

In the Age of Anya: My Story in Events from 2012-2022



I would like to thank my mother for taking such good care of me and helping me with all my schoolwork, for being there when I'm sick, and for being the best mother anyone could have. I would like to thank my brother Malik for being the best brother in the world, for taking care of me, cooking my favorite food, taking me out shopping, and for doing all the things big brothers do. To all my family and friends that I didn't mention, a special thanks to you all for whatever part you played in my life in creating this book.



MY NAME IS **ANYA**, AND I'M A TEN-YEAR-OLD AFRICAN AMERICAN GIRL. I LIVE WITH MY MOM AND MY BROTHER, AND I LOVE SCHOOL AND READING AND SPENDING TIME WITH MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

MY MOM TEACHES ME TO **LOVE EVERYONE**, WHATEVER COLOR THEIR SKIN HAPPENS TO BE, OR WHERE THEY'RE FROM, OR WHATEVER IT IS ABOUT THEM THAT IS "DIFFERENT"— "**DIFFERENT**" IS **GOOD**! I JUST SEE PEOPLE. IF WE STOPPED SEEING COLOR AND CULTURE, AND LOOK AT THE PEOPLE INSTEAD, THE WORLD WOULD BE A MUCH BETTER PLACE!

I MAY ONLY BE TEN, BUT I'VE SEEN A LOT IN MY TEN YEARS! **MANY REALLY IMPORTANT, WONDERFUL, SAD, AND AMAZING THINGS HAVE HAPPENED SINCE I WAS BORN.**



A LOT OF THOSE THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED HAVE TO DO WITH RACE AND CULTURE, BUT ALL THOSE THINGS ARE PART OF HOW THE WORLD IS CHANGING, AND I HOPE IT IS CHANGING FOR THE BETTER.

THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE IN THE WORLD IS LOVE, AND LOVE WILL ALWAYS WIN. IT MAKES US BETTER PEOPLE. SHOWING LOVE TOWARDS SOMEONE DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO BE THEIR BEST FRIEND. LOVING SOMEONE MEANS YOU CARE FOR THEM, REGARDLESS OF WHO THEY ARE TO YOU, **JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE HUMAN!** SOME FOLKS SAY IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO LOVE EVERYONE.

I SAY IT'S WORTH A TRY.

COME WITH ME ON THIS JOURNEY THROUGH MY TEN YEARS OF LIFE AND LOOK AT SOME THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED SINCE 2012!



Official White House photo by Pete Souza, public domain image, altered from the original

I WAS BORN IN **2012**, AND A LOT HAPPENED THAT YEAR!

ONE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS THAT HAPPENED IN 2012 WAS THAT **BARACK OBAMA WAS RE-ELECTED AS PRESIDENT** OF THE UNITED STATES. HE AND HIS WIFE, **MICHELLE**, WERE THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES! THE OBAMAS DID LOTS OF GREAT STUFF WHILE HE WAS PRESIDENT.



Day 60 Occupy Wall Street November 15 2011 Shankbone 18.JPG. This file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license. Altered from the original image.

ALSO IN 2012, THE ENTIRE WORLD WAS HAVING A HARD TIME, DURING WHAT IS NOW CALLED THE "GREAT RECESSION." A LOT OF PEOPLE LOST THEIR HOMES AND ALL THEIR MONEY AND DIDN'T HAVE JOBS. IT WAS REALLY SAD. PEOPLE WERE VERY UPSET ABOUT INEQUALITY, WHICH IS WHEN SOME PEOPLE HAVE MORE ADVANTAGES AND PRIVILEGES THAN OTHERS, BECAUSE OF REASONS LIKE RACE AND OTHER THINGS THEY CAN'T CONTROL.

THE **OCCUPY MOVEMENT** WAS ABOUT **PEOPLE STANDING UP FOR EVERYONE'S RIGHTS** AND TRYING TO HELP OTHERS UNDERSTAND HOW THINGS COULD BE DIFFERENT, IF WE CHANGE HOW THE SYSTEM TREATS POOR PEOPLE AND PEOPLE OF COLOR. BLACK, WHITE, ASIAN, INDIGENOUS, AND ALL TYPES OF PEOPLE STOOD TOGETHER TO SAY, "WE WANT THINGS TO BE BETTER FOR EVERYONE!" IT WAS REALLY COOL!



