



INSTANT #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER INSTANT USA TODAY BESTSELLER In time served. Still pretty, still pold, still pretty, still bold, still bold, still pretty, still bold, still pretty, still bold, still pretty, still bold, still bold, still pretty, still bold, still bo crown, and ultimately to snatch Midnight back into her life no matter which bitch had him while she was locked up. But Winter is not the only one with revenge on her mind. Simone, Winter is not the only one with revenge on her mind. Simone, Winter is head off? Can Winter is not the only one with revenge on her mind. as any hood and certainly the Brooklyn hood she grew up in. That's what Winter thinks. A heartwarming, passionate, sexual, comical, and completely original adventure is about to happen in real time—raw, shocking, soulful, and shameless. True fans won't let Winter travel alone on this amazing journey. Sister Souljah, the author of The Coldest Winter travel alone on this amazing journey. Anthony Barboza / GettyHow does a bad bitch enter the world?From the first pages of Sister Souljah's 1999 debut novel, The Coldest Winter Ever, the teenage protagonist declares that she's been a style icon since birth. "The same night I got home my pops gave me a diamond ring set in 24-karat gold," Winter Santiaga says. Practical considerations, such as whether her infant fingers could even hold up the rings, mattered less to the Brooklyn-raised diva than the shine. "It was important for me to know I deserved the best, no slum jewelry, cheap shoes, or knock-off designer stuff, only the real thing." The novel vividly details how Winter's hubris and greed, two other heirlooms passed down from her drug-dealing father, led to her undoing. She even meets—and ignores the advice of—a fictionalized version of Sister Souljah, who appears as something of a role model to he wayward teen. By the book's end, Winter is serving 15 years in prison. Now, 22 years later, a new sequel finds Winter to a temptation-packed purgatory to reclaim the life that should have been hers all along—but not without facing unexpected hurdles. In Life After Death, published last week, Sister Souljah continues to explore the vices that ensure Winter and materialistic young people like her. The second novel follows Winter to a temptation-packed purgatory where she must surrender the avarice, lust, and ego that have defined her existence. Though Life After Death doesn't take place on the literal streets of Brooklyn, the sequel joins its predecessor—and the rest of Sister Souljah's work—in illuminating both the glamour and the that doesn't take place on the literal streets of Brooklyn, the sequel joins its predecessor—and the rest of Sister Souljah's first novel has sold more than 1 million copies since it was published, a statistic that doesn't take place on the literal streets of Brooklyn, the sequel joins its predecessor—and the rest of Sister Souljah's work—in illuminating both the glamour and the danger of urban life. readers who passed it around in classrooms, buses, and locker rooms like contraband. "The Coldest Winter Ever is one of those books we all read in middle school, or high scho when ... the high schools use it; and the junior high schools are not authorized, but they use it anyway; and everybody's mother read it, and the grandmother read it, "sometimes referred to as "urban fiction." Within a decade of the book's release, the genre made up the most popular paperbacks at Black-owned it, and the grandmother read it, and the grandmother read it, "sometimes referred to as "urban fiction." Within a decade of the book's release, the genre made up the most popular paperbacks at Black-owned it, and the grandmother read it, and the grandmot bookstores around the United States. And now Life After Death presents an opportunity to more thoroughly consider literature of its kind—for those of us who first became acquainted with Winter as teens, and for a publishing industry that still doesn't quite understand characters like her. Street lit is a deceptively simple name for a rich, metatextual art form. Early works, including Omar Tyree's Flyy Girl, featured young female protagonists getting caught up in the excesses of 1980s hip-hop culture, gang life, and drug usage. But the genre can include less nihilistic fare too. Young-adult fiction such as Angie Thomas's 2017 novel, The Hate U Give, which explores the effects of gun violence and police brutality through the story of a teen girl, is a natural entrant to the category. Read: 'The Hate U Give, which explores the effects of gun violence and police brutality through the story of a teen girl, is a natural entrant to the category. Read: 'The Hate U Give, which explores the effects of gun violence and police brutality through the story of a teen girl, is a natural entrant to the category. Read: 'The Hate U Give, which explores the effects of gun violence and police brutality through the story of a teen girl, is a natural entrant to the category. Read: 'The Hate U Give, which explores the effects of gun violence and police brutality through the story of a teen girl, is a natural entrant to the category. 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Read: 'The Hate U Give, which explores the effects of gun violence and police brutalit anthology about street lit, the editor, Keenan Norris, connected the genre to a long history of literature and journalism chronicling the beauty and pitfalls of city life. He described the genre as "a body of American literature produced by post-1980s Black and Latino writers and deriving its formal structure, narrative technique, and themes from the determinist and naturalist fiction of past epochs in African American and American and American literature." Norris drew parallels between street lit and early-20th-century noir novels, noting that authors such as Chester Himes brought the "detective-gumshoe narrative devices" and moral ambiguity of those white noir writers' books to fiction about Harlem. As Norris also points out, street lit is "undeniably tied to hip-hop in terms of its origins, raw content, and up-by-the-bootstraps entrepreneurship in the production and distribution stages." Indeed, Life After Death takes its title from the posthumous second album of another Brooklyn juggernaut, the Notorious B.I.G., and does more than just gesture at his influence. In the novel, after hearing one of the late artist's singles playing, Winter muses on rap's power: "Nineties rappers and hip-hop music ruled the airwaves, reflected our culture, and moved our streets," she explains. "It was dominant, not only in Brooklyn, but in all hoods in America and around the world."Perhaps fittingly, before publishing Winter's first tale in the '90s, Sister Souljah, literature has been just one way to tell the stories of a community, both its social ills and its potential for transformation. She told me that when she writes, she's "going for a level of excellence that has nothing to do with me being higher or better or distant from my community," Among non-Black people, Sister Souljah is perhaps best known as the Public Enemy rapper whom Bill Clinton likened to the Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke in 1992. Clinton, a presidential candidate in the second and loving of my community, but has everything to do with me being close and intimate, and concerned and loving of my community." at the time, quoted a rhetorical question that Sister Souljah had posed in a Washington Post interview following the Rodney King riots: "If black people kill black people kill black people?" Though she insisted that the quote was taken "completely out of context" and deliberately misinterpreted, the controversy nonetheless led to the term Sister Souljah moment being used—even now—to describe any instance of politicians publicly repudiating a so-called radical figure or idea associated with their own party. These days, Sister Souljah doesn't like to spend much time thinking about that chapter of her life, or about what opinions white people hold of her in general. "If you obsess over that, it's like you're losing your time, you're losing your life force, you're losing your time, you're losing your time things with other people," she said after citing the theory of double consciousness outlined by W. E. B. Du Bois. "Part of the appeal of Sister Souljah's novels is that they let their characters do the same. Winter, for the most part, determines her own life. Her poor choices, rather than any explicitly named social force, are what tend to land her in trouble. At her story's high points, she narrates with an almost intoxicating self-assuredness. Sex, money, beauty, power—Winter has it all, at least for a while, and readers get a glimpse of what it feels like for her. "Now a bad bitch is a woman who handles her business," she says after an early exchange with her mother, who had "made it clear to me that beautiful women are supposed to be taken care of." That bad-bitch mystique, as described in the novel, influenced a generation of readers. It helped the famed Love & Hip Hop cast member Yandy Smith-Harris land her first job in the music industry. It even inspired a hip-hop mixtape of the same name, from Ms Banks, an artist raised across the Atlantic in South London. That's not to say that Sister Souljah's characters and those in other so-called street-lit books don't live in worlds for the same name, from Ms Banks, an artist raised across the Atlantic in South London. That's not to say that Sister Souljah's characters and those in other so-called street-lit books don't live in worlds. shaped by oppressive systems. Winter and her family endure plenty of strife, much of which is a direct result of the social and economic conditions surrounding them. In one early Coldest Winter's father cautions her against romanticizing their former life in the projects: "Those streets don't love you. They don't even know you," he warns her, foreshadowing the fall to come. "The street don't love nobody." Read: What incarcerated rappers can teach AmericaEven in her condemnation of Winter's actions, Sister Souljah—both the actual author and the character in the book—addresses the larger injustices affecting people who live in similar environments. The novelist's critiques are interpersonal as well as societal. That's one of many reasons the book has been circulated widely in (and sometimes banned from) jails and prisons, both real ones around the country and fictional ones on television. Connecting The Coldest Winter Ever to the work of hip-hop feminists such as Joan Morgan, the filmmaker and professor Stephane Dunn wrote in 2012 that "Souljah's novel bridges the gap between the academic and professor Stephane Dunn wrote in 2012 that "Souljah's novel bridges the gap between the African American literary canon and contemporary black pop fiction, between the academic and popular, while being concerned with elevating the mass audience's critical consciousness to provoke transformative thinking and action."Still, Sister Souljah's books pose a challenge to readers and critics invested in a specific vision of literary "Black excellence." Some Black authors and booksellers have bristled, at times infamously, at the mass-market appeal of novels like hers. Take this description of street lit from a 2004 Chicago Tribune column, in which one Black bookstore owner referred to the genre as "mindless garbage about murder, killing, thuggery," while the writer described its rhetorical conventions in starkly unfavorable terms: "An exemplary tale is a mixture of foul language, flying bullets, fast cars, a flood of drugs, fallen angels, and high-priced frippery. It venerates grams over grammar, sin over syntax, excess over success." Or this 2006 New York Times op-ed, in which the author Nick Chiles objected to the books' placement under an "African American literature" placard at Borders. Chiles lamented "the whole community of black authors—from me to Terry McMillan and Toni Morrison, from Yolanda Joe and Benilde Little to Edward P. Jones and Kuwana Haulsey—[being] surrounded and swallowed whole on the shelves by an overwhelming wave of titles and jackets that I wouldn't want my 13-year-old son to see." (McMillan also wrote a blistering, personal invective against 'ghetto lit" the following year.)Unlike those authors, Sister Souljah's frustration with the term street lit isn't about the other writers she gets grouped with; it's about whom she doesn't get discussed alongside. She's spoken publicly about her unease with the label for at least a decade now, and when we talked, she reiterated the points that she's long been making. She calls her books "literature," just like celebrated white authors from Europe and the United States whose works explore the same core emotions as hers do. "Because we're writing about love. We're writing about fright. We're writing about fright. We're writing about struggle. We're writing about hate. "She said." continued: "So if you create a category and say, 'These books are not literature; they're street lit'—like, what is that? And what does that mean?" At a practical level, it means, as Sister Souljah recalls, having a bookseller tell her that their store kept copies of The Coldest Winter Ever locked up for fear of having them stolen by readers. Often, it means that the books aren't considered for their thematic or artistic value. Sometimes they're even discussed in terms that one might call "racially charged" in polite company. A 1999 Publishers Weekly review, for example, claimed, "Souljah peppers her raunchy and potentially offensive prose with honesty albeit often at the expense of disciplined writing." Kirkus Reviews, meanwhile, referred to it as "a tour de force of black English and underworld slang." But as the writer Vanessa Willoughby asked pointedly in 2016, "If writing in vernacular can be considered high art when executed by Faulkner, why aren't the code-switching skills of Souljah's literary vision, or of the Santiagas' rhetorical flair, the books find their readers. The readers and nails and everywhere else young people gather, it'll be Winter's time again. Nearly two decades after her bestselling The Coldest Winter is ready to reclaim her throne when a friend shoots her and sends her on a torturous journey through Hell. Embed our reviews widget for this book What is this? See All Reviews >> Renowned hip-hop artist, political activist, and b... Title: Life After Death Author: Sister Souljah Publisher: Atria/Emily Bestler Books Published: March 2, 2021 ASIN: B08BZVTLWX Pages: 349 I purchased this book when it dropped in March and promised to share my thoughts. That was nine months ago, and I want to deliver on my word. The Plot is in the title. Winter Santiaga is still in prison and negotiating a deal with her brother-in-law, Elisha, for a reality TV show on her release. But before Winter could make her grand debut, she gets shot. And this is where the story goes to a place I did not want to go. The rest of the book are the details of Winter's experience in the after-world. Neither heaven nor hell, she floats around in a kind of purgatory. What in the American Horror Story is going on here? There is a bit of a twist at the end, but unfortunately for me, it was not enough to save the book. It also didn't help that I predicted the twist from the beginning so I didn't even have the satisfaction of that to help how I would rate it. Urban Fiction? Paranormal? Sci-Fi? Magical Realism? Pushed as an urban fiction novel, Life After Death Winter sounds a lot less mature that the Winter from the end of book one. To understand what I mean let's do a quick recap of the end of The Coldest Winter Ever, Winter is still street, but has been humbled after serving seven years in prison. With eight more years to go, she is shackled and accompanied by guards to attend her mother's funeral. She talks about how breathing is different, the feel of the sun on her face and the smell of the food. As the book comes to an end and Winter sees the family, her middle sister Porsche rolls up in a Mercedes Benz dressed like a million bucks. Winter can already tell the road she's headed and thinks about warning Porsche about the life she's living. She decides to let it be. quarter-length mink coat, Python sky-high boots, red Gucci driving gloves, an activated iPhone, and a red carpet welcome out of the door. Mmkay. It would seem she would be far removed from that kind of lifestyle by now. Preachy There is a lot of talk about Islam that came across as highly preachy. I don't mean bits and pieces here and there. I mean whole pages about how Allah does what Allah pleases, Allah chose the language of Arabic as the language of the Holy Quran, so forth and so on. As one reviewer summed up: "My only criticism is the strong Muslim leaning; without spoiling, I felt the portrayal of the nuns in the convent was unnecessarily offensive. An interesting read! But if you're looking for a TCWE II you will be disappointed." Winter's Life After Death journey is an experience into the world of the deeply spiritual practices of Islam as Souljah sees it. After she enters this world, everything feels like a sermon with Winter's life as the conduit, the vehicle from which the message is given. Put plainly: it feels like Souljah wanted to write a book about religion because of the trauma of the 2020 Pandemic and used her most famous character to do it. According to her Instagram: "I wrote LIFE AFTER DEATH in 2020, a year of great loss, huge disasters, raging fires, violent storms, virulent viruses and the whole world shaken by the body count. Everything everyone worshiped besides GOD was either brought to a complete stand still or vanished into thin air." - Sister Souljah I get it, but readers feel deceived. They thought they were buying the follow-up to what is arguably one of the best urban fiction books of their young adulthood, only to read about Souljah's "EXTREMELY polarizing and generally terrible opinions and belief," as one reviewer puts it. "I didn't buy this book to read Souljah's religious and uber conservative rhetoric, I bought this book to finish Winter's story. If she couldn't write that she should've just said that instead of giving us a weird ass bestiality scene and making Winter make increasingly erratic and poor decisions to justify the religious crap she stuffed the plot with." The marketing gave us the impression the book would pick up where The Coldest Winter Ever left off. In truth, it is a different book. Fans of the novel say it's not supposed to be the same, but the promotion says otherwise. Even the covers are similar. "People who are saying "This is not supposed to be the same, but the promotion of it!" - Amazon Customer Review I believe this would have been better received had she created an entirely new character with no connection to Winter. Giving Credit Where Credit is Due I do want to give Souljah credit for attempting to pen something deeper than your traditional Street Lit. You can tell she wanted to give her readers. You can tell she wanted to give her readers. Souljah's religious messages are not a total surprise. Although, I didn't enjoy that book either. "Unrealistic. Dragged. Boring. Depressing. It was in need of a serious plot twist that never came." - Amazon Customer Review I would also make more sense to readers of the Midnight series: "Its written for Souljah fans who have read the Midnight series. Not that the story is particularly relevant, but there are A LOT of references to Islam that might not make sense entirely except Midnight explained them in his series." I do believe there is an audience for this book and that head it been marketed to that audience for this book and that head it been marketed to that audience for this book and that head it been marketed to that audience for this book and that head it been marketed to that audience for this book and that head it been marketed to that audience for this book and that head a better idea of the sense entirely except Midnight explained them in his series." what they were getting. "If she wanted to write about these kinds of things don't mislead the readers into thinking we were getting another Winter experience, clearly it was not. The story is hard to digest. The only reason a lot of us purchased it was under the guise of it really being an actual sequel to one of the best readers wanted to read." I can only rate this book that SHE wanted to read." I can only rate this book that SHE wanted to read." I can only rate this book that SHE wanted to read." I can only rate this book that SHE wanted to read." I can only rate this book that SHE wanted to read." I can only rate this book that SHE wanted to read." I can only rate this book that SHE wanted to read." two stars. It is two stars instead of one because I did enjoy the start of the book. It seemed promising until Winter went into the sunken place. Note: I was not paid for this reviews of books I read on my own are published on this blog. Reviews of books I read on my own are published on this blog. Reviews of books I read on my own are published on this blog. regardless of rating. "21 Books We Can't Wait to Read in 2021" — Essence"The 10 Most Anticipated Books Of 2021" — Forbes "The second novel follows Winter to a temptation-packed purgatory . . . LIFE AFTER DEATH . . . joins its predecessor—and the rest of Sister Souljah's more from here earlier realistic coming-of-age novel, while this raw and otherworldly tale conveys the terrible consequences of Winter's poor choices, which will haunt her until she begs for redemption." — Booklist"Mystical . . . Imaginative." — Publishers Weekly\*\*Praise for THE COLDEST WINTER EVER\*\*"Sister Souljah has taken her talents from the stage to the page." — Essence"I think she is an important voice in American literature, and I find her work spiritually rewarding and powerful." -- Jada Pinkett Smith "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is precious, babacious, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is precious, babacious, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably libidinous, and it's ample evidence of the author's talent that she is also deeply sympathetic." -- The New Yorker "Winter is nasty, spoiled, and almost unbelievably l voice." -- Publishers Weekly Sister Souljah is a graduate of Rutgers University. During her college years, she was known for her humanity. Post-graduation, Sister Souljah is a graduate of Rutgers University. During her college years, she was known for her humanity. Post-graduation, Sister Souljah is a graduate of Rutgers University. During her college years, she was known for her humanity. academic, cultural, and recreational after-school programs, weekend academies, and sleep-away summer camps. Partnering with major mainstream celebrities, she provided her efforts free to all young people and families in need. A multidimensional woman, Souljah was the only female performing artist and voice of Public Enemy. She is also a wife and a mother. A storyteller who makes the entire world her home, she lives wherever she is "pushing her pen." After a nasty breakup of any couple, the war begins. I knew bitches who keyed their ex's ride, or punctured his tires, or banged in his rims with a hammer. I knew bitches who her, shot her man had replaced her with. Or even stalked her, shot her man had replaced her with. credit cards, crashed his car, cut up his clothes, pawned his jewels, and even burned down his house. But when a man or woman who used to be lovers, living together, working together, and one betrays the other, betrayal makes the matter more meaner than murder. 