

BAKULU

• *the ancestors* •

For the children of nobody.

FOREWORD

*With gratitude, humbly to my honorable ancestors who have gone before me.
Thank you for clearing the path. Ase.*

*We acknowledge the work of those who have gone before us and invoke the
aid of those who stand with us by saying Kinkamache. I give sweet gratitude to
the ancestors.*

The Grief We Never Got To Finish

In Yoruba, when a woman has been betrayed by her husband, the village of mothers gather round her in a circle, placing her in the center. The woman in pain is allowed to have her moment — the expulsion of her husband's betrayal by a physical release. The circle is sacred, and the women surrounding her are not just there to witness. They are there to sit with her in the middle of her grief, holding space, clearing the way for her, and giving her support.

And that may sound so strange and foreign, but it's really just more indication of how our ancestors were so far advanced in their knowledge of how to heal for real.

There is a wound in us that never got to close, because we were never given the space to look at it.

When our ancestors were stolen from the Kongo, from the lands of the Yoruba, the Bantu, the Fon — they didn't just lose their homes. They lost the practices that let a person grieve. The drum was banned. The gathering was banned. What was taken wasn't only freedom — it was the technology our people had built over centuries to process unbearable loss.

In its place, we were handed a different instruction. Endure. Obey. Your reward comes later, in a Heaven you cannot see, from a God who is watching your suffering and will settle the account when you die.

Here's what I find most remarkable, and what this book is really about: the grieving never actually stopped. It went underground. Hoodoo is that grief, still breathing, wearing a disguise.

You cannot pray your way around a wound your ancestors were never allowed to name out loud. But you can go back. You can sit at the altar. You can call the names. You can let the grief that was interrupted four hundred years ago finally finish the sentence it started.

Ase.

This is one chapter.

The rest of your ancestors are waiting.

MEET THE ANCESTORS

A beginner's guide to ancestral veneration, Hoodoo, and reclaiming the practices that were never meant to be forgotten.

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Ase.