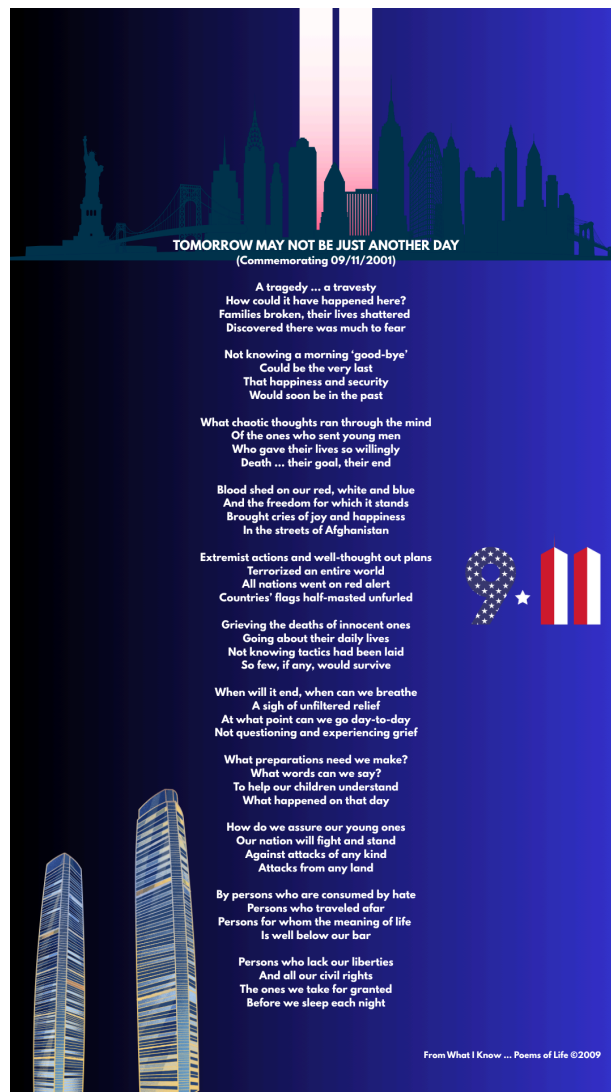




9/11 REMEMBERED



IT'S FALL!

My birthday month is now in the rearview mirror. Fall is the time of year when the air is crisp and teases of sweater and jacket weather; I love the clothes, not the temps! Fall is a time when red, yellow and orange leaves provide hope of better days ahead. Let us welcome this season as a forecast of mid-term election course-corrections for the current trajectory of this nation.



Speaking of November, do we or do we not **FALL BACK**? Will manually adjusting analog clocks to reflect a loss of one-hour become passé? My thoughts on the matter are unsettled since I have only known *springing forward* and *falling back*.

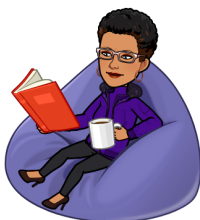
MEMOIR UPDATE

"*The memoir*" is currently hovering somewhere north of 300-pages ... so many memories and non-memories! *You might ask, "What is a non-memory?"* You will have to wait and see!

HELP NEEDED: I thought the title, *I Laugh, I Joke, I Do Not Play: Memoir of a Black Woman Born Colored* was settled. However, it has been suggested I shorten it. So, considering ...

- *I laugh, I joke, I do not play: Memoir of a Colored Woman* [strike-thru Colored and write Black above it]
- *I laugh, I joke, I do not play! A Memoir*

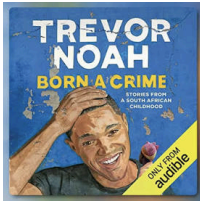
We shall see which, if either, makes the cut! I may be leaning towards the second, but I remain open to suggestions.



MOSTLY AUDIBLE!

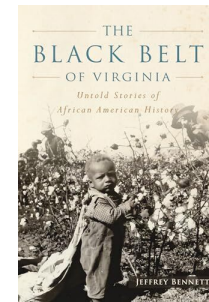
Many years ago, I was told "*In order to be a good writer, I must read.*" I wanted to be a good writer, but being a full-time mother and wife, *my life was life-ing!* I could not find pockets of time to pick up a book and simply sit with it for

hours without thoughts of things I should be doing creeping in; audiobooks were not yet a thing. I am making up for loss time.