'Cause you can just kill someone if you want to, no matter who you are. No matter who they are or where they hide. They bound to resurface eventually. Let down their guard eventually, and that's precisely when they can get got. But ex-lovers, who more than just creeping and fucking other niggas or bitches, where one betrayed the other, told a life-changing secret tat he or she had confided with, sold him or her out to his or her sworn enemy, called the cops on him or her out to his or her sworn enemy, called the cops on him or her for any damn reason, flipped on 'em in a court of law or was way-worser, like working as an undercover police, a bitch-ass informant, spying and telling on his or her traitor in severe loss of either: wealth, status, or something or someone he cherished. A betrayed lover wants to see the traitor in actual excruciating pain. He or she wants to taunt and torture first and then deliver the last blow that leads to the traitor's complete and final downfall. I know. Bullet was the main one who betrayed me. He's at the top of my payback list. He was my nigga for many months before I got arrested. Yeah, he was a hustler. I fucking loved that. His fuck game was strong. I loved that too. Once he and I first hooked up, I never fucked around with no other nigga but him. I'm a loyal bitch. Loyalty runs through the Santiaga blood. But he never fully acknowledged my loyalty to him. He never gave his loyalty to him. He never gave his loyalty to him. He never fully acknowledged my loyalty to him. He never gave me his heart. He didn't cause me to feel or think that he was. It was that he . . . I don't know. He loved me with his mind and body but never gave me his heart. treated me like a suspect, who was bound to turn on him or turn him in. I wasn't. I'm the one bitch that wouldn't . . . ever, Santiagas are born snitch-free. Bullet put our Manhattan condo in my name. Back then, at the time, I thought that meant he loved me. Of course I did, he provided. In turn, I covered for him here and there. Held his coke, concealed his weapons, and carried his cash here and there quietly whenever he told me to. I was trying to earn my way up and also in, to his heart. I thought we should be on some Bonnie and Clyde shit. But fuck Bonnie and stying together. Turned out, he put everything in my name not for love or for providing for a top bitch and daughter of legendary hustler and entrepreneur Ricky Santiaga. Instead Bullet was on some Brooklyn scheming. He made it so that if everything or anything went wrong, he could drop all the legalities and blame onto me without losing any street credibility because it wasn't like he snitched on me. He simply left a paper trail and documentation all in my name that told the fictivity secause it wasn't like he snitched on me. free. On the day of my arrest that led to my conviction as a drug dealer sentenced to serve fifteen years on a mandatory minimum, which at the time I had never even heard of, my nigga Bullet had a car rented with a credit card in my name. In the rental car was me and the product, I was 'bout to ride round trip to Virginia on a run with him, a big and necessary business move. Simone, who for some reason can't get the fuck out of my mind trip to Virginia on a run with him, a big and necessary business move. or life or death story, saw me sitting there on our Brooklyn block in the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though. Simone had bullshit beef with me that she swore was real. So, soon as she saw me that day, it was on. Bitch threw a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though. Simone had bullshit beef with me that she swore was real. So, soon as she saw me that day, it was on. Bitch threw a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though. Simone had bullshit beef with me that she swore was real. So, soon as she saw me that day, it was on. Bitch threw a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though. Simone had bullshit beef with me that she swore was real. So, soon as she saw me that day, it was on. Bitch threw a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though. Simone had bullshit beef with me that she swore was real. So, soon as she saw me that day, it was on. Bitch threw a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though. Simone had bullshit beef with me that she swore was real. So, soon as she saw me that day, it was on. Bitch threw a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. He shall be a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though the rental waiting on Bullet. He shall be a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. He shall be a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. He shall be a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, though the rental waiting on Bullet. He walked around to the driver's side. I was relieved that he had rescue does not be a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet, was relieved that he had rescue does not be a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. I didn't see her, the walked around to the driver's side. I was relieved that he had rescue does not be a brick through the rental waiting on Bullet. He walked around to the driver's side. I was relieved that he instead of jumping into the rental car and speeding away, walked off calmly as if he never was with me. Never even knew me and never intended to get in the car with me at all. I was arrested in the rental car that was in my name, with the weight stuffed inside teddy bears, and the weapon tossed beneath the seat. They cuffed, fingerprinted, mug-shotted, jailed, grilled, and investigated me. They asked me for names or just one big name. gave them nothing. I rejected their bullshit tricks and game. The name is Santiaga, royalty not rats. I wasn't mad at him for renting me the condo or even for taking me on his big business run to Virginia. I was down for him. I wasted to go. I didn't like being left out of the business or the action. It's that that nigga Bullet didn't come for me. He didn't not business or the action. It's that that nigga Bullet didn't come for me. He didn't come for me. He didn't at dime to my legal defense. He didn't send one of his men to make sure I had all that I needed. He didn't put one cent on my commissary. He didn't write me one letter, slip me one kite from his peoples on lock. He didn't check for me and to me that meant he never loved me. That's why he's on my payback list. He betrayed me. I never betrayed him, not even once. of vision. In that freeze-frame she was Brooklyn Momma, before the move to our luxurious Long Island mansion. Before she ever toked a hit of that crack pipe. I knew, after having fifteen years on lock to just sit and think about it, that for me to accept my mother, aka Momma, aka Lana Santiaga, aka the Baddest Bitch on the Planet, after her crack breakdown would be the same as rejecting myself. No! It would be the same as rejecting myself. Brooklyn Momma was the most. She was the beautifulest, the funniest, the funniest to get the same as rejecting myself. Brooklyn Momma was the most. everything. I didn't need no books. Momma was all show-and-tell. She told me and showed me while she was telling me all that a bitch needs to know. "Ooh now, that's not cool," she would say when I shitted in my diaper at age two. That's how way back my earliest memory of Momma goes. It is my first and earliest memory of anyone or anything, including myself. After Momma said that, she taught me how to pee and poop, where to pee and poop, where to pee and poop. and poop, and how to clean myself thoroughly and smell like a lady always should smell. "Come in the bathroom," she would talk to me like I was an adult, and then laugh at herself. But I knew she meant it and I understood her perfectly. "No potty," she would say, kicking the baby toilet into a corner. "Sit on the real seat like I do," she would say, pointing. I would be trying my best to balance my little body on the adult toilet with the humongous hole. "Now tinkle!" she would say, like it was a magical thing, not just pissing in the bowl. While I tinkled, Momma would turn away and look at herself in the bathroom mirror while singing a song, which relaxed me. Momma had the dopest music collection of original singles and albums. She knew every song ever made from the oldest to the newest. In my first memory, she was singing to herself? After that first memory, is she singing to poppa? Or, is she singing to me? Or is she singing to herself? After that first memory, I remember Momma singing "Everybody Is a Star" to me in the scented bubble bath as we bathed at the same tub. Momma was musical and Poppa had the whole house wired with speakers in every room, including the kitchen and the bathroom. Both of us sitting on her king-sized bed, Momma would oil and powder and dress me. She'd comb through my silky hair like each strand was a thread of pure gold. "All good!" She would carefully select one and put it on my little head, drowning me in it. "Tilt it like this! Lay it to the side!" she would cheer, as my little fingers attempted to adjust the hat to the style that was the only way a fashionable supastar like Momma would be clicking her Kodak, or pressing out Polaroids of me that would end up on her wall of photos of everything Momma loved the most. That was us, family. By the time I was six, Momma would play-dress me in her real clothes, with real bitch accessories so that I could walk down the runway that Momma made in the apartment corridor which she lit up with colorful lamps and lights. I'd be killing the red car- pet while the overhead speakers would be pouring out the sounds of Rod Stewart's "Da Ya Think I'm Sexy." I worked the runway to all Momma's music picks, which could be anything 'cause she knew everything musical. Donna Summer's "Hot Stuff," Grace Jones's "La Vie en Rose" or 'Slave to the Rhythm." Momma loved Grace Jones. Momma marked time and her favorite memories through music. She loved to tell me her coming-up stories. When she would be narrating them to me it seemed she was the loved to tell me her coming-up stories. She was the loved to tell me her coming-up stories. When she knew them all already, and had told them to me or Poppa more than once before. She never sat still when she was saying her stories. She wouldn't sing the whole song, just certain lines to highlight and prove that this song was the soundtrack to her fourteen-years-young first love, first intimacy, first sexual experience with the one and only Poppa. She'd be acting