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IN 2013, SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT HAPPENED: **THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT** STARTED. THREE BRAVE AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN GOT TOGETHER AND BEGAN A MOVEMENT WHICH CHANGED HISTORY BY **FOCUSING ON VIOLENCE AGAINST BLACK PEOPLE.**

IT STARTED ON TWITTER AND FACEBOOK WITH THE HASHTAG **#BLACKLIVESMATTER.** THEY DO THINGS LIKE HELP PEOPLE GET REGISTERED TO VOTE AND FIGHT CRIMINAL AND RACIAL INJUSTICE AND HELP THE ENVIRONMENT AND IMMIGRANTS. BLM IS IN LOTS OF CITIES AND COUNTRIES NOW, AND THEY WORK REALLY HARD TO HELP EVERYONE BE SAFER AND HAPPIER—AND EQUAL!



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IN **2014**, MALALA YOUSAFZAI, A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL FROM PAKISTAN, WON THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE! MALALA OVERCAME BEING ATTACKED BY TERRORISTS WHO DIDN'T WANT HER TO LEARN, BECAUSE SHE WAS A GIRL. SHE ESCAPED PAKISTAN AND GOT BETTER, AND MALALA WENT ON TO BECOME KNOWN ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR HER FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT OF EVERY CHILD TO HAVE AN EDUCATION. SHE IS VERY BRAVE AND VERY STRONG!



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IN **2015**, A VERY IMPORTANT THING HAPPENED: LOVE WON! IN **2015**, THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES DECIDED THAT **LGBTQ+ PEOPLE CAN LEGALLY GET MARRIED IN EVERY STATE!**

THIS WAS IMPORTANT BECAUSE, BEFORE THAT, ONLY MEN AND WOMEN COULD GET MARRIED, TO EACH OTHER. BUT WE KNOW THAT WASN'T RIGHT, AND THAT WHOEVER WANTS TO BE MARRIED SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO IT. SO THEY TOOK IT TO COURT, AND THE COURT AGREED WITH THEM! **"LOVE IS LOVE"** WAS WHAT THEY SAID—AND THEY WERE RIGHT! NOW PEOPLE WHO LOVE EACH OTHER CAN GET MARRIED AND SHARE A LIFE TOGETHER, AND THEY HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS ANY OTHER COUPLE.



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IN 2016, A REALLY TALENTED YOUNG FOOTBALL PLAYER NAMED **COLIN KAEPERNICK** DID SOMETHING THAT SHOCKED AND INSPIRED AMERICA. DURING A FOOTBALL GAME, WHEN THEY PLAYED THE NATIONAL ANTHEM, COLIN WENT DOWN ON ONE KNEE. HE DID THIS TO PROTEST POLICE BRUTALITY AND RACIAL INEQUALITY IN THE UNITED STATES.

SOME PEOPLE DIDN'T LIKE WHAT HE DID, BECAUSE HE MADE THEM FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE BY TELLING THE TRUTH. COLIN ENDED UP NOT BEING ABLE TO PLAY FOOTBALL AGAIN AFTER THAT. HE'S AN ACTIVIST, WRITER, AND SPEAKER NOW, HELPING INSPIRE AND EDUCATE PEOPLE ABOUT INJUSTICE AND INEQUALITY EVERYWHERE. **HE STOOD UP...OR, KNELT...FOR WHAT HE BELIEVED IN.** THAT IS REALLY AWESOME!



(Courtesy of Woman on 20s), image altered from original.

ALSO IN 2016, PRESIDENT OBAMA ANNOUNCED THAT **HARRIET TUBMAN**,
THE FORMERLY ENSLAVED WOMAN WHO HELPED SO MANY OTHER
ENSLAVED PEOPLE ESCAPE IN THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BEFORE AND
DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, **WILL BE ON THE \$20 BILL!** HARRIET
WILL BE **BOTH THE FIRST WOMAN AND THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN**
TO BE ON A U.S. BILL!

IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME FOR THIS TO HAPPEN, BUT IT WILL HAPPEN!
HARRIET TUBMAN WAS AN AMAZING WOMAN, AN AMAZING PERSON,
WHO **FOUGHT FOR WHAT SHE BELIEVED IN, AND HELPED OTHERS EVEN**
WHEN IT PUT HER LIFE IN DANGER. SHE IS A REAL ROLE MODEL AND
ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF HOW LOVE WON, EVEN DURING A WAR!



