

## A Reckoning Between Shadow and Shine

Every 30 seconds, a human dies. One cheek to cheek hug is lethal. In a blink, the artist's brush and fountain pen freeze. Unemployment and stimulus checks are too little and too late. Lysol fumes swap as fresh air; quarantines house the office, the classroom, and a night out on the town. To vote is now a Special Forces mission. Zoom rooms and TikToks are how we fly to see Grandmas and Uncle Joes.

Finally, our longest December night ushers a half-moon. Part shadow, part shine, the fine line that divides command a Reckoning. An andante movement escorts 295 pandemic days—no doubt tomorrow's nostalgia told from once closed cafes and bookstores.

The Revolution is indeed televised in city streets across the country, after a thin blue line knees-to-neck the extinction, another begging Nubian voice. Military policing over armor Black and Brown protesters, arm-in-arm with White bodies tased into a reality, *Black lives do matter*. Mailboxes stuffed with books on "How To Be Antiracist" for folk once wearing "I Am Woke" T-shirts. Anti-Black fog conjures up The Ancestors' rage; this time They call for justice as radical love and self-care.

Snake tongues flickering under red trucker caps smell their rants on just how great America is hoarding toilet paper and bread, caging Mexican babies. To wear or not to wear a mask is a half-witted debate; to beach or not to beach is a privileged squabble. And as crooked fingers wag self-righteous Facebook posts, the virus spatters like freckles on a sun-kissed face.

Oh, Winter Solstice who art in the heavens, forgive our trespasses, hellish pokes at credible science, exploiting warriors in blue scrubs, and snatching souls of sons and daughters of the African Diaspora. We fall on our knees, dear Mother, bow to your shadow and shine. After a cold night, palm to palm in deep breathing, give us daybreak, celestial wisdom, and deliver us to what is holy and true.

– Yvette Angelique  
December 2020