



INTRODUCTION

BY ANDREA WILLIAMS

When we think of legacy, we think of honor. Of tribute and reverence for lives well-lived. Of the souls and shadows of heroes, their influence staining millennia to come. Legacy, in this way, is attributed only to the deceased, to those who've come and already gone.

But legacy isn't a dead thing. It's alive always, as long as make it so.

Legacy is about memory, you see. It's about how we remember.

And who we remember.

Too often, though, we let others do the remembering.

It is said that the winners write the history books, books that guide our memories. These winners, these writers? They made the rules. Victory? It's on their terms.

So they tell us how we remember. They tell us who we remember.

They ain't worried about Grandmama and her home remedies, the way she crushed turmeric with herbs from her garden to heal us from the inside out.

Neither do they care about the plot of land Great Grandaddy scrimped and

scraped to buy, how he stood firm in his deep brown skin when the men with their guns and their badges tried to claim the ground beneath his feet, made rich with his own sweat and blood.

If you ask them, legacy is a measure of conquest. It's of allegiance to a code—not of honor, but of power. Of individual success that supersedes collective triumph.

But what we know is this: A legacy isn't measured by society's awards and achievements. It's inherent in our living, its value determined by that which we choose to ascribe.

We know this, too: that we are temporary beings, here but for a moment and destined to depart. It is what we know when we know nothing else, when life confounds more than it comforts and the days between the first and last stretch wide like the glittering, angry sea.

And we know that the residue of a life is dense and durable, resistant to erasure. Even without assistance it persists, in the genetic and cultural threads that knit one generation to the next.



It's there when we mix up our own version of Grandmama's special cure. She's gone but she guides, steadying our hand as we add a bit of this, a touch of that. It's deep in the soil at Great Grandaddy's home, in the Black dirt that aunties and uncles and cousins have trod and sown, in the fertile land from which we all shall reap.

You can feel this legacy in Kyshona's Legacy, in the work she did to comb through her own family's past, lifting stories and memories and weaving them into something seamless, something that will last forever.

You can see it in the album's credits, in the way she opened doors and made space, welcoming Grandpa H.T. and the Church Elders, amplifying their voices.

You can hear it in her voice—breathtaking and melodic, vulnerable, but also haunting. For as much as she is celebrating and preserving, this music, these lyrics, are an explicit call to action. Legacy is alive and all around us, but we are the ones who must collect it. We are the ones who must protect it.

Kyshona says that every family has storytellers, because we are all

storytellers. So we must doing the telling. With our words, with our songs, with our traditions passed from one kin to another.

But before we can tell, we must listen. To Grandmama and Great Grandaddy and their grands and greatgrands, too. For some, those bodies are nameless, identities lost to time and the conquerors' errant pen.

Yet their spirits, their voices, their legacies remain.

Ashes to ashes and dust to dust, we begin where the ancestors end, their dreams buried deep in our chests... Their blood, our flesh.

It's so easy to forget and so easy to ignore. We see ourselves the genesis, think nothing of before. Yet in their stories is where we find our own.

So we remember.

What do we do with these lives, brief as they are, these blips on a line of neverending time? What do we give and what do we take? What do we leave behind?

There is always something left, you see.

We remember.

ALBUM PRODUCED BY Kyshona and Rachael <u>Moore</u>

Recorded at Southern Grooves in Memphis, TN, USA Engineered and mixed by Rachael Moore Mastered by Kim Rosen, Knack Mastering



ELEPHANTS

Born from the earth
All pride, all worth
Hunted from birth
We watch, we learn
We run, we hurt
We walk the land
Truth buried deep inside
Leaving a trail behind
We run, we hurt

Our heads held high
Gentle and wild
Heavy with light
All grace, all fight for life and tribe
They cannot see
A shadow of majesty invisible clarity
Gentle and wild
Our skin is thick

But greed, still pricks
We strive, we live
With fear you grip
You pull, you kill
Oh say can you see
We're precious like ivory
You're trampling ebony
You take what we have and then you leave
Abandon our bodies, abandon our bodies
If we're gone then who will speak

We strive to live You pull, you kill



by Kyshona and Shannon LaBrie ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/Moraine Music Publishing (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy Drums, Congas, Percussion: Jamie Dick Bass: Dave Smith Electric and Acoustic Guitar: Will Sexton Drum Programming and Synth: Rachael Moore