like she was telling the story. She squeezed her eyes tight in anticipation, clamped her legs together like she was telling the story. She squeezed her eyes tight in anticipation, clamped her legs together like she was telling the story. Stewart's "Tonight's the Night," 'cause he was cool, sexy, and smooth, and only Santiaga was sexier, smoother, and cooler than Rod without having to sing one note. Momma had more style, got more looks, and had more style, got more looks, and had more wigs than the Supremes. She threw me big birthday parties, which could not be called just "parties" cause they were major events that niggas from Bk to Bx fought to get invited to. Many of the people who showed up I did not even know, even though the celebration was for me! After the huge crowd went home, when only family remained gathered in the ballroom, Momma would emerge dressed up on some karaoke-type vibe. She'd be Tina Turner and somehow lured Poppa into dressing like he was Ike. He didn't single for the ballroom was for me! though, he just laid back and let Momma mesmerize him with her high energy and vibrant personality. No matter how she freaked it, Momma was larger than life and glowed more than any worldwide superstar. That's right. Momma was larger than life and glowed more than any worldwide superstar. reason why I love hiphop, memorized it like I memorized Momma, and moved my hips to it, up until this day. Momma taught me how to stand, style, and strike a pose. Momma taught me how to talk without ever saying a word. How to talk without ever saying a word. How to capture and wear the prettiest, or curbs. Momma taught me how to stand, style, and strike a pose. Momma taught me how to stand of the prettiest of t most stylish meanest fashions, so I would never have to tell a next bitch anything. She would just stay the fuck back or back the fuck back or back. What to keep and never allow anyone to touch, beg for, or borrow. Jump to ratings and reviewsINSTANT #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERThe long-anticipated sequel to Sister Souljah's million copy New York Times bestseller The Coldest Winter Ever .Winter Santiaga hit time served. Still stunning, still pretty, still bold, still loves her father more than any man in the world, still got her hustle and high fashion flow. She's eager to pay back her enemies, rebuild her father's empire, reset his crown, and ultimately to snatch Midnight back into her life no matter which bitch had him while she was locked up. But Winter is her target. Will she blow Winter's head off? Can Winter dodge the bullets? Or will at least one bullet blast Winter into another world? Either way Winter is fearless. Hell is the same as any hood and certainly the Brooklyn hood she grew up in. That's what Winter thinks. A heartwarming, heart-burning, passionate, sexual, comical, and completely original adventure is about to happen in real time—raw, shocking, soulful, and shameless. True fans won't let Winter travel alone on this amazing journey. 2841 people are currently readingSister Souljah (born Lisa Williamson) was born in 1964 in New York City. She attended Cornell University's advanced placement summer program and Spain's University. Her travels and lectures have taken her all over America, Europe, and Africa. In the mid-1980s, she founded, in cooperation with the United Church of Christ, the African Youth Survival Camp, located in Enfield, North Carolina, for children of homeless families. In 1992, her rap album, 360 Degrees of Power, and video, "Slavery's Back in Effect," catapulted her to national attention. She lives in New York with her husband and son. Displaying 1 - 30 of 951 reviewsJanuary 7, 2021Let me just start with sis, what in the entire hell was this? Also, I'm about to drop spoilers so if you don't want to know why I gave this such a low rating, go ahead and click out, scroll past, do what you have to do. When I read The Coldest Winter Ever back in 99, it was unlike anything I'd ever read, and I've always read a lot. Up until then, there wasn't a wide variety of street/urban lit. Donald Goines was one of the originators of the genre, but his books were mostly out of print by then, as were Iceberg Slim's books. So Sister Souljah, she who inspired some and was a controversial figure for others said it was, in my humble opinion, but like I said, it was a different voice. I read Midnight, based on a character from CWE, years later and was also unimpressed. So why would I read Life After Death given how underwhelmed I was by her previous work? Growth. I thought that surely 22 years later, the author, her characters nor her writing have grown. Winter Santiaga is still the unlikeable, delusional chick she was in CWE. For the life of me, I can't figure out how your only claim to fame is that your father was once a big time drug dealer in the 90s and you think that should earn you respect well into your 30s? The book opens with her in jail, serving a 15 year bid because, as you'll remember from the end of CWE, she got sentenced for being in Bullet's car which was full of drugs and guns and had been rented with her credit card. She's just about to get Daughters?Anyway, Winter makes these ridiculous requests for her reality show, including her father's release from prison where he's serving a life sentence, designer clothes with a matching white mink (I guess she's the Lisa Raye of the prison set), a red carpet from the door of the prison to a new Bentley, etc. Completely ridiculous foolishness. As she exits the jail, she's shot and this is where things go left (just in case you didn't thinks) a matching white mink (I guess she's the Lisa Raye of the prison set), a red carpet from the door of the prison set) a new Bentley, etc. Completely ridiculous foolishness. As she exits the jail, she's shot and this is where things go left (just in case you didn't they'd already gone left). She "wakes" up in what seems like purgatory. First she visits her jail crew and finds out one of them shot her - same chick who held a grudge for 15 years and slashed her face in CWE. Then she visits an over the top palatial estate where she sees Midnight with one of his wives (don't ask) and instead of pondering her death, she's trying to figure out how she can have sex with him. Like, sis, don't you have more s to worry about? Then it really gets gets, and by good I mean even more ridiculous, she becomes the son of Satan's sidechick. Y'all. Y'ALL! She's joyriding through hell and is completely unfazed. Like on some, "he's got a nice ride and sexes me up well, what more could a girl ask for?" At some point her turns her into a snake and then I quit, because life is short and who has time for bullshit? I don't know ho who were looking for a follow up to The Coldest Winter Every. CW: beastiality, rape, homophobia, misogyny, anti-abortion rhetoric, graphic descriptions of hell, internalized to find out that Sister Souljah was coming out with a second book this year especially since The Coldest Winter Every was published in 1999. I wa if choices she doesn't agree with while attempting to convert them over to her religious beliefs. If she wanted to make a statement about how people weren't taking the time to listen to God in the midst of a pandemic THIS WAS NOT IT. Life After Death takes place 15 years after the events of The Coldest Winter Ever. As Winter is getting released from her time in prison she gets approached with the opportunity to star in a reality TV show. This alone does not make sense. Why would any major broadcast company want to focus on Winter's life and make it into a reality TV show? Before this is even able to occur, she is shot and killed and then begins her descent into hell and then begins her descent into hell and this is when this books looses any semblance of being coherent. From joyriding through hell to screwing satan's son to meeting the aborted children of the women in hell, Winter continues to live these is shot and killed and then begins her descent into hell and this is when this books looses any semblance of being coherent. his to be a purgatory before she gets to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that seems to be a purgatory before she gets to the filth of animals which leads to her homophobic ideals, her misogynistic views, and her complete and total lack of regard for people's experiences. As a reviewer, lack of regard for people set to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equating anal sex to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equating anal sex to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equating anal sex to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equating anal sex to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equating anal sex to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equating anal sex to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equating anal sex to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equating and sex to the "official" hell. It is through this journey that Souljah shares some of her perverse views including equations of the second terms of the second terms of the second terms of ter ents on authors; HOWEVER, in this case she inserted so many of her personal views into this book that to talk about the book is to talk about the message in a different way. She could have highlighted the importance of slowing down and reflecting on life while growing ositive way without tearing down others. She shames people who are queer, she shames women who have had an abortion, she shames people who are spiritual instead of following institutionalized religion, she shames people who are spiritual instead of following institutionalized religion, she shames people who are spiritual instead of following institutionalized religion, she shames people who are spiritual instead of following institutionalized religion, she shames anyone who does not believe what she believes. THIS IS NOT THE WAY TO GET PEOPLE TO SEE AND UNDERSTAND YOUR PERSPECTIVE. YOU DON'T GET TO MAKE LESS THAN BECAUSE YOU FEEL LIKE IT'S THE WAY TO MAKE THEM BELIEVE YOUR RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES. This is exactly what draws people away from God. And I hat is a book that she wrote in 2020 that I believe would have never happened in God. It's not right. This who book felt like a cash grab. It was a book that she wrote in 2020 that I believe would have never happened in God. It's not right. not because of COVID. S&S should be ashamed. The editor who passed this book through and gave it a green light should be using to draw people to God this isn't it. When it was all said and done, I still feel like Winter didn't learn a thing except not to worship or idolize anything but God. She learned not a damn thing about compassion, kindness, forgiveness or love-the things that we should be using to draw people to faith. I have never felt more disappointed or hurt by an author in a long time. This was manipulative and wrong and clearly I'm not the only reviewer who feels this way. I don't ever tell people not to read books. For this one I would say check it out from library if you can. audiobook black-books books-read-in-2021 January 13, 2021 Yikes. Firstly, thank you to Netgalley, Simon & Schuster Canada and Sister Souljah for approving my request for an advanced readers copy of the long-awaited sequel to Coldest Winter Ever in exchange