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IN JANUARY OF 2017, OVER 400,000 PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON, DC., AND OVER 3 MILLION PEOPLE WORLDWIDE, HELD DEMONSTRATIONS AND MARCHES. THE WOMEN'S MARCHES WERE TO BRING ATTENTION TO IMPORTANT ISSUES LIKE **WOMEN'S AND IMMGRANTS' RIGHTS, AND RACIAL EQUALITY.**

EVERY YEAR SINCE, THERE HAS BEEN A WOMEN'S MARCH IN WASHINGTON, DC, AND OTHER PLACES. PEOPLE OF ALL RACES AND CULTURES GET TOGETHER AND TAKE A STAND FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE IN: **LOVE, EQUALITY, AND FREEDOM!**



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ALSO IN **2018**, A 15-YEAR-OLD GIRL FROM SWEDEN TOOK A STAND BY ORGANIZING A "**SCHOOL STRIKE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.**" **GRETA THUNBERG** SAT ALONE OUTSIDE THE SWEDISH PARLIAMENT BUILDING, ASKING FOR A RADICAL REDUCTION IN GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. SINCE THEN, THUNBERG HAS RALLIED ROUGHLY **10 MILLION PEOPLE FROM 260 COUNTRIES** TO JOIN IN THE SCHOOL STRIKES.

KIDS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! AS MALALA AND GRETA HAVE SHOWN US, YOUNG PEOPLE CAN LEAD THE WORLD IN DOING THE RIGHT THING, AND HELPING OTHER PEOPLE REALIZE THAT WE CAN MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE! THEY ARE INSPIRING!



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SERENA WILLIAMS IS ONE OF THE BEST PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES IN HISTORY. SHE HAS WON EVERY MAJOR TENNIS TOURNAMENT, INCLUDING THE OLYMPICS! IN **2019**, SHE COMPETED IN ALL THE BIG TOURNAMENTS AND DID REALLY WELL IN THEM, EVEN THOUGH SHE GOT HURT AND WAS RECOVERING FROM INJURIES FOR MOST OF THE YEAR. SERENA IS ALSO AN ACTRESS, A WRITER, AN ACTIVIST, AND A MOM! SHE IS ONE OF THOSE WOMEN WHO THEY SAY "HAS IT ALL," AND IS A ROLE MODEL TO ALL OF US!