2 THE ECHO

No you can't see the house through the trees
All around it the roots buried deep I can still feel your presence on this land
And the wind in the trees is the touch of your hand

You are the song
I am the echo
Wherever I am
It's cause you dared to go
You dug the land
So I could grow
You are the song
I am the echo. I am the echo

All that's left of a life is a stone No one knows all the stories it holds No one knows your name but you made your mark The blood that was shed still beats strong in my heart

You are the song And I am the echo Wherever I am
It's cause you dared to go
You dug the land
So I could grow
You are the song
I am the echo, I am the echo

The words that you speak (It's an echo, it's an echo) Where you plant that seed (It's an echo, it's an echo) When you love real deep (It's an echo, it's an echo) What you gave to me (It's an echo, it's an echo)

You are the song
And I am the echo
Wherever I am
It's cause you dared to go
You dug the land
So I could grow
You are the song
I am the echo, I am the echo
I am the echo. I am the echo

by Kyshona and Caroline Spence ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/Concord Sounds/Tiny Shop Publishing c/o Concord Music Publishing (ASCAP)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona

Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy

Drums: Peewee Jackson Percussion: Jamie Dick Rain Stick: Kyshona Bass: Dave Smith

Acoustic Guitar: Ellen Angelico Electric Guitar: Will Sexton Wurlitzer: Al Gamble



3 WAITIN ON THE LAWD

On a South Carolina road Over 100 acres and the stories untold If that soil could speak Of all the joy, pain and loss it's seen

From the riverbed to the church yard Tom toiled those acres hard Working night and day with his two hands He was building more than houses on that land

Waiting on the Lawd Waiting on the Lawd Waiting on the Lawd to show the way

Now what Sydney James used those acres for Was her sanctuary, pharmacy and grocery store Working night and day with her two hands She was sowing a legacy on that land

She was blessed and highly favored One hundred five long years stubborn, willing and able She took her rest from that land Singing Precious Lord please take my hand Waiting on the Lawd

Waiting on the Lawd

Waiting on the Lawd to show the way

Waiting on the Lawd Waiting on the Lawd Waiting on the Lawd to show the way

The children have grown and moved away (hey ooo)
Each one wary of those that take and take (hey ooo)
Some walk by sight some walk by faith (hey ooo)
Some fight to forgive, some give a little grace

When it's home that they miss (that they miss)
They taste the bitter sweet soil on their lips
They're all doing the best that they can
To keep building the legacy on that land

Waiting on the Lawd Waiting on the Lawd Waiting on the Lawd to show the way

Waiting on the Lawd Waiting on the Lawd Waiting on the Lawd to show the way

Waiting on the Lawd to show the way

featuring Ruthie Foster, Odessa Settles and Chris Pierce

by Kyshona and Crys Matthews @Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/ Crys Matthews (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy Percussion: Kyshona, Jamie Claps: Kyshona, Jamie Dick, Michelle Conceison. Rachael Moore Bass: Dave Smith Electric Guitar: Ellen Angelico Harmonica: Chris Pierce

4 WHISPERS IN THE WALLS

White beams standing tall Shadows cast on the yard The chain link has come undone The dust settles with the sun Don't look like much, but once, It was something to someone

Cracked window, sunsets
In collected fragments
The flowers have lost their scent
But they refuse to relent
All to rust what once
Meant something to someone

Secrets lost to lock and key Still feel the life and the legacy Can't see the footprints in the halls

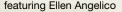
They got a hold on me
I hear their whispers in the walls

Plaster carries The weight of the buried All the grieving and fighting Loving and crying Might change with the decades We fade, but we never fade away

Secrets lost to lock and key
Still feel the life and the legacy
Can't see the footprints
in the halls
They got a hold on me
I hear their whispers in the walls

No distance no great forgiveness The ones we have lost are always within us

Secrets lost to lock and key
Still feel the life and the legacy
Can't see the footprints
in the halls
They got a hold on me
They got a hold on me
They got a hold on me
I hear their whispers in the walls



by Kyshona, ZG Smith and Kathryn Rose Wood ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/ Classy Hound (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy Drums: Peewee Jackson Bass: Dave Smith Electric and Acoustic Guitar: Ellen Angelico Electric Guitar: Will Sexton Acoustic Guitar: Kyshona

