

IMANI'S SAFEHOUSE



Hello, Family!

Greetings, and Happy New Year!

This first month of 2022 has been hard on a lot of folks. We hope February will offer some respite from all the sickness, the quarantines and the cold. In the meantime, please know that we are thinking of you, and that we're here to support you in any way we can. We are a community, after all. As the activist and icon

Angela Davis—whose 78th birthday was January 26—says, we must think of ourselves not just as individuals, but as "members of communities of struggle."

In strength and solidarity,
Imanis Safehouse Inc.



Happy Birthday, Angela Davis!

UNTITLED

BY KIM WILLIAMS

My mind wanders
to places far beyond where I am
Slipping away into the abyss
Another elsewhere
Voices fade into the background
White noise just taking up space
Blank spaces await to be filled
like sand in an hour glass
After its turned
Topsy turvy are thoughts reflected
in doodlings on paper as
lines beggin for attention to be written on
Staring into a world
that truly interests me
Bringing happiness to the
Crevices of my heart
shining light on those dark places
Illuminating the corners with imagination
images of a life of grandeur
places of peace
joyful things
physically here
mentally there

going where I please
but only visiting
the others around me keep
me grounded next to them
umbilicalled to the present
tethered to the now
arriving back to the immediate
hoping they don't notice
my blank stare
a gaze into not here
if only they knew that
I left briefly
then I discover they
may have left too

ERIC ADAMS SWORN IN AS MAYOR

Eric Adams was sworn in as New York City's 110th mayor on December 31, 2021. Adams, a former NYPD officer who served as Brooklyn Borough President, takes office as the city faces a new surge in COVID-19 cases due to the highly-contagious Omicron variant. He also faces challenges from a progressive—and for the first time in the body's history, majority-female—City Council. Before taking office, Adams, spurred by the ongoing humanitarian crisis at Rikers, announced that he would reinstate the practice of solitary confinement in city jails.

A letter, signed by 29 incoming city council members, blasted the incoming mayor's decision, arguing that solitary confinement is inhumane and leads to more violence.

"Solitary confinement is considered by the United Nations, human rights organizations, and medical and mental health experts to be a form of torture," the letter read in part.

Adams fired back, invoking his experience as a police officer. "The one thing that's different from everyone that signed that letter and Eric Adams: I wore a bulletproof vest for 22 years and protected the people of this city," he said in a December news conference. "And when you do that, then you have the right to question me on safety and public safety matters."

Adams' response sets a disturbing precedent, suggesting that his decisions about crime and safety are beyond question, even when they are in direct conflict with the will of the people.

POEM #5

BY JULIE HERRNKIND

All I ever Wanted
 was to be held
 All I ever got
 was broken like a nut's shell
 All I ever Wanted
 was to have a family
 All I ever got
 was separated unconditionally
 All I ever Wanted
 was to be loved
 All I ever got
 was nothing and above
 All I ever Wanted
 was to belong to someone
 All I ever got
 was kicked and shoved
 All I ever Wanted
 was to be everything they weren't
 All I ever got
 wasn't much different
 All I ever Wanted
 is still in my soul
 All I ever got
 would make your blood run cold
 All I ever Wanted
 was to have peace
 All I ever got
 was the war that doesn't just rage inside of me
 All I ever Wanted
 was to make a difference
 All I ever got
 was that I survived with indifference
 All I ever Wanted
 was to be a mother
 All I ever got
 was now scattered like the leaves in the wind,
 unremembered by everyone but me
 All I ever Wanted
 was to feel intertwined
 All I ever got
 shook me loose, like an earthquake of independence with a
 noose
 All I ever Wanted
 was to see the good

All I ever got
 was ransacked with bad news
 All I ever Wanted
 was the truth
 All I ever got
 was all in the news
 All I ever Wanted
 was to see the stars
 All I ever got
 was twinkle, twinkle why you wishing on that star
 All I ever Wanted
 was to gain some understanding to this pain
 All I ever got
 was it's going to be okay
 All I ever Wanted
 was a future to be proud of
 All I ever got
 was worse than those before me that ended up
 condemning me
 All I ever Wanted
 was to ease these dreams
 All I ever got
 was my silenced screams
 All I ever Wanted
 was to have a sane reality
 All I ever got
 was pure hell unless living inside of me
 All I ever Wanted
 was to let go
 All I ever got
 was a will that must have been sent from above and that
 was pure hell not love
 All I ever Wanted
 was not to be left alone
 All I ever got
 was a broken home
 All I ever wanted
 is you
 All I ever got
 was a standard fuck you
 All I ever wanted
 was to squash these fears
 All I ever got
 was 25 years
 All I ever wanted
 was to believe
 All I ever got
 was my broken dreams surrounding me



Ronnie Spector

1943–2022

Rock'n'roll legend Ronnie Spector died of cancer on January 12, 2022. She was 78.

As the leader of the 1960s girl group, the Ronettes, Spector's uniquely raw and sweet vocals revolutionized pop music, and influenced the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. John Lennon once called the Ronettes hit "Be My Baby" the greatest rock'n'roll song of all time.

Spector, with her towering beehive hairdo and short skirts, is also remembered as a style icon. "I wanted to be the Marilyn Monroe of Spanish Harlem," she wrote in her 1990 memoir, "and I wasn't going to settle for anything less."

Contact us at:

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If you are still interested in joining the Imani's Safehouse book club, please let us know and we will send you a copy of Octavia Butler's *Kindred*. For anyone who is reading the book now, let us know what you think!

And as always, we welcome essays, poems, and artwork. Send us anything you would like to see published!