for an honest review. Like many millennial black women, Coldest Winter was a formative reading experience for me as a teen, so I was extremely excited to receive an ARC of the sequel. Where do I begin with reviewing this? I find it challenging to write bad reviews, and I always try and find something positive to say about a book (if I can), and I try o keep my negative reviews constructive. But honestly, I do not think I can be constructive about this book because there was not one single redeeming thing about my reading experience. Honestly, this is just a really bad book in almost every measurable way you can assess a book. I am shocked it's being published frankly, and I have to think it's ONLY being published because it's a sequel to an intensely popular book, and not because t as a novel itself. This story mostly takes place in the grey area between life and death (per the title) of the main character we all loved (and hated) in the first book of this series, Winter Santiaga. The writing is elementary and unsophisticated, the plot is nonsensical/implausible/poorly constructed, and it made Winter Santiaga more cruel and unlikeable that she was in the first book (which says a lot, because in my ecollection she was fairly judgmental and unpleasant in Coldest Winter). And honestly, when I got to the end and realized the main message of the book, it was clear to me that this is just some respectability bullshit and messy misogynist propaganda. This book was NOT worth the time I spent on it (and tbh, I skimmed the last half because it was so unbearable and frustrating to read). [General description of some problematic plot points propaganda. pecific spoilers though.] To illustrate my point about the absurdity of the plot, this book included the following: bizarre and underdeveloped notions about Islam/religion in general, some strange cult-y bullshit, sprinklings of body shaming/fatphobia, anti-choice propaganda (i.e. descriptions of various), shaming of drug usage/drug addiction, some incredibly culturally insensitive descriptions of various about Islam/religion in general, some strange cult-y bullshit, sprinklings of body shaming/fatphobia, anti-choice propaganda (i.e. descriptions of various). characters of different ethnicities, homophobia, casual and internalized misogyny, a weird obsession with "silky" hair (hellllo internalized anti-blackness/colourism/texturism), AND LITERAL BESTIALITY (seriously, what the fuck, Souljah?!) And that's really just the tip of this disastrous iceberg. Because problematic content aside (Coldest Winter was not without its flaws as we all know), this book was just very poorly done. It did not accomplish what it set out to do, and it didn't advance Winter's overall story in the slightest. It was a wholly unnecessary sequel, and quite a jarring and uncomfortable reading experience overall. Honestly, I wish I could erase this book from my memory entirely. I wish I had never picked it up. And to keep it 100, my giving this book 1 star is quite generous. It doesn't deserve any stars at all as far as I'm concerned. And though there is no doubt that she changed the reading game and will forever remain an icon of urban literature, this will absolutely be the last Sister Souljah book I ever pick up. Teenage Ebony is BUMMED, and I cannot in good conscience recommend that anyone spend their hard earned money on this book or support it in any way. January 12, 2021 should've stayed dead to the show but only if her conditions are met (her father being released from prison [he's in jail for life for murder so wtf], a mink coat, a red carpet and Bentley for when she's released - we won't even get into how unrealistic they were and how she should be grateful she's even getting offered a reality show, but this is WiNtEr SaNtIaGa). The day she leaves prison, she's shot and killed and the reader is taken on a journey throughout her life after death (in purgatory or hell - it felt like hell to me, I was in hell reading this). This was just so stupid. There wasn't much of a point to this book. After getting to a certain point (where she gets turned into ing anal [I know, no words]), I skimmed to the end to see what happened. It was stupid and lacklustre. Sister Souljah's writing also hasn't grown in the 20+ years since the first book and it's very apparent in Winter's character and the dialogue used. I get that hard to read. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. There was literally no point nor reason for this to be published. February 9, 2021 Took me a minute to figure out what to say. I don't like trashing anyone's work. It's hard writing a book! But listen, this might be the worst book I've ever read. I...don't know if there's time to cancel this publication, but if they can, they definitely should. Scrap the whole premise and start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to The Coldest Winter Ever, those sweet memories of passing a beat up copy of the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to The Coldest Winter Ever, those sweet memories of passing a beat up copy of the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to The Coldest Winter Ever, those sweet memories of passing a beat up copy of the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to The Coldest Winter Ever, those sweet memories of passing a beat up copy of the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to The Coldest Winter Ever, those sweet memories of passing a beat up copy of the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to The Coldest Winter Ever, those sweet memories of passing a beat up copy of the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to The Coldest Winter Ever, the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to the start anew. I need to erase this from my memory and hold on to the start anew. I need to erase the start and the start anew. I need to erase the start and the start and the start and the start anew. I need to erase the start and the start anew. I need to erase the start anew. I need to erase the s ny high school—let that be my last memory of Winter Santiaga. Because this???I'm rambling so I'll just say it, this book is a homophobic, sexist, bestiality-filled mess, that uses religion in a very...weird way. I guess this is magical realism? But, dog finger fucking is where I really tapped out. Maybe magical realism should be left in the hands of a more skilled writer. I'm just really upset thinking about how this was the las book I read in 2020; an awful book to close out an awful fucking year. No stars. Do NOT recommend. January 16, 2021Oooh. I don't know about this. She literally means life after death or what does death after life look like, and ........ I really try to avoid writing negative reviews. I mean really what is the point in that. To hoot and holler about how bad something is, doesn't make a whole lot of sense. So this is a caution review. Souljah literally, yes literally wrote a book about life after death, wow. The first clue you have that something is amiss, is the publisher blurb. It says so little about the contents, that's generally a red flag. This is a very dark book. I had trouble sleeping after finishing. Most of the book takes place in the Last Stop Before The Drop, which is a sort of purgatory but complete with earthly things, cars, fashion, attitudes, sex (crazy sex, some involving). how and towards the end of the book, just a teeny bit arrives. It's just a bizarre novel in every facet of the word. You will undoubtedly question how the decision to publish was ever agreed upon. So, as a caution, approach carefully, be ready for a what has been a bit arrives. It's just a bizarre novel in every facet of the word. You will undoubtedly question how the decision to publish was ever agreed upon. So, as a caution, approach carefully, be ready for a what has been advited by a bit arrives. It's just a bit arrives was ever agreed upon. So, as a caution, approach carefully, be ready for a what has been advited by a bit arrives was ever agreed upon. happens when you "die" tale. If you are into that kind of thing this book will work for you. If you were looking for the continued story of Winter Santiaga on Earth in Brooklyn, NY, that book has not been warned. Why Souljah why? Perhaps her purpose was to have folks thinking about how their living could impact their afterlife. Believe me, you don't want to spend any time in "The Last Stop Before The Drop, the County for you. If you were looking for the continued story of Winter Santiaga on Earth in Brooklyn, NY, that book has not been warned. Why Souljah why? Perhaps her purpose was to have folks thinking about how their living could impact their afterlife. Believe me, you don't want to spend any time in "The Last Stop Before The Drop, the County for you. If you were looking for the continued story of Winter Santiaga on Earth in Brooklyn, NY, that book has not been warned. of the Ungrateful, the State of Ignorance, and the Land of Arrogance." January 26, 2021 March 4, 2021 Read with your third eyeSister Soulja will never write another 'The Coldest winter' type of book, so if you're looking to look "deeper" into the words on these pages, you'll see that AGAIN, Sister Soulja is providing an urban masterpiece. There is no mindless content full of ghetto bastard behavior in this book. It's about life, lessons, vanity and the impact our choices have on everyone around us. Enjoy this book because it's full of gems hidden in plain sight. March 18, 2024I was one of the girls who grew up reading The Coldest Winter ever way before I had business reading it. It changed the way I viewed my own life and I wanted nothing more than to be like Winter Santiaga. Waiting 20 years for this book, hought I wouldn't be able to put it down, but Life After Death was a hard read. Not because it was hard to follow or particularly difficult in verbiage, but because Winter is still Winter, and I didn't realize I needed Winter to grow up. I needed Winter to be the mature version of herself and all the things we loved about her: super fly, cunning, business minded, loyal and raw. It turns out that being an adult doesn't make Winter mature, and our heroine is not as loveable as she was in her youth. If anything, this book was a pusher for Prison Abolition, because prison made her worse. It stunted her growth this book and even when I did, I was so minimal it was like feeding someonee. It stunted her growth by the end of the book but it was so minimal it was some growth by the end of the book but it was some growth by the end of the book but it was some growth by the end of the book but it was some growth by the end of the book but it was some growth by the end of the book but it was some growth by the end of the book but it was some growth by the end of the book but it was some growth by the end of the book but it was some growth by the end of castor oil for 6 days and giving them a peppermint at the end; it was barely enough to cover the bad taste. February 18, 2021 Nostalgia is not enough. "Life After Death" is the highly anticipated sequel to "The Coldest Winter Ever" was a staple coming- of- age novel within our community (even though the majority of us had no business reading it back then knew about Winter Santiaga and the various obstacles she faced. So of course, twenty years later, people were excited to hear about this book. The writing itself was a