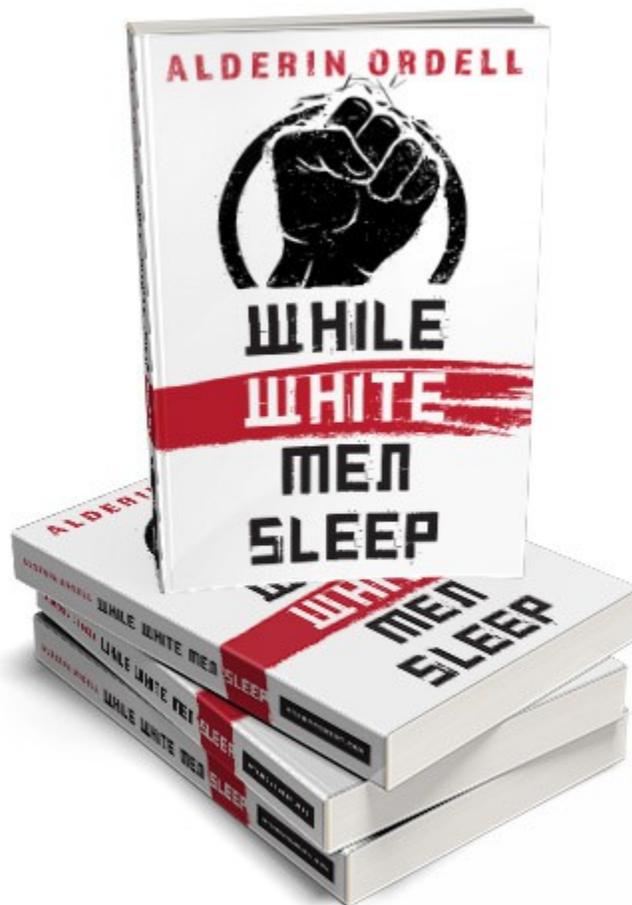


While White Men Sleep  
Chapters 1-3



by Alderin Ordell

*“If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightening. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be moral one; or it may be physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what people will submit to, and you have found the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue until they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.”*

Frederick Douglas



# Chapter 1

It was two am and Mandy felt like someone was suffocating her. Her heart pounded while something twisted her stomach in knots. She felt like a spider backed into a corner about to strike.

Mandy sprang from her bed, snatched her black Droid X smart-phone from her desk and opened on a chat room called, “Gather and Resist.”

The posts were fast and furious—sadness for Hillary Clinton's loss, skepticism that the vote was fair, encouragement and love, resolve to keep fighting, and lots of anger directed at Donald Trump. Mandy clicked on “empower2”, the handle for her best friend Janet. A private chat screen popped open.

*Can't sleep... Mandy typed.*

*No one can. Janet typed back. Are you okay?*

*It's like I'm with Mark again.*

*Why? Mark left your life forever.*

*But there are of thousands of men just like him. They own everything. And they all think like Trump.*

*I'm here for you.*

*I appreciate that. But we have to do something about this.*

*There's a protest happening at Pioneer's Square in downtown Portland. I was thinking about going but was scared to go alone. You want to go with me?*

*Meet you there in thirty minutes.*

= )

Mandy took the Max train from East Gresham to Downtown Portland. At Pioneer's Square, rowdy protesters wearing bandanas over their faces threw rocks and bricks at cars and buildings. SWAT officers ran over to intervene. Helicopters circled over-head, thrashing the wind. Mandy caught Janet's anxious glance near the old Pioneer Courthouse fence and rushed over to her.

Janet, a small framed African-American woman, stood nervously against the rickety metal barrier that stood guard over the aging gray stone courthouse. Her eyes darted left and right until she caught sight of Mandy. She wore tight brown jeans that clung to her body, outlining her slender frame and a Black Lives Matter sweater. She tied her thick, long black hair in a pink rubber band that allowed her dark curls to cascade down her back, giving her a youthful appearance despite her 35 years. Janet clenched her arms around herself. "Didn't expect to see them tonight," she said, eyes trained on the officers pushing their way to the troublemakers.

"Reminds me of some of the civil rights protests my mom went to," Mandy said, a memory of charred bodies flashed through her mind.

"That's right, you've seen this before."

"One major difference, through." Mandy pointed to a group of three girls posing for selfies. "Everyone here is white."

Janet batted her eyes and surveyed the crowd in disbelief. "Holy shit, you're right! Well, this is Portland."

"Still, this ain't right."