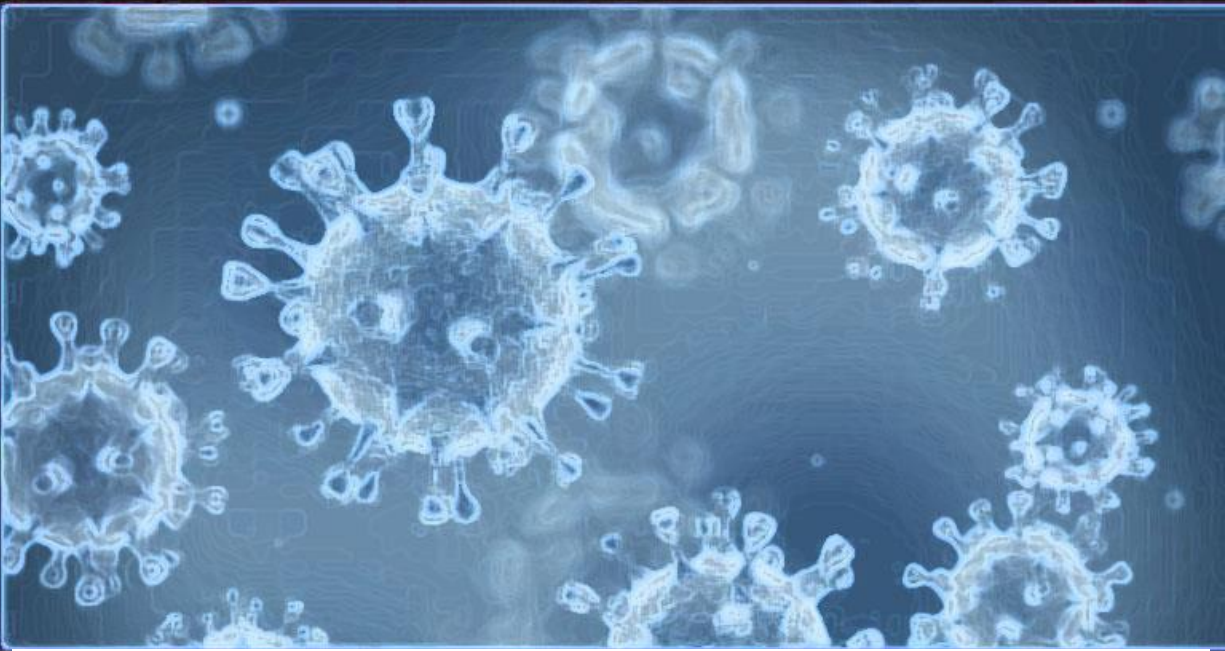


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ALSO IN **2019**, SOMETHING VERY SCARY HAPPENED: THE VIRUS, **COVID-19**, HIT THE WORLD. THEY CALLED IT THE **COVID PANDEMIC**, BECAUSE IT WAS AN EPIDEMIC THAT SPREAD ALL OVER THE WORLD.

COVID 19 CHANGED EVERYTHING, FOR ALMOST EVERYONE IN THE WORLD.

LOTS OF PEOPLE GOT VERY SICK, AND MANY OF THEM DIED. PEOPLE HAD TO STAY HOME FROM WORK AND SCHOOL, TO NOT GET OTHER PEOPLE SICK OR GET SICK THEMSELVES. COUNTRIES STOPPED LETTING PEOPLE TRAVEL FOR A WHILE, TO TRY TO KEEP THE VIRUS FROM SPREADING, BUT IT STILL DID ANYWAY. I COULDN'T GO TO SCHOOL FOR OVER A YEAR—WE HAD TO DO CLASSES ON ZOOM AND AT HOME! EVEN THOUGH COVID-19 IS STILL AROUND, **THE WORLD IS STARTING TO RECOVER.** WE HAVE TO LOVE EACH OTHER AND DO THE THINGS TO KEEP EACH OTHER SAFE AND WELL!



Image courtesy of @kamalaharris on Twitter. Image altered from original.



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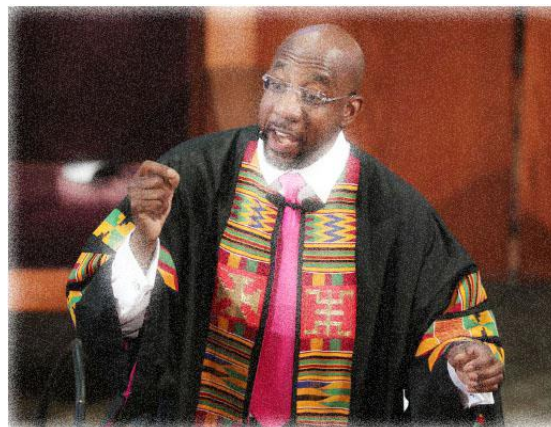


Image courtesy of. Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Raphael-Warnock>. Accessed 29 December 2022.

2020 WAS A BIG ELECTION YEAR! LOTS OF PEOPLE CAME OUT TO VOTE, AND MANY PEOPLE OF COLOR, WOMEN, AND LGBTQ+ CANDIDATES WERE ELECTED! A VERY IMPORTANT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION TOOK PLACE, AND THE REALLY COOL THING WAS THAT KAMALA HARRIS, WHO IS THE FIRST BLACK AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN WOMAN, NOT TO MENTION THE FIRST WOMAN, WAS ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT!

ALSO, STACY ABRAMS RAN FOR GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA (AND ALMOST WON!), AND REVEREND RAPHAEL WARNOCK WAS ELECTED AS THE FIRST BLACK SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF GEORGIA! BESIDES BEING A SENATOR, REV. WARNOCK IS THE PASTOR AT EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH, WHERE REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ONCE PASTORED! THE ELECTION WAS VERY CLOSE, BUT REV. WARNOCK WON—TWICE! HE WAS JUST RE-ELECTED IN 2022. LOVE WON!



Image of NYC BLM mural courtesy of Eden, Janine and Jim from New York City via Wikimedia Commons, licensed through Creative Commons Attribution 2.0. Image altered from the original.