bit all over the place. Winter as a character has experienced very little growth, which in and of itself is very heme of this novel was in one word...bizarre. The religious aspects were jarring, and certain scenes... again, all I can say is bizarre. It was difficult to even finish this book. If you were expecting a "sequel" to "The Coldest Winter Ever," unfortunately you will not find it here. Instead, you will get the story of Winter Santiaga's life after death as she literally experiences hell. Reclaiming my time. March 2021PLEASE DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME OR MONEY!!! I can't believe I waited all these years for this.. This book is horrible!!!! Sister Souljah is a one hit wonder. Everything she has written is trash except The Coldest Winter navigated life in jail, give an update on what her sisters and dad is doing and once she get out of jail let her get revenge on everybody she felt dic Make her a dope girl getting money and taking over where her dad left off or let her commit petty crimes trying to get on, get caught and thrown back in jail. There are so many different ways that this book could have been written. Can't believe she was even given the green ligh to publish this. I want my money back.. Truly embarrassed for her!!!! I had to force myself to finish reading... March 4, 2021Writing a book is not easy. Heck, I can't even write a complete sentence, so I can only imagine the tremendous about of pressure to write a sequel after twenty-something years. All writers have a platform and audience to truly send a message. Whelp, Sister Souljah took her shot. The book starts with Winter's release. from prison. She ain't learned a damn thing and only got worse in her endeavors to be top b\*tch making other b\*tches bow down. Well... It's on the first page that we learn she has suffered a tragedy. I like the intent of the book showing that there are consequences for our actions... even after "death". thinking they didn't sign up for  $\triangle$  trigger warning  $\triangle$  beastiality, rape, uncomfortable talks about pedophilia, incest, abortion shaming, homeopathic ideology tumps, and violence (to name a few) all wrapped up like a trippy paranormal novel. While I got an advance reader copy from the publisher months ago I could not force myself to read certain parts. Thank goodness for the audiobook. Nia Long's narrating got me through this (side note: I can only imagine what she thought as she read the script)! Anywho, this book has some of the most taboo kinkiest sex you will ever read...If you into that kind of thing. I won't judge you. All and all there is definitely a message being sent with this book. Having read it all, I get it. don't agree with this over-the-top delivery, but I get it. I'm not done yet. Continue to the comments. []] This is reminiscent of The Divine Comedy volumes 1-3 by Dante Alighieri and A Divine Revelation of Hell by Mary K. Baxter (equally difficult reads). I believe the author was inspired by the former. I highly recommend you read these two as a follow-up or prerequisite. She also incorporates rhetoric of various religions- although she takes abs along the way through Winter's commentary []. I would never discourage anyone from reading, here's my blunt response. And if you are still reading, here's my blunt response. And if you are still reading, here's my blunt response. er Alert  $\triangle$  The book is basically a literary "scared straight" to try to convert the reader to Islam. That's what I got as the overarching moral of the story. It felt like the author tried to set things right while thoroughly making her point that set the Winter should not be idolized. That's just my opinion.My rating? Fashion wise, this one wasn't a donation bin reject but it is definitely so last season for me. xoxo, KatMarch 5, 2021IKYFL I saw the advance reviews. I knew that this would be a mess. I never expected it to turn out like this. We waited two decades for this? She had so much time to craft a solid project. I don't understand why she would alienate her loyal readers by going in this. e was ridiculous. At times it even became perverse and disgusting. It kept getting worse as the book progressed. I was determined to finish it. I'm glad that I did. She won't get any more of my time or money after this. March 12, 2021This book was probably the strangest, most bizarre book I have ever read in my entire reading life... and it was determined to finish it. I'm glad that I did. She won't get any more of my time or money after this. March 12, 2021This book was probably the strangest, most bizarre book I have ever read in my entire reading life... and it was amazing! I will admit that at first, I was like, "WTF is this?! Who asked for finish it. I'm glad that I did. She won't get any more of my time or money after this. March 12, 2021This book was probably the strangest, most bizarre book I have ever read in my entire reading life... and it was amazing! I will admit that at first, I was like, "WTF is this?! Who asked for finish it. I'm glad that I did. She won't get any more of my time or money after this. March 12, 2021This book was probably the strangest, most bizarre book I have ever read in my entire reading life... and it was determined to finish it. I'm glad that I did. She won't get any more of my time or money after this. March 12, 2021This book was probably the strangest, most bizarre book I have ever read in my entire reading life... and it was determined to finish it. I'm glad that I did. She won't get any more of my time or money after this. March 12, 2021This book was probably the strangest, most bizarre book is constructed with the strangest and bizarre book is constructed with the strange We did not need a sequel." It started off on a note I wasn't expecting at all. Fantasy is not my genre of choice. BUT I stuck with it and was rewarded, at least to me, for my patience. This book is ahead of it's time, way WAY ahead of it's time, way WAY ahead of it's time, way way a least to me, for my patience. This book is ahead of it's time, way way a least to me, for my patience. This book is ahead of it's time, way way a least to me, for my patience. This book is ahead of it's time, way way a least to me, for my patience. This book is ahead of it's time, way way a least to me, for my patience. This book is ahead of it's time, way way a least to me, for my patience. This book is ahead of it's time, way way a least to me, for my patience. 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This book is a least to me, for my patience. This book is a least to me, for my patience. This book is a least to me, for my patience. This book is a least to me, for my patience. This book is a least to me, for my patience. This book is a least to me, for my patience. This book is a least to me, for my for her to disappoint and eff things up anyway. But her character arc was real, raw, flawed, and consistent. If you do the disservice of starting and not finishing this book, you miss out in a major way. I initially was disappointed at Winter's lack of growth for the majority of the story, but eventually she got it. I read TCWE as a teen and loved Winter. But when I reread the story again as an adult, I became super aware of how selfish and ugly the was. When I heard there would be a sequel, I was hyped to see if Winter changed, if she grew because she didn't seem to have matured in the minor scene she appeared in, in Porsche's story. I was almost sad Winter didn't seem to have matured in the minor scene she appeared in, in Porsche's story will always be up for debate but I loved it for Winter, sis needed it. Sister Souljah remains one of my favorite authors. What she did here was brilliant and on a third eye level. If this story proved anything to me, it's that she's a visionary.March 8, 2021I feel like I just crawled, belly to the ground, thru sewage. This book contains the stuff that megalomaniacs are made of. I would expect these rantings in a 4am tweet. Am I alone in believing that one doesn't need to tear down another's religion to have faith and belief in their own? Sad...so sad. Religious fanaticism aside...this book wasn't the least bit entertaining. Sista Souljah had over 20 years and still no character development or depth. It can be argued that the first book wasn't the least bit entertaining. Sista Souljah had over 20 years and still no character development or depth. It can be argued that the first book wasn't the least bit entertaining. own hype. Refund? Yes, please. I rate this book a negative 2 stars. February 3, 2021 This book was not what I expected it to be. Not that I want a book to be predictable, we all love a shocking twist or POV we didn't expect etc.. But lets think back on how The Coldest Winter Ever ended. Mama Santiaga's funeral. Winter and her father seeing each other for what we think may be the last time. Midnight adopting the twins. Porsche showing up ooking great and living life. As a reader, I'm hoping this isn't the last time Winter gets to see her Dad. What kind of life are Midnight and the twins going to have? Wow, Winter realizes she is at her lowest, what happens next? What happens next? What happens next? What happens with these characters we've invested in 20 years later. The first book had so many important messages in it. I loved reading between the lines and seeing what Sister Souljah wanted the reader to understand. I could see her passion in that book. Winter is shot, and the whole story is of her comatose thoughts of what hell is like after living the life she's lived. For me, it was almost too "wow" for me to really even take in any possible for me to reall nessages that were trying to be told in the story. The demonic presence, the animalistic sex, the demeaning actions from what is clearly the devil as her man... why? Even the ending where she comes back to life didn't fit what I felt would have been her end game. Winters interview and the responses she would have been given in life. Especially after seeing the mercy she's been given in life. Winter learns a lesson and realizes what's up, that response should have been way different. Maybe to be told. I don't think Sister Souljah is a bad writer at all. Maybe those of us who didn't care for this book are the ones who aren't seeing what is supposed to make this book would have liked to see Winter actually living life and see how she has changed and grown as a person. If she didn't have a happy ending and did the same shit she did when she was younger, I still would have preferred to read that than to read the crazy hell limbo dream that was her story 20 years later. I don't really give bad reviews. If I don't nean any disrespect to SJ a an author. This is a lengthy review because I genuinely love her books and I'm invested in Winter. I was really looking forward to this one. I think anyone who read Coldest Winter growing up was super hyped about this book just wasn't for me. And I don't think it was the best sequel to Winter's release either. January 5, 2021Ok log: read below: I was really excited to read this because I loved The Coldest Winter Ever and Midnight and really thought that Sister Souljah could do no wrong! So believe me when I say I am so sad that I have to give this one a less than stellar review. But it just didn't do it for me. The book is based on Winter's life after she has died (so think heaven, hell, devils, God, etc.). That