“Are we gonna march with them?”

Mandy shook her head. Then a frantic reporter nearly knocked Mandy over as she rushed to set up for an NBC News live broadcast. A twenty-something white girl dressed in pink stood ready to be interviewed, a trickle of blood running down her face.

“Three, two, one... live!”

“We're here live in Pioneer Square where police conflicts with protesters have been escalating all night. We have Jamie Harris here who suffered a cut above her right eye. What happened, Jaime?”

“We were marching and suddenly this rock hit me in the face. I fell down, but I think I'm okay.”

“You're not going to the hospital?”

“We came here to show the world how mad we are that a sexist pig like Trump is now our President. A little blood will not stop me!”

Her friends cheered in the background.

Mandy scoffed and then walked in front of Jaime, startling the reporter. Janet pulled out her phone.

“Pardon me, but I have something to say,” Mandy said. She glared at the white girl who took a couple steps back while her friends scowled at Mandy in the background. The reporter gave an uncomfortable glance to the older black woman with curly salt and pepper hair. Mandy's blue jeans and green Portland State University t-shirt suggested nothing out of the ordinary about her. But her intense brown eyes looked at people like she could cut straight through their bullshit. And while others on the crowded street looked apprehensive and

nervous in the building chaos, Mandy stood solid and confident, determined to speak her mind. The reporter exchanged glances with her producer, who gave her a hesitant nod. "Go ahead."

Mandy peered into the lens and projected her powerful voice. "The problem isn't Trump, the problem is white. This is a white society with a white government fueled by white special interests in a system built by and for white people, rooted in white supremacy. What you all are doing here doesn't matter! Nothing will change until the whole system changes and that will take a lot more than this protest. It'll take a movement. Look around you. Every building, every car, every bank, every street sign, every stitch of clothes people are wearing are part of the military industrial complex. And at the top is a ruling class of white men pushing nationalism and globalism on all of us until they control every last thing."

The reporter took a stressed breath. "Thank you for that perspective. What's your name, ma'am?"

"Mandy Jones."

Just then a tear gas capsule exploded about a half-block away and the camera cut to a group of people running away.

The reporter took off and Mandy and Jaime exchanged awkward glances, then Janet ran over. "I recorded everything you said and posted it on You Tube!"

Mandy grinned. "Let's get out of here."

Two hours later, back in Mandy's tiny studio apartment cluttered with books, unfinished college papers, and stacks of laundry waiting to be put away, Mandy

and Janet stared at YouTube in disbelief.

“100,000 people!” Janet exclaimed.

“I had no idea the internet moved so fast,” Mandy commented. “Why are so many people watching me?”

“You stood up a white girl. You struck a nerve. Look at all these comments!”

Mandy scanned them “Well, some are nice anyway.”

Janet scowled.

“DarcyM” popped up on Janet's phone with a chat invite: Is Mandy there?  
Can I chat with her?

“Should I click on it?” Janet asked Mandy, who shrugged.

Janet accepted and wrote: *This is Mandy, What do you want?*

DarcyM wrote: *I saw your video and I wanted to say I whole-heartedly disagree with you! I grew up in a trailer here in Louisiana and we had many days where we ate nothing but a potato for dinner. You make it sound like things are so easy for white people. It's not a white system. It's survival of the fittest, the way it should be.*

Mandy tensed, grabbed Janet's phone, then wrote back: *Has anyone ever denied your right to vote? Have you ever been pulled over by the police for no reason and charged with crimes you didn't commit? Have you ever lived in a neighborhood where people didn't want you there and harassed you because of the color of your skin?*

*No. But nobody has given me anything, either. I had to work minimum wage jobs to put myself through school.*

*And yet here you are getting by. Not in jail. An entire world of possibilities in front of you. They have arrested me seven times fighting for my rights.*

*You make it sound like violence is the answer. You guys fighting on the streets are no*

*better than terrorists. That's one thing I like about Trump, he's for law and order. You guys throw a tantrum because your candidate lost and suddenly you think our whole society should change. I even heard people calling for Oregon to secede from the union! Hello? This is the United States of America and I, for one, am a proud white American!*

Mandy began furiously typing back and Janet placed her hand on her friend's shoulder. "It's not worth it."

Mandy caught herself, erased choice words and typed: *It's not easy for a white woman to understand white privilege.*

She ended the chat.

"At least she was polite," Janet commented.

"Yes, polite. But completely out of touch." Mandy rubbed her chin, lost in her thoughts for a moment. Then she finally said, "I know what we should do next."