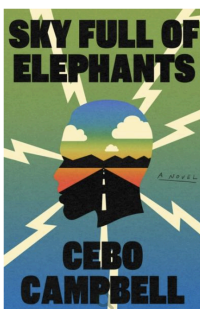


BORN A CRIME: Stories from a South African Childhood [9 hrs. 30 min.] is the autobiography of Trevor Noah. I cannot imagine anyone other than Trevor being the narrator as he delivers truths of apartheid while having you laugh as only he can. This was truly an educational and enjoyable listen. As the biracial child of a resilient and fearless black Xhosa mother and white Swiss father, a union which was illegal at the time, Trevor recounts his childhood using humor and honesty. The book was originally published in 2016.

My next read – yes, an actual book which I purchased, held and read – was prompted by my reading a column in the Richmond Times Dispatch. Jeffrey Bennett's column was about his ancestor, Arthur Adams. The column titled "Defying Jim Crow for Freedom," provided insights about a Black, gay moonshiner turned war veteran in Jim Crow America. The column was a very interesting read, hence my purchase of **The Black Belt of Virginia: Untold Stories of African American History.**



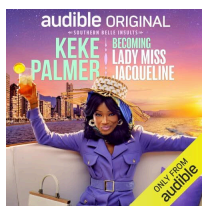
It took me a day and a half to read **Black Belt ...** cover to cover because I could not put it down. It is filled with references to places I know and places I have been. Virginia's history is filled with a plethora of little known Black facts and Mr. Bennett's book sheds a light on many of them, i.e., history we were not taught in school.



Sky Full of Elephants [10 hrs. 24 min.] by Cebo Campbell was added to my reading list on the recommendation of elder daughter. An internet overview states ... *It tells the story of a Black man who lives in a world in which all White people walked into the closest body of water and disappeared.* I had to listen to it twice. This book had me thinking and wondering ... wondering whom, amongst my less melanated friends, acquaintances and family, I would miss. Who did I wish to

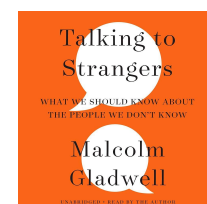
discover their possession of at least "one-drop" of which they were unaware so they could remain on dry land? Surprisingly, my list was longer than anticipated. **LOL!**

The casual greeting between two men on an airplane, one Black and the other Native American, prompted me to share ...

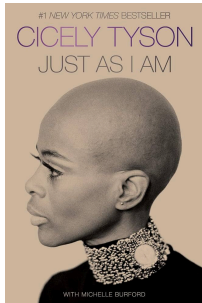


Becoming Lady Miss Jacqueline [3 hrs. 13 min.] was definitely a different kind of "read!" Keke Palmer's alter ego, Lady Miss Jacqueline, takes readers on a roller coaster ride of history, recent and present day events, inventions, etc. while dropping hundreds of names, real and fictional. To be honest, this was a strange listen BUT it did provide inspiration for me to consider Audible for my memoir! *Hm-m-m-m-m!* ... me speaking my life and sharing my poems! THE PROBLEM: I hate my voice!

Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know [8 hrs. 57 min.] is a nonfiction book written by Canadian writer Malcolm Gladwell. I may have felt differently about this book if I were a psychologist or analyst. The book starts with the Prairie View, Texas, traffic stop of