alone was a bit of a shock to me given the style and content of Sister Souljah's past books. Unfortunately, the storyline ended up being completely disorganized and all over the place. I didn't even know what was happening half of the time. The writing was subpar, not at all the unique style that I have come to know and love from Souljah's books. The characters that popped up were weird and all over the place. I didn't even know what was happening half of the time. example... could not tell you who she was or what she was doing in this book aside from shouting random nonsense over and over again). The entire last half of the book seemed to be a fictional book. And don't even get me started on all of the problematic messages littered throughout. I get that Souljah's books are known for being crass and pushing boundaries, but this was just... over the top and not in a good way. I mean, she repeatedly described abortion as murder, condemned any religion that did not worship Allah (those who believed in God/Jesus/Mary, etc. were stuck in the in-between place, couldn't go to Heaven), and that's only 2 of the many issues going on in this book. I'm really not sure how this ended up getting published, honestly. I guess I can give it props for a little bit of a twist at the end? But even that is not enough to redeem this book. Overall, I don't think I can recommend this book. Overall, I don't think you need to.February 10, 2021I the view back is funny that all of the "5 star" review back is funny that all of the say about the book. I'm not even sure what to say about the book that others haven't already explained in their reviews here on their stellar review because they know the author, it's the only reason why I could think they'd leave a 5-star review, especially without gushing about the book). I'm not even sure what to say about this book that others haven't already explained in their reviews here on onestly, read any of the other 1-star reviews, they share my opinion in how horrible this book was, I can't believe any editor would have say yes to this, but as others have stated it is most likely due to her fame from the first novel. Wouldn't recommend this book. It's not at all what I expected. The Coldest Winter Ever took me on a wild ride and I loved ever ing this book took a dark and silly turn and just fell off the deep end. I really hate the terrible publicity this book will receive when it comes out in March. Sister Souljah really get. Book Reviews by Tara aka Queen of MemoirsNovember 13, 2022 Although The Coldest Winter Ever is one of n all time favorite fiction novels, it saddens me to say, Life After Death is my least favorite sequel. I was super excited about the release of this book. I even reread The Coldest Winter in anticipation of it's release. Unfortunately, I didn't need to read TCWE again, because Life After Death is my least favorite sequel. I was super excited about the release of this book. I even reread The Coldest Winter in anticipation of it's release. down, and adding it to my DNF (Did Not Finish) pile. The story was all over the place. As I read each chapter I hoped it would somehow take a turn for the better, and start to make sense. Sadly, that never happened. In my attempt to not give any spoilers, I've decided not to discuss the plot. However, I will say this...the majority of the characters in this book are new. The story is not set in New York. If you thought Winter was cold in the first book, then she is below freezing in this book. There are many controversial topics within the story. This is a book readers will be polarizing. I believe the concept of Life After Death is about the ideas of consequence, free will, faith, materialism, divine judgment, and the and while I normally find each of these concepts extremely thought provoking, I was minimally moved by the way in which they were delivered in this sequal. As a matter-of-fact, it came off a little sanctimonious. For all the above reasons I can only give this book 1 make sense of it all. March 8, 202122 years ago, Sister Souljah blessed the urban literary world with The Coldest Winter Ever. A book that inspired some, if not all, of our favorite authors. Young adults loved Winter for her street smarts and hood celebrity status. Now, Winter, and all her fans are grown. After doing a 15-year bid, Winter Santiaga is back and ready to claim everything that she felt she has lost, and ready to claim everything she feels she deserves. Like any hood celebrity, Winter feels her release should be celebrated. After some convincing from her brother-in-law, Elisha, Porsche's husband, Winter decides to take her release to television, on a reality tv show. But like any other plan that Winter has ever conceived, it's thwarted, changing the game indefinitely. "Everybody know Winter Santiaga is all about action and hustle, plotting and planning, making it and taking it, and a dead bitch can't do that shit."From the moment this read starts, you can see that Winter has little to no growth from her time in prison. Instead of using her time wisely to grow and learn, she's spent it trying to figure out how to exact revenge on her enemies and on how to be "the top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm moving wheever murdered me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her time in prison. Instead of using her time wisely to grow and learn, she's spent it trying to figure out how to exact revenge on her enemies and on how to be "the top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm moving wheever murdered me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her time wisely to grow and learn, she's spent it trying to figure out how to exact prevenge on her enemies and on how to be "the top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm moving wheever murdered me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her time wisely to grow and learn, she's spent it trying to figure out how to exact prevenge on her enemies and on how to be "the top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm moving wheever murdered me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm moving wheever murdered me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm moving wheever murdered me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm moving wheever murdered me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm moving wheever murdered me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her top bitch". "That's when I promised my beft, I'm her top bitch". "That's when I promised me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her top bitch". "That's when I promised me to the top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her top of my 'payback's a bitch' list. I'm her top we top of which was be to be the star, so she got murdered on camera, a dramatic debut.' Simone waved her arms in the air, still holding the Ciroc." Before Winter starts her after life journey, she's allowed to visit the two people that she loves the most, Midnight and her father, the infamous Ricky Santiaga. "Somebody got me! But don't you worry about who did it. Stay still for me. Don't kill whoever did it. I'm gonna you the fuck out of here. I'm gonna put you where you belong. Trust me, you're Baby Girl. Poppa, you did everything in life for me. Now I'm gonna be the one to king you!" Winter's unable to comprehend what's going on, but when she comes to her own conclusion about what's going on, but when she comes to her own conclusion about what's going on, but when she comes to her own conclusion about what's going on, but when she comes to her own conclusion about what's going on, but when she comes to her own conclusion about what's going on, but when she comes to her own conclusion about what's going on, but when she comes to her own conclusion about what's going on a bout what be comes to her own conclusion about what's going on a bout what be comes and a bout what be comes about was trying to break me, I know. But Winter Santiaga is not easily broken. "The next 80% of this book gets really weird, even tricky. Winter santiaga takes the afterlife on the best way she known as The Last Stop Before the Drop, has all the worldly things Winter can want and more. Her designer labels, expensive cars and even men that can fuck her into oblivion. Old habits die hard an cost Winter, ultimately teaching her a lesson that is learned almost too late. She's turned in to several different animals, killed in the afterlife twice and even meets the souls of her aborted kids. If any of this sounds weird to you, then you are correct in your assessment. Those aspects of the book were almost hard to read. It was like reading a paranormal book. "Unexpectedly, because it was not highlights when I finished this book. It was enlightening. It didn't feel good reading, but it was definitely necessary. Winter's time in the afterlife broke her down, gave her life meaning and taught her multipl lessons. "Don't know if I will ever be able to let pride go even though I know it's wrong. I don't know if I even want to. I don't cover my hair or wear religious-type clothing. For me that ain't it. But I do worship, I'll let him be the only one that sees me bow down before him, bowing down beside me, to the One who created us both and us all. "My overall assessment is: I enjoyed this book. It held my attention from the beginning until the end. Even with all of its weirdness, I was still able to enjoy. Even with all of its weirdness, I was still able to enjoy attention from the beginning until the end. Even with all of its weirdness, I was still able to enjoy. get it. There was just no thrill for me. About 5 or so chapters in I figured out what the book was solely about. Let's just say the title speaks for itself, literally. The last two chapters is what made me give it a bit more love on the rating. The Santiaga family was hottest on the block, nobody was messing with them even while locked up. Winter had a crew in lockup. She had plans for them to star in a reality TV show when they were released. They were going to make their appearances and make their money but nobody will come close to looking better or making more money than Winter santiaga, she will make sure of that. She was the star of the show, the main attraction! However one of her crew members figures out Winter just irked me the ENTIRE time. She literally did not learn a thing after serving 15 years in prison! Brooklyn is where she grew up. Brooklyn is hood. You know what they say: you can take and learn from for sure. There are some triggering and controversial topics that are brought up as well: rape, sodomy, abortion; to name a few. Just read it with an open mind don't have high expectations like I did or else you will be (just as I was) highly disappointed. Also... was anyone else annoved with the number of times the word "furthermore" was used or was it just me?March 11, 2021Okay so... remember that song by 2PAC called, "I Wonder If Heaven Got A Ghetto?" So... this book made me feel like she heard that song and said I can't imagine Heaven having a ghetto but I bet hell got wouldn't leave her so then she said to herself... what would a tour of hell in the hood look like. And then boom... "Life After Death" was born. There was definitely a message there but not sure which direction that message there been message there but not sure which direction