"You want to do more?"

"Yes. There's something I've wanted to do ever since my mother was murdered. A plan, actually."

"To do what?"

"Confront our racist society head-on. Maybe start a revolution."

Janet looked away nervously.

"Look! My video has gained another 10,000 views in the time we've been sitting here. I feel like this is the opportunity I've been waiting for."

"What exactly do you want to do?"

"Many things. But first, I want to go to Harahan, Louisiana to stage a massive protest."

"Are you out of your mind!" Janet asked incredulously. "Why Harahan?"

“Because it’s the whitest town in America and it’s close to where the largest slave revolt in US history happened. People will listen to me there.”

“I don’t know, Mandy...”

“C’mon, Janet! If this many people are interested in what I said tonight, wait until they hear what I have to say next!”

The header for Chapter 2 features a black silhouette of a hand with the index and middle fingers extended, positioned to the left of the text 'Chapter 2'. The text is in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The entire graphic is set against a background that transitions from a dark orange on the left to a lighter orange on the right.

## Chapter 2

It took Mandy and Janet ten weeks to put all the details in place but by January 23rd, 2017 they were nearly set to go to Harahan.

News coverage was frantic. The Women's Rights marches were also happening that weekend with over two million women expected to protest across the country. But the bigger story for the last month, even bigger than the small crowds at Trump's inauguration, was Mandy Jones leading her black women to Harahan.

With their flight only four hours away, Mandy sat alone on her bed/couch in her cramped studio apartment in Gresham, Oregon tying up a few loose ends. She looked sadly at a pile of text books at her feet that she had just boxed up to ship out to buyers on Amazon. Mandy needed those books to complete her current class load on her way to getting an MA in Sociology at Portland State University. Her goal was to one day use her degree and experience to get a job organizing community events in Gresham to help the homeless youth. She sighed. That program was now on hold. She needed the money even more.

Mandy then looked up at a poster of Nina Simone hanging in her kitchen/office area. Nina's deep eyes sparkled with depth and wisdom as she stood on stage in a white dress that was draped over her slender but tempered body. Nina's fist powerfully clutched her mic as she sang the 1960's protest song *Mississippi Goddam*. It was Mandy's favorite picture of Nina Simone who was a

role model for Mandy growing up.

Mandy's fondest memories of her mother, Jane Africa, were baking cinnamon rolls and listening to Nina Simone in their Philadelphia apartment kitchen. It was one of the few times Mandy and her mother ever connected. Mandy even used her mother's baking recipes to start a food cart in downtown Portland—Cinnamon and Spice. #Mandy sighed again. She closed and sold Cinnamon and Spice last week. Again, she needed the money.

This plan of her was already costing Mandy so much and she hadn't even left Gresham yet! But now it was time. After putting her packages out for the postman, Mandy grabbed her suitcase and left her apartment to go meet Janet at the airport.

*Harahan Goddam...*

During the Uber ride to the Portland Airport, Mandy's phone rang. It was Mary. "I'm worried about you, sis. You can still call this whole thing off."

"You've said that before. I love you but there is no way I'm turning back now."

"Do you think this will really matter? It just puts a big target on your back. Those white people are mean down there! You know Louisiana has the highest rate of gun ownership in the whole country? They're all packin'! Even the white moms with the baby strollers are packin'! They put their heat right next to the formula!"

Mandy chuckled.

"And what are you bringing to protect yourself?"

“A good idea. Passion for change.”

“You can't change these white folks! I'll bet they've already got IRS agents working on throwing you in jail for your tax issues. They've probably got police officers surveying you 24-7 looking for something to arrest you for. You can't win. You stick your neck up and they'll chop your head off!”

“And yet sitting in my crappy apartment and doing nothing or marching alongside a bunch of middle class white women fixes nothing, either. C'mon, I'm doing this for Mom.” #Mary quieted. “She died doing exactly what you're doing.”

“That's right.”

“Did her life matter?”

“It mattered!” Mandy snapped. “Her involvement in MOVE mattered. And her murder is the reason you and I need to keep fighting. The children that were blown up that day could have been us.”

“Let em' have the South, Mandy! We can stay in the North, stay in the cities. Or why can't we move to Canada? It's cold there but at least we'd be free.”

“I ain't moving to no goddamn Canada!”

Mary laughed. “Me, either!”

“We have to fight for Louisiana, Mary. Our own ancestors were enslaved and murdered there. And stupidity and racism in the South spreads like a virus creating pockets of hate all over the world. Louisiana is ground zero.”