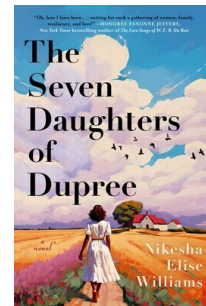


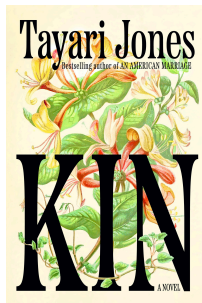
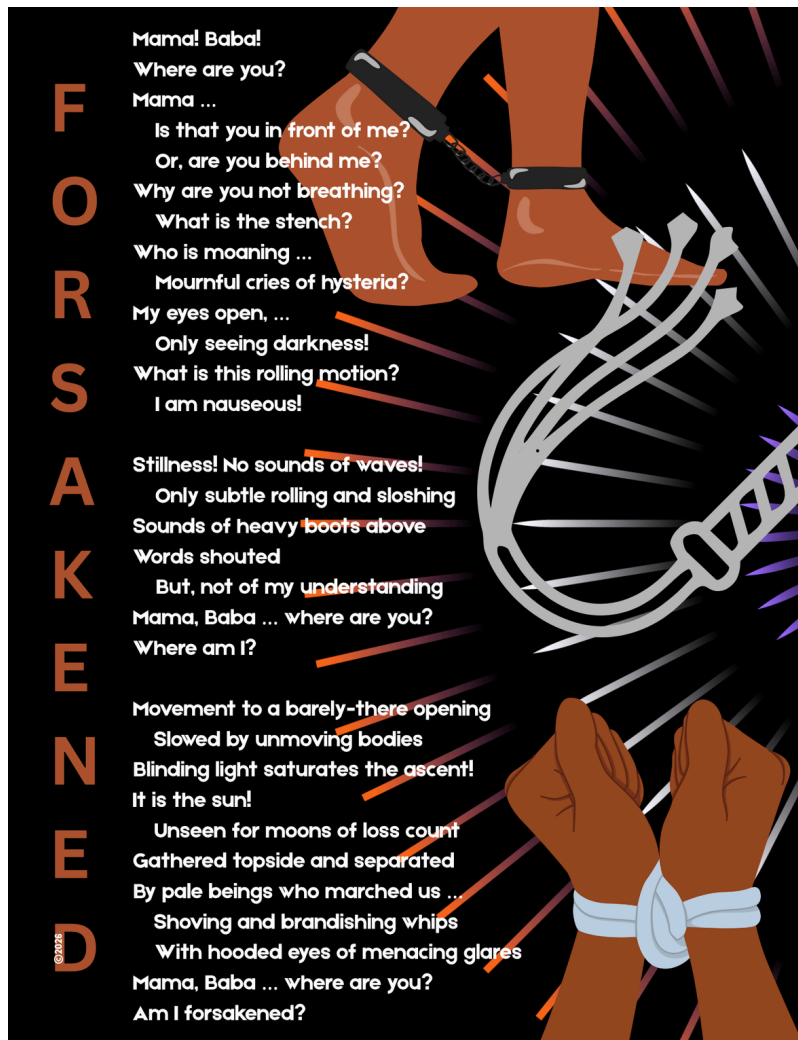
Sandra Bland which resulted in her suicide as well as the recounting of the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. Gladwell sheds light on various events involving "mismatched individuals" which occurred throughout history as well as current events in the news. For me, the analysis and connectivity of Bland and Brown to the other events, historical and recent, took too long.



Just As I Am [16 hrs. 8 min.] had been in my Audible library for a couple of months. After *Talking to Strangers ...*, I desired to listen and not think. Mission almost accomplished! Miss Cicely Tyson had me contemplating ... a lot! This is a beautiful book with an Introduction by Viola Davis and Ms. Tyson narrating her own story. Cicely Tyson truly **lived** her life and epitomized "A life well lived!"

I suspect if I had read the physical book vs. listening to the Audible of **The Seven Daughters of Dupree** [11 hrs. 7 min.], I would have grasped the familial connections of the characters more quickly. Nikesha Elise Williams first introduces the reader to the current branch of the Dupree family tree. It is not until near the end that family secrets are revealed pulling the entirety of this read together. I became immersed in the capture and enslavement of Sara, the first acknowledged generation of Dupree daughters. Her evolution and strong desire for freedom forged the path for the future daughters. Upon finishing, I could not help but wonder ... *Would I have survived the Middle Passage? Would I have survived the long walk? Would I have chanced running away to freedom?* Sara dropped *Forsaken* into my lap; it is a work in progress ...

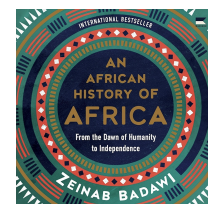




KIN [13 hr. 10 min.] by Tayari Jones is a historical fiction depicting "familial" ties of Annie and Vernice, two motherless daughters who become and remain close friends from cradle to death. The story is told from each of their perspectives in alternating chapters depicting struggles for Black women in the American South. This book is an Oprah Book Club choice, which had nothing to do with my selection.

Closing out this quarter with **An African History of Africa ...**

[15 hr. 32 min.] by Zeinab Badawi. This was an extremely interesting book and definitely flies in the face of all who want to say or want to believe that Africa does not have prominence in world history. The historical significance of the varied and many kingdoms have attributed much to mankind in spite of the marauding by European nations. This is not to say there was no in-fighting amongst African nations because there was along with African nations participating in the slave trade. However, she points out the differences



between indigenous slavery within Africa and chattel slavery outside of Africa.
This is a book which should definitely be included in school curricula.

MY LITERARY CHILDREN LOCATOR ...

[Author's Website](#)

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Y.B. Taylor, Writer



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