that message there but not sure which direction that message there been message there b ah used Life after Death to her advantage. She knew many was waiting for it to drop and I think she saw it as a perfect opportunity to try and reach and drop the jewels on as many ears that would listen. And many jewels she dropped them metaphorically it still made it a dope azz read. Actually it made it a dope azz read. Actually it made it a dope azz read. Actually it made it a dope azz read. wasted 12 dollars and 99 cent. Boring bore at all.WTH I'm pissed at this sequel. if I could give no stars it would be that.March 4, 20211 actually didn't finish. It wasn't really my kind of books but this one was a little demonic for me. I respect everyone's religious beliefs but the things I read went against mine. Allegra BourbonStreetBookers March 4, 20211 actually didn't finish. It wasn't really my kind of book. I'm a big fan of her previous books but this one was a little demonic for me. I respect everyone's religious beliefs but the things I read went against mine. 5, 2021 The Coldest!!!Life After Death...This title is literal. This was a hell of a ride we were taken on. I don't base my love for a book or an author on the reviews of the basic. This book is for real readers with the ability to comprehend. Sister Souljah is doing what she does in real life through her literary work, using her platform to attempt to save the soul of the people. Read, absorb and apply as necessary. The end of this book was worth the confusion and the round about way we were taken to get there!!!! The end of this book is why I upgraded my 4 star review to 5 stars. I was definitely reminded of the reason why Porsche is my most favorite person in any book I've ever read. Her level of love is hy I upgraded my 4 star review to 5 stars. unmatched March 31, 2021 January 10, 2021 Thank you to Netgalley for approving my ARC reguest in exchange for an honest review I've been looking forward to this sequel for vears. L consider The Coldest Winter Ever to be a classic and I've re-read it several times since L initially read it in high school. That said, I went into Life After Death with extremely high expectations but ultimately. Lam very disappointed. L gave it 1 star but even that feels like a stretch. I couldn't even finish it. To be honest, it felt like Life After Death was written by a completely different author. The storyline was very messy and confusing. Several times, I would stop to try and understand what point Sister Souljah is trying to make. I tried really hard to push through in hopes that it would get better but it was so bad that I just had to stop. It pains me to write a review like this but it's the truth. I don't recommend this book and I'm not sure I could ever pick up another Sister Souljah book again after this.-@chanele.reads.wellDisplaying 1 - 30 of 951 reviewsGet help and learn more about the design. 5 answers2025-04-26 10:33:04In 'Life After Death', the story revolves around a young woman who unexpectedly dies in a car accident and finds herself in a surreal afterlife. Instead of heaven or hell, she's stuck in inter a limbo-like world where she must confront her past mistakes and unresolved relationships. The narrative alternates between her attempts to communicate with the living and her journey to understand her own unfinished business. Through these interactions, she begins to piece together the impact she had on others and the legacy she left behind. The book delves into themes of regret, forgiveness, and the possibility of redemption, ultimately asking whether it's ever too late to make amends. The climax occurs when she discovers a way to send a final message to her grieving family, helping them find closure. The story ends on a bittersweet note, suggesting that while death is inevitable, the connections we forge in life endure in ways see.5 answers2025 04-26 17:46:04The main characters in 'Life After Death' are deeply intertwined in a narrative that explores themes of loss, redemption, and the afterlife. The protagonist, a young woman named Clara, is at the heart of the story. She's a fiercely independent artist who's been grappling with the sudden death of her twin brother, Ethan. His passing leaves a void that she struggles to fill, and her journey is one of self-discovery and healing. Ethan, though deceased, remains a central figure through flashbacks and Clara's memories. His vibrant personality and their transformations. The story also introduces Clara's memories. His vibrant personality and their unbreakable bond are vividly portrayed, making his absence all the more poignant. Then there's Marcus, a mysterious man Clara's memories. His vibrant personality and their transformations. The story also introduces Clara's memories. best friend, Lila, who provides a grounding presence and a touch of humor amidst the heaviness. Lila's unwavering support and candid advice help Clara navigate her grief. Lastly, there's Dr. Ellis, a therapist who challenges Clara to confront her pain and find meaning in her loss. Together, these characters create a rich tapestry of emotions and relationships that drive the narrative forward.5 answers2025-04-26 01:14:57In 'Life After Death', the most emotional moment for me was when the protagonist revisits the park bench where they first met their late partner. The description of the empty space, the lingering scent of flowers, and the sound of children playing in the background felt like a punch to the gut. It wasn't just about the loss but the realization that life continues around you, indifferent to your pain. The protagonist sits there, clutching a letter they never sent, and the weight of unspoken words becomes unbearable. That scene made me reflect on how we often take time for granted, assuming there will always be a tomorrow to say what we feel. Another heart-wrenching moment is when the protagonist finds a box of old photographs in the attic. Each picture tells a story—birthdays, vacations, quiet mornings—but what hits hardest is the realization that these moments are now frozen in time. The protagonist breaks down, not just from grief but from the overwhelming love that still exists despite the loss. It's a reminder that death doesn't erase love; it just changes its form. The book beautifully captures the duality of life and the resilience of the human spirit. The protagonist's journey through grief and loss is a central focus, but it's not just about mourning—it's about healing. It's not just about moving on but learning to carry the weight of loss in a way that doesn't crush you. The book also touches on the concept of time-how it can feel like an enemy in grief but eventually becomes a companion in healing. Another theme is the interconnectedness of lives. The protagonist's story is intertwined with others, showing how one person's loss can ripple through a community. The book doesn't shy away from the darker aspects of grief, like guilt and anger, but it also highlights moments of unexpected joy and connection. It's a reminder that life after death isn't just about survival—it's about finding meaning and purpose again.5 answers2025-04-26 01:49:10In 'Life After Death', the afterlife concept is explored through a blend of spiritual introspection and vivid storytelling. The protagonist's journey begins with a sudden, unexpected death, which thrusts them into a realm that defies earthly logic. This new world is neither heaven nor hell but a liminal space where souls confront their unresolved emotions and unfinished business. The author uses rich, almost cinematic descriptions to paint this ethereal landscape, making it feel both alien and eerily familiar. What struck me most was how the book delves into the idea of self-forgiveness. The protagonist meets other souls who are stuck in cycles of guilt, regret, or denial. Through these interactions, they realize that the afterlife isn't about understanding and releasing the burdens of the past. The narrative shifts between moments of profound sadness and unexpected humor, creating a balanced exploration of what it means to truly let go. By the end, the protagonist's transformation feels earned. They don't just move on to another realm; they achieve a kind of inner peace that eluded them in life. The book leaves you pondering your own unresolved emotions and the idea that the afterlife feels deeply personal and introspective compared to other novels in the genre. While many afterlife stories focus on grand cosmic battles or moral lessons, this one dives into the emotional and psychological journey of the protagonist. The narrative doesn't just describe a new world—it delves into the character's regrets, relationships, and unresolved questions from their past life. What sets it apart is its raw honesty. The protagonist isn't a hero or a villain; they're just a person trying to make sense of their existence. The afterlife here isn't a place of judgment or reward but a space for reflection and growth. The author avoids clichés like pearly gates or fiery pits, instead crafting a surreal, dreamlike landscape that mirrors the character's inner turmoil. This approach makes 'Life After Death' stand out. It's less about the journey, offering a nuanced take on what it means to confront one's own life after it's over. It's a story that lingers, not because of its world-building, but because of its emotional depth.5 answers2025-04-26 18:03:09In 'Life After Death', the theme of reincarnation is handled with a mix of introspection and raw emotion. The protagonist, after dying, finds themselves in a liminal space where they're forced to confront their past lives. Each life is a mirror reflecting their dying, finds themselves in a liminal space where they're forced to confront their past lives. weight of carrying memories from one life to another. What struck me most was how the author uses reincarnation is a fresh start, showing instead how the past lingers, shaping who we become. It's a haunting yet hopeful exploration of how we carry our scars and lessons across lifetimes.5 answers2025-04-26 21:22:58In 'Life After Death', the journey of the soul is depicted as a profound exploration, a doorway to a different plane of consciousness. The soul's journey is described as a series of stages, each marked by introspection, healing, and growth. Initially, there's a sense of disorientation as the soul detaches from the body, but this is followed by a period of clarity where past life experiences are reviewed. The narrative emphasizes the importance of love, forgiveness, and understanding in this process. The soul encounters guides or higher beings who assist in this transition, offering wisdom and comfort. Ultimately, the journey leads to a state of peace and unity with the universe, where the soul prepares for its next incarnation or ascends to a higher state of being. The book suggests that this journey is not linear but cyclical, with each life contributing to its evolution. The book also touches on the concept of karma, where the soul's actions in life influence its experiences after death. This cyclical nature implies that every soul is on a path of continuous learning and growth, with each death and rebirth offering new opportunities for enlightenment. The depiction of the soul, as portrayed in 'Life After Death', is a reminder of the interconnectedness of all beings and the eternal quest for understanding and harmony.