“Damn it, Mandy! You're stubborn like Mom. I tell you what, I am booking the next flight to New Orleans and you're not marching one step until I am by your side.”

“I don't need a protector, Mary.”

“I'm coming to Harahan and I guarantee I WILL be packing.”

Mary hung up and Mandy felt even more stressed than before. Mandy loved her sister. She even loved that her sister was military-trained and could provide legitimate protection. But Mary was angry, loose, impulsive... And she blamed Mandy for everything.

Could Mandy have saved their mother? Mary thought so and her cross looks and scowls never missed an opportunity to let Mandy know.

The next morning Mandy, Janet and 50,000 other protesters from across the US gathered in the tiny downtown of Harahan, causing the locals to show up with homemade signs asking everyone to leave. “We’re a Quiet Town, We Don’t Want Trouble,” one sign read.

Mandy was surprised at the turnout and wasn't quite sure if everyone was there because of her video, because of the media coverage, or because of Janet.

Janet was deeply involved in the Black Lives Matters movement. She helped design and maintain the website for the Oregon branch, attended all the meetings, wrote articles and protested. She used her connections to invite Black Lives Matters members from across the nation to Harahan.

Mandy scanned the crowd. She definitely saw Black Lives Matters t-shirts and signs. But Mandy also saw pockets of protesters that dressed urban, like they were straight out of inner city Los Angeles or New Orleans. Some looked suburban in designer jeans and jackets. Some looked like they were from Miami in floral pattern shirts and brown slacks. Others looked like they might have

flown in from New York. The bottom line was the crowd was diverse.

The white people of Harahan looked shocked, bewildered and frightened to have so many black people gathered in their town. Mandy was happy that they showed up though. They would have no choice but to hear her words.

There were few parking lots in Harahan so most of the protesters bused and car pooled from New Orleans. The media set up at local parks. The news cameras were all pointed at a makeshift stage built on 1st street while a small army of police stared tensely on the outskirts of the crowd.

Backstage, Mandy heard the constant clicking of camera lenses and it seemed her name was on everyone's tongue. At ten a.m., she approached the microphone, raising her hands to quiet the tense murmur.

"Today I'm here to announce the beginning of the Oya movement!" Mandy announced powerfully, pausing for effect. "Oya is an African goddess of war whose name literally translates to 'she-tore.' And that is exactly what we're here to do today—tear up the white system that controls our country and rebuild it into something better."

A banner dropped behind Mandy depicting Oya dressed in war clothing with a spear in her hand. Cameras clicked at a furious rate and a flurry of comments ensued before Mandy raised a hand to once again silence the crowd.

"We are here in Harahan, Louisiana because it is the whitest town in all of Louisiana that overwhelmingly voted for Donald Trump in this last election. But more than that, we are here because this land was once full of slave plantations and this area saw the biggest slave uprising in American history—the German Coast Revolt.

"For those of you who don't know, the German Coast Revolt started on January 8th, 1811 at the Andry plantation just west of here in the John the Baptist parish. Charles Deslondes, a mulatto slave driver, organized 25 slaves that rose up against the plantation owners. They ransacked stores, gathered supplies and munitions, and pillaged other plantations while freeing more slaves. Then they marched south to New Orleans fully intent on taking over the city.

"Two days later, about twenty miles from New Orleans, thirty US soldiers battled the uprising. Twenty slave insurgents soon lay dead. The others were captured or fled to the swamps. By the end of the month, all the insurgents that had fled were captured, and the soldiers beheaded each one."

Mandy again paused for effect.

"That's right, the military soldiers, with the help of local law enforcement and the blessing of elected white officials, cut their fucking heads off! And if that weren't enough, their heads were placed on poles, lining the road to New Orleans to remind everyone of white power and who was really in charge."

Mandy took a deep breath. Most stared back at her in awe, not knowing the story.

"As I drove here from New Orleans today, I imagined those heads of our ancestors lining the street, rotting on poles, in the most undignified manner possible. Would any human do that to a pack of stray dogs? Would they do that to rats in a lab? If an elephant went feral and stomped a child to death, would we put its head on a stick? No. But that's what happened to black people trying to be free. And that's why we're here today. You all think this white tyranny is in

the past but I assure you it has only transformed. Donald J. Trump, who is now the 45th President of the United States, is a modern day slave owner.”