THE BLACK COMMUNITY LOST MANY PEOPLE TO INJUSTICE AND POLICE VIOLENCE THROUGH THE FIRST DECADE OF MY LIFE: **MICHAEL BROWN, ERIC GARNER, PHILANDO CASTILE, FREDDIE GRAY, TRAYVON MARTIN,** AND MANY, MANY MORE FROM 2012 ON...THEN, IN **2020**, WE LOST **GEORGE FLOYD, BREONNA TAYLOR, AHMAUD ARBURY.** AND OTHERS. THE SUMMER OF 2020 BROUGHT DEMONSTRATIONS FROM BLM AND ANTIFA ACTIVISTS, AS WELL AS EVERYDAY PEOPLE, INCLUDING KIDS LIKE ME! WE WANT EVERYONE TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO WERE TAKEN FROM US UNJUSTLY, SO WE WANT TO **SAY THEIR NAMES AND NEVER FORGET!**



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ON JANUARY 20, **2021**, PRESIDENT BIDEN AND VICE PRESIDENT HARRIS WERE INAUGURATED, WHICH IS THE OFFICAL CEREMONY SWEARING THE NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT INTO THEIR OFFICE. IT IS A HUGE PARTY, WHERE LOTS OF FAMOUS AND IMPORTANT PEOPLE COME, DRESS UP, AND CELEBRATE THE NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT. THE 2021 INAUGURATION WAS SPECIAL IN MANY WAYS, BUT ESPECIALLY BECAUSE **AMANDA GORMAN, A 20-YEAR-OLD YOUNG AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN, READ HER ORIGINAL POEM, "THE HILL WE CLIMB."**

AMANDA WAS THE FIRST EVER YOUTH POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES! SHE SAID, **"THERE IS ALWAYS LIGHT. IF ONLY WE'RE BRAVE ENOUGH TO SEE IT. IF ONLY WE'RE BRAVE ENOUGH TO BE IT."**



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I'VE TALKED ABOUT HOW PEOPLE HAVE STOOD UP FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE IN...WELL, THAT KIND OF POWER ISN'T ALWAYS USED THE RIGHT WAY, TO HELP OTHERS. ON **JANUARY 6, 2021**, A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO DID NOT AGREE WITH THE RESULTS OF THE 2020 ELECTION GOT TOGETHER AT THE US CAPITOL AND **RIOTED**, BREAKING INTO THE HALLS OF CONGRESS, AND EVEN HURTING AND KILLING SOME POLICE OFFICERS WHO WERE TRYING TO KEEP THEM OUT. **IT WAS A VERY SAD DAY IN AMERICAN HISTORY**, AND PEOPLE ARE STILL TALKING ABOUT IT, TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO DEAL WITH IT, AND HOW TO PUNISH THE ONES WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE. ALL I KNOW IS, **IN THE END, LOVE WILL WIN, WE JUST HAVE TO KEEP ON STANDING UP FOR WHAT IS RIGHT!**



Image courtesy of Carroll University Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Image altered from original.

2022 WAS A BIG YEAR FOR MANY PEOPLE. BUT ONE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS THAT HAPPENED IN 2022 WAS THAT JUNETEENTH WAS OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED AS A FEDERAL HOLIDAY!

PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN DECLARED ALL ENSLAVED PEOPLE WERE FREE IN THE **EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION IN 1863**, DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR. HOWEVER, THE ENSLAVED PEOPLE IN TEXAS DID NOT HEAR ABOUT IT UNTIL **JUNE 19, 1865!** THEY WERE THE LAST ENSLAVED PEOPLE TO HEAR ABOUT THEIR FREEDOM. JUNETEENTH HAS BEEN CELEBRATED BY PEOPLE ALL OVER THE COUNTRY FOR DECADES, BUT NOW IT IS A FEDERAL HOLIDAY, AND **EVERYONE CELEBRATES AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE AND FREEDOM NOW!**



**THANK YOU FOR WALKING THROUGH THE FIRST DECADE OF MY LIFE WITH ME. THERE ARE MANY THINGS WE SAW ON THIS PATH, SOME VERY WONDERFUL...SOME VERY SAD...BUT ALL OF THEM ARE PART OF HISTORY—
PART OF MY HISTORY, AND YOURS, TOO!**

REMEMBER WHAT MY MOM SAYS: LOVE ALWAYS WINS.

WE ARE THE ONES WHO HAVE TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN. BY REMEMBERING THE SAD AND SCARY THINGS AS EXAMPLES OF THINGS WE WANT TO NOT REPEAT AND LOOKING AT THE INSPIRING AND HAPPY THINGS AS EXAMPLES WHERE WE WANT TO GO IN THE FUTURE, WE CAN DO IT!

WE ARE THE CHANGE.

LET'S LOVE EACH OTHER AND CHANGE THE WORLD IN THE PROCESS!

LOVE, ANYA