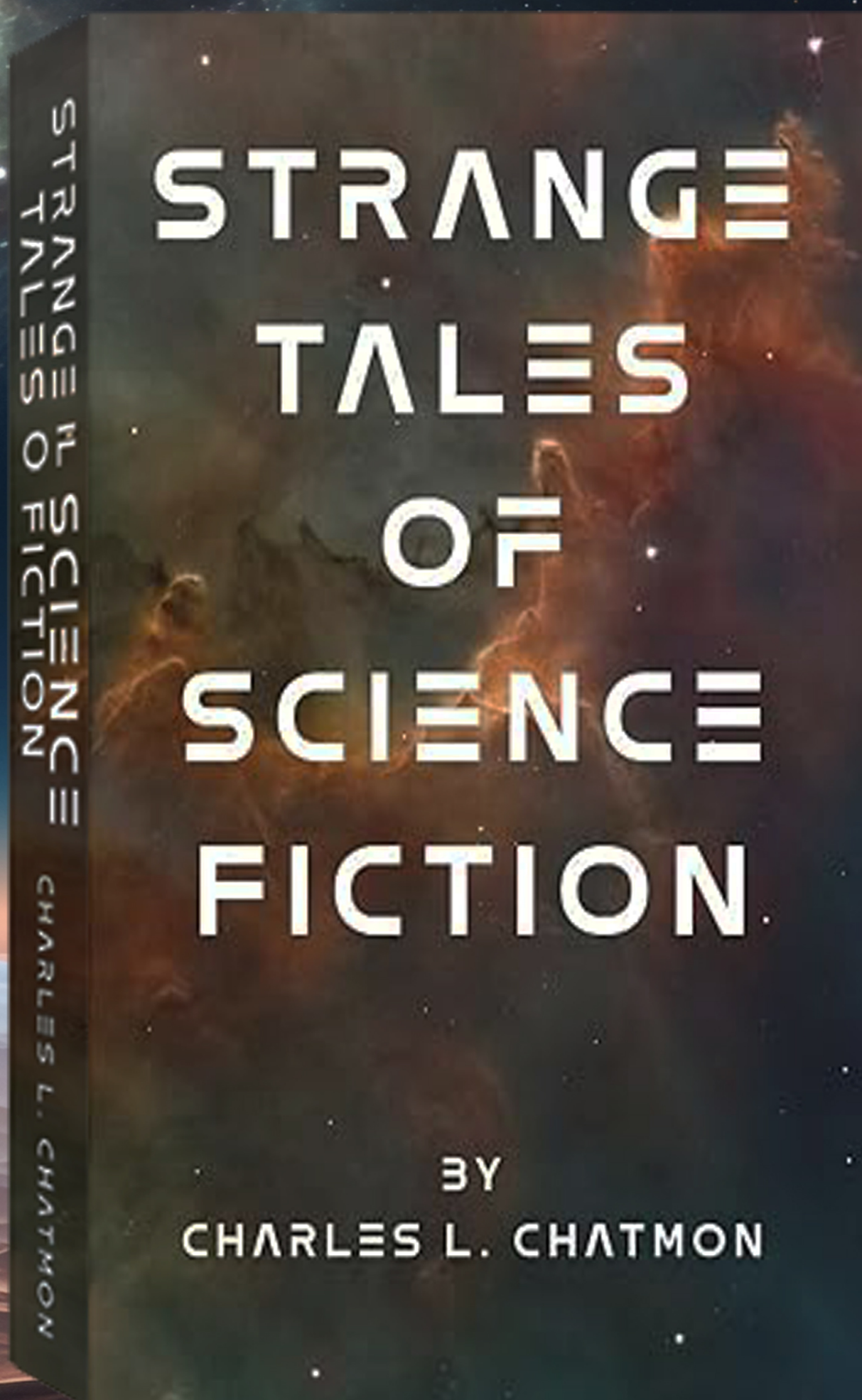
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STRANGE TALES OF SCIENCE FICTION IS AVAILABLE NOW!

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?

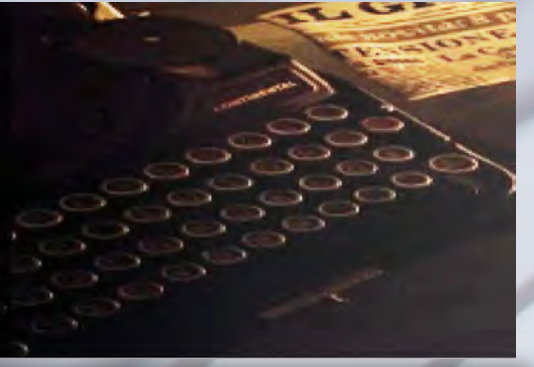


CLICK ON THE BOOK ABOVE TO PURCHASE ON AMAZON!

