

Patricia M. Muhammad  
presents

# MURDER BY DISSENT

## Special Objects:

Murder By Dissent is a mystery/detective-historical romance novel. The story is set in the 1960s in a small precinct of Chicago. Jacqueline Sadie Thompson, a "coloured" detective is married to William Singleton, an Anglo Englishman. The detective's workday started as any other—case assignments for her and her colleagues to solve crimes. She and her co-detective, Sebastian Johnson, have overlapping cases which easily makes them partners. Their murders occurred during some civil rights protests. Against his wife's reluctance, William accompanies Jacqueline and her station house partner, Sebastian to the crime scene. Jacqueline is the center of William's attention. She is the breathing manifestation of her husband's *object* of affection. Someone tosses a Molotov cocktail. Chaos. Debris. A crumbling building. They only have seconds to act. William quickly gathers his wife and pulls her to safety. He cannot allow for anything or anyone to take what belongs to him. His wife is grateful though she is dazed. She wonders what has become of Sebastian. William returns to work, Johnson does not. She focuses on his empty workstation chair. She has witnessed enough crime and death and believes that empty seat is the most subtle manner to inform her that her colleague is no more. Jacqueline has a fainting bout. William rushes to the police station and retrieves her. He watches over what is most valuable to him in all his life. Jacqueline attempts to dissuade him from worrying so. She thinks she is able to work on her case files which are stuffed in her leather workbag.

For Jacqueline, the workbag is the bridge between work and home. William believes that if he keeps her separate from the two, then it will keep her case assignments a far off. Jacqueline considers it the door to resolution of her cases and closure in accepting her colleague's passing. Yet, she and William cannot help but appreciate the gift of time that unfortunate circumstance has granted them. Jacqueline and William entangle themselves lightheartedly, but most times in the throes of relentless, seductive passion. Black melds into white, passion springs forth felicity, his moonbeam eyes pull her brown ones into his sphere. The energy they emit from slow movement, caresses and caring motions create their own orbit. This intangible object is their protection. It does not allow for anyone to enter or interfere with the bond that they already consummated long ago. William's voice is the commanding wand in which Jacqueline could only naturally heed. It is not contained, nor can it be redirected. Her husband calls her forth to lie with him in their marital bed for as many times as their renewed strength and time within the day allows. William mesmerizes his wife when she requests for him to read to her. She lies upon him

as he lies on his back. They are both distracted by the beauty of grace that exists between them. When he is able to recite, the object of his voice only lulls her further into his protective and loving embrace.

The enchantment of his voice deepens. It becomes the circled gathering that catapults them both into expressing their mutual adoration in the most tangible form. Their home is the cocoon in which they share their intimate thoughts, their playful dance and some of the most sensual moments. It is also their protection. The sturdy construction obviously contributes, but for William it is the fortress by which Jacqueline's husband stands as the lone guard of their home.

As Jacqueline continues to convalesce and William cares for her, a brooch falls from the detective's pocket while they are in the living room. Her husband does not recall seeing this piece of jewelry of hers before. She explains that it belongs to her great grandmother. Jacqueline never wore it and only carried it on her person. It is a reminder of the good she found in her earlier lineage. This is her link from her familial circumstances in which a coloured woman served an elite 'Negro' family with devotion, to now her attenuated descendant being a 'coloured' female detective. Though American history can easily uphold the racial divide as a continuous strain in the betterment of its overall society, not everything is black and white.