Many in the crowd gasped. Some Trump supporters yelled from the back, working in a couple slurs. This got the attention of nearby police officers who scattered in pursuit. Despite the commotion, Mandy continued: “Who produces the cheap materials Trump uses in his luxury condo buildings all around the world? Servants. Who builds his resorts and golf courses? Servants. Who drives him around? Cooks his food? Servants. And by servants I mean minorities, here and abroad. People like me and all of these black women in front of me. Poor immigrants, legal and illegal, taking whatever job they can get to provide for their families so Trump can make another million dollars and play another round of golf.”

“You shut your mouth!” a man yelled, and the crowd became more and more agitated.

“The white system doesn't call us niggers anymore, they use us for cheap labor and if we don't play along, they call us criminals.

“The US has more people in jail than most of the world combined. And who's in those jails? Us! And who's working in those jails for a pittance of pay? Us! Slave-fucking labor!

“This white system hasn't changed since the day black heads lined the streets to New Orleans. And all you white people in this town are part of it. You don't even understand your white privilege. But look at your elected officials! Gerrymandering has drawn up your districts so they can get elected again and again with no competition! How old was Strom Thurman, a former member of

the KKK, before he retired from congress? 94! And only because he was dying!

“And this white system lies to all of you. They tell you you're all the victims, that they'll get you better jobs and better pay and all the materials things you want. Empty promises. Like a cheap whore they use you for your vote and toss you aside until they need you again for the next election. Y'all keep falling for it!”

A couple rocks and bottles flew up on stage. Mandy noticed several officers talking on radios. She caught Mary's eye off-stage who looked very concerned. She knew she needed to hurry.

"Today, this white system, this military industrial complex fueled by blood money, corporate greed, fake news, and cheap migrant labor, ENDS! Like Oya, who is unbeaten in battle, we will fight for a revolution and we won't stop until we prevail!

"Our demands are simple: end the war on black people and other minorities. Remove all white nationalists from public office. Destroy the military industrial complex and close any corporation or bank that benefits from it. And create a shared-resource society where all people have equal access to the things they need to survive.

"In the coming weeks I will expose each facet of the military industrial complex and those white individuals who power it. I will show how white supremacy is still at the core of this country and expose the 9/11 and World War 2 cover-ups.

“The Oya movement will give everyone the reason and the way to change! Black lives matter and we're not going to take it anymore!”

Mandy was fired up and poised to say more but the crowd had deteriorated into chaos, police and SWAT running in every direction. There was an onslaught of yelling, two fistfights that looked like mosh pits, while rocks and other objects flew. Mary, wearing camouflage pants, white t-shirt, with her hair braided and slicked back, ran out and grabbed her sister's arm and pulled her backstage to a waiting car. They sped away to their New Orleans hotel. Mandy sat taugth and focused like a prizefighter, ready for the next round.

“Was it worth it?” Mary asked sarcastically.

“Hell, yes! The entire world now knows about the German Coast slave massacre.”

“Those rocks were flying at you and you barely budged.”

“They will have to aim better!”

Chapter 3

On the drive back to New Orleans, Janet's phone buzzed. "Darcy wants to talk to you again."

Mandy looked irritated. "Should I?"

"It's up to you."

Mandy hesitated but then grabbed Janet's phone and tapped on Darcy's handle on Messenger.

*I watched you speak on stage. I'm headed back to New Orleans now. Can we meet for coffee?*

Mandy showed the text to Janet who shook her head. "That bitch is gonna kill you!"

*Why?* Mandy texted back.

*Everyone around here has been talking about you. I want to open a dialog that isn't so hostile. I work in city council and I have ideas.*

*When and where?*

*Meet me at Mojo Coffee house in downtown New Orleans in an hour. I'll be at the coffee bar.*

*See you there.*

Janet peered over Mandy's shoulder. "You will really meet with her?"

Mandy nodded.

"Not without me," Mary said.

"I'm going, too," said Janet.

An hour later, Mandy, Mary, and Janet walked into the Bohemian themed coffee house heavy on bright orange and colorful, abstract paintings. Mandy looked around, "Looks like something you'd see in Portland."

"I like it," Janet said.

A forty-something pudgy white woman with permed, graying hair and a bright coral blouse and blue "mom" jeans approached them. "Thank you so much for accepting my invitation," she said, nervously eyeing each one of them.

"It's our pleasure," Mandy said, not sure if it was. "This is my sister Mary and best friend Janet."

"Nice to meet you," Darcy said and shook their hands. "You're nothing like I expected you to be," she said to Mandy. "On TV and even on stage you seem much bigger. But in person..."