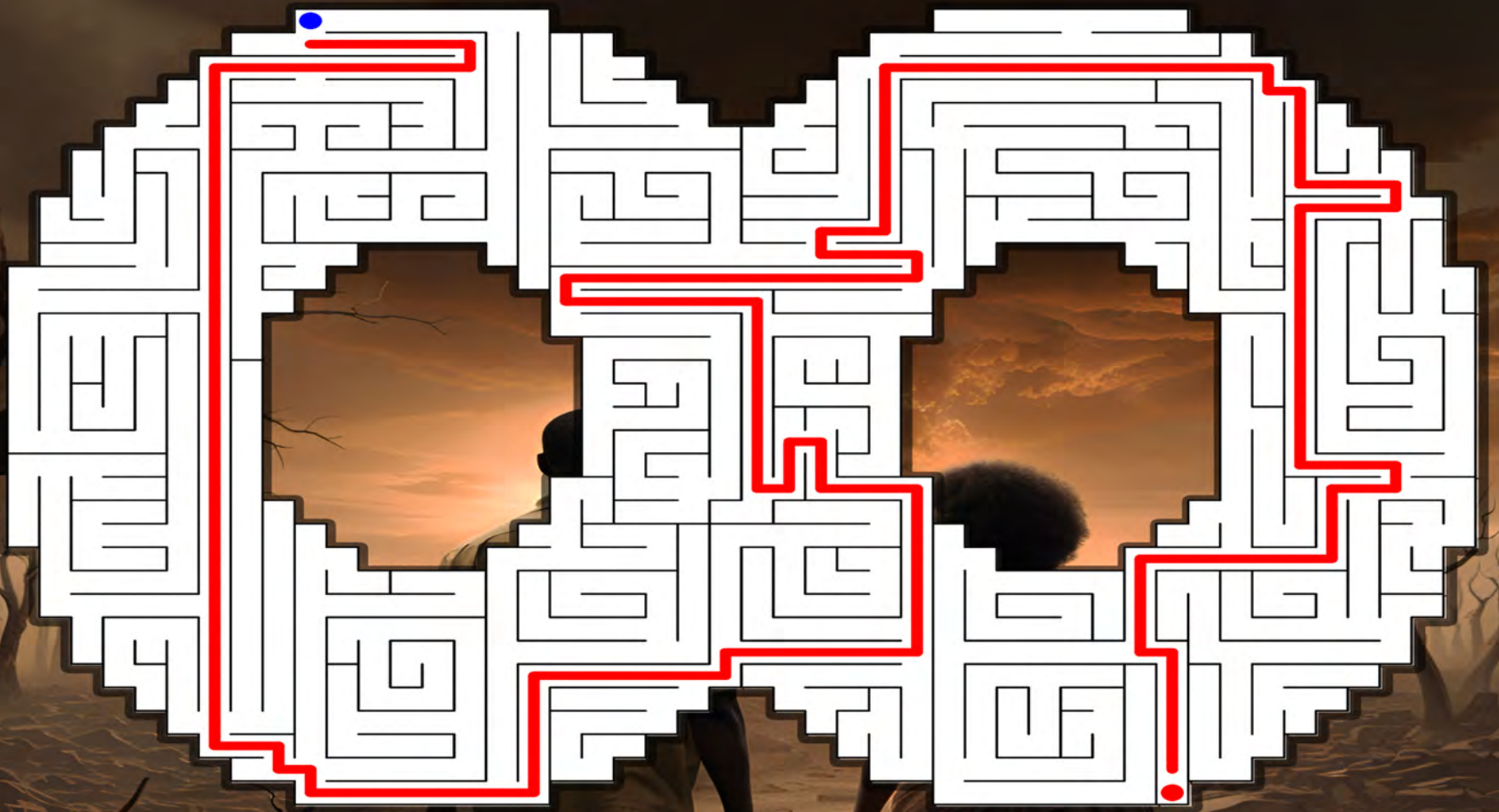
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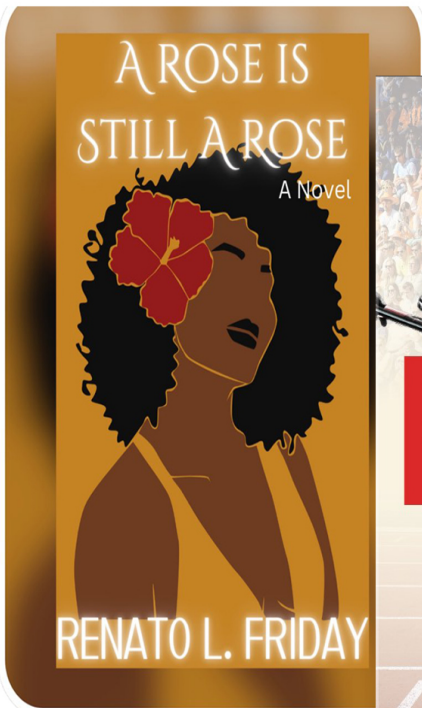


Could YOU Survive Immortality?!



OCTOBER
MAZE
SOLUTION

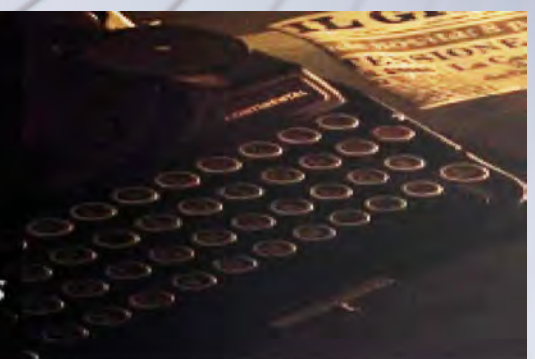
THE
PROBLEMS OF
IMMORTALITY!
COMING SOON!



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IYAPO YAPA

Tales of the
MONKEY'S PAW



NOT EVERY WISH GRANTED MAKES DREAMS COME TRUE

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR!



Keepin' it a BUCK *series*

SHORT STORIES of HORROR and SUSPENSE



BE SURE TO VISIT IYAPO YAPA ON THESE OTHER PLATFORMS!

Heaven Mississippi

A NOVEL



Coming Soon!