"Yeah, I'm short. Sorry to disappoint."

"I don't mean to be rude. What I meant to say is your voice is commanding. Yet, in person you look like an average older woman."

Mandy frowned. "I didn't ask. Just tell me why we're here."

The murmur of the coffee shop quieted as people recognized Mandy and shot anxious glances at her. Mandy suddenly felt like she was in a snow globe. Darcy pointed to a table near the back. "Let's move away from the windows."

"Agreed," Mandy said.

Mary sat first, looking impatient, patting the pistol strapped to her inner leg.

Darcy did her best to ignore Mary as she sat and turned her chair toward Mandy. "After watching your video and now your speech, I'm concerned about

what you've started and I think you need our help.”

Mary rolled her eyes.

Mandy elbowed her.

“Why would we need your help?” Mandy asked.

“I sit on the city council out in Baton Rouge. We deal a lot with hate crimes out there so I've become an expert. There are 15 active white supremacy groups in Louisiana and I saw many of their members lurking in the back during your speech.”

Mandy remembered some of the angry white faces she saw.

“They're there because you are a poster-child for a white supremacy recruitment drive like I've never seen before. Your video appears on all of their websites. They are growing and planning and you bringing thousands of black women to Harahan is only fanning the flames.”

“You look like you have all the answers,” Mary commented sarcastically.

Darcy shot a cross glance at her.

Mandy put her hand on Mary's knee to calm her down.

“No, I don't have a solution,” Darcy said dryly. “But when you announced your Oya movement today, you made it sound like it was only a black woman's movement. That's a mistake. Two million women are expected to march across the country today including the 15,000 that just finished marching here from Washington Square park to Duncan Plaza. Many of them were white.”

“So?”

“You need to work with them, keep it civil.”

“All of these white women may protest Trump, but they're still part of the

bigger problem," Mandy said.

"I'm afraid I can't join you in your beliefs of the evil white system."

"Of course not. And that's the problem. Did you know that the average white family earns \$32,000 more than the average black family here in Louisiana? The wage gap reflects their influence on your legislature. This state is the definition of an evil white system."

Darcy sighed and shook her head.

"I get it," Mandy continued. "You don't think Oya can succeed without the help of all these white women. You think including white people in our movement will temper the strength of the white supremacists here. I strongly disagree. This is a black movement. Why? Because from what I've seen, present company included, there isn't a single white person out there who truly gets it. With Oya, I will change that."

"But many of these white women think as you do!"

"No, they don't! They might vote the same way, they might protest and say many of the same things, but until they can truly self-reflect and detach from their consumerism, detach from their creature comforts, and be willing to live unsure and uncomfortable for the sake of the greater good, they are still the problem and not the solution."

Darcy's cheeks reddened. "I can see we're not going to agree today."

"No, probably not. But I won't give up on you or anyone else."

"Can I can at least get your phone number? Things will get really bad around here. I'd like to at least be able to reach out to you, get your advice, since you're the cause of it all."

"I'm not the cause! I didn't massacre all those slaves! I didn't elect Donald Trump president."

Darcy held up a hand. "Ok..."

Mandy glanced at Janet and Mary. Mary gave a hesitant nod.

"Fine," Mandy said. "I will give you my number. I will help you if I can. But I don't want white people in Oya right now." Mandy typed her number into Janet's Messenger account and hit 'send.'

Darcy looked overwhelmed. "You don't live here so you really don't care about the people here."

"I care from the bottom of my heart."

"Good people are about to get hurt!"

"I understand your concerns. But I'm not changing Oya to make it more palatable for white people like you. Oya is a non-violent movement. If there is violence, if good people get hurt like you say, it's not because of Oya."

Frustrated, Darcy stood up and stormed out of the coffee shop.

Mandy sat in silence for a moment, wondering how she would ever reach a person like Darcy. Her primary goal was to destroy the military industrial complex and create a new society built upon equity and equality. But she couldn't do that without winning the hearts and minds of Americans, even the white ones. To do that, she had to expose the evils of racism and capitalism and introduce a better way to live...

Mandy looked at Mary, "I need your connections from the military to make the next step of my plan happen. And it's not exactly legal."

Mary looked concerned. "How illegal?"

“Going to jail is a possibility. We will also piss off a lot of racist white people.”

Mary looked down. “I’m not afraid to go to jail. But I don’t want to give up my freedom for nothing.”

“This could be amazing, Mary. But you will have to believe in me.”

“I will try. Tell me more.”