B3: AL Gamble



5 ALMA REE

I still hear her humming

Lay your head here my child Come and sit for awhile No more tears will there be Say these words here with me

Alma Ree got down and she taught me to Pray that night, pray that night, pray that night, pray that night I still hear her humming Don't let my anger rise Lord let my steps be light Keep my hands steady Lord Let my tongue be no sword

Alma Ree got down
on her knees and
Prayed all night, prayed all
night, prayed all night
I still hear her humming
When her body was tired
Alma Ree closed her eyes
Kept the faith, finished the race
With a smile on her face

Alma Ree layed down where she prayed and

featuring Nickie Conley

by Kyshona and Hannah Miller ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/Hannah Miller Music (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona
Singers: Nickie Conley,
Maureen Murphy, Kelvin
Armstrong
Drums: Peewee Jackson
Percussion: Jamie Dick
Claps: Kyshona, Jamie
Dick, Rachael Moore
Bass: Dave Smith
Acoustic Guitar: Ellen

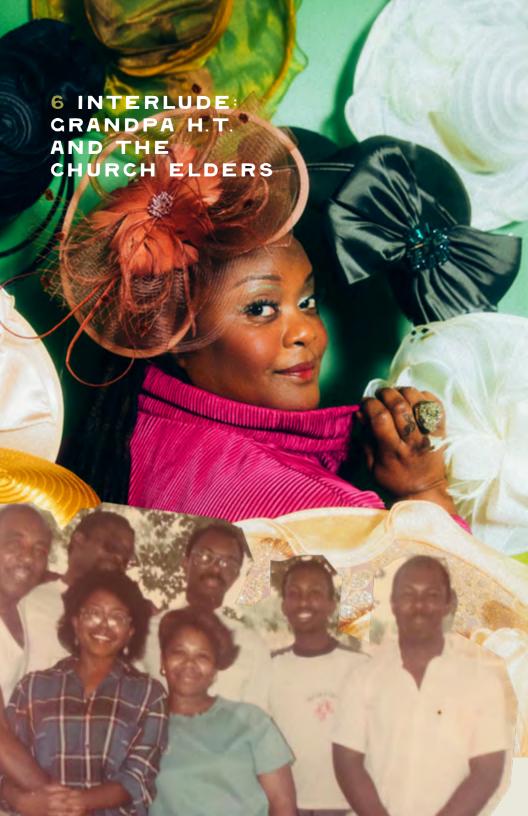
Angelico, Kyshona

Saw the light, saw the light, saw the light I still hear her humming

Don't let my anger rise Lord let my steps be light Keep my hands steady Lord Let my tongue be no sword Keep my hands steady Lord Let my tongue be no sword

Let my tongue be





7 HEAVEN IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE

Heaven is a beautiful place, I know Heaven is a beautiful place, I know If you wanna get to heaven on time You've got to plumb the line Heaven is a beautiful place, place I know

Oh when I get to heaven I'm gonna walk the streets like I can I'm gonna buckle my sword right by my side Stick it in the golden sand I'm gonna shout out my troubles are over I done made it to the promised land Yes I know that heaven is a beautiful place I know

Heaven is a beautiful place, I know
Heaven is a beautiful place, I know
If you wanna get to heaven on time
You've got to plumb the line
Heaven is a beautiful place, place I know

Oh sometimes I like to be in company Then again I like to be alone Jesus is my captain and he's sitting on the throne Sometimes I'm up, sometimes I'm down Almost level to the ground But I know that heaven is a beautiful place I know

Heaven is a beautiful place, I know Heaven is a beautiful place, I know If you wanna get to heaven on time You've got to plumb the line Heaven is a beautiful place, place I know

Oh I remember, Lord I remember The day my daddy died He said now, son, I'm gone away to leave you With King Jesus by your side So when I kneel down to pray Oh the words I hear my father say I hear him saying Heaven is a beautiful place I know

Heaven is a beautiful place, I know Heaven is a beautiful place, I know If you wanna get to heaven on time You've got to plumb the line Heaven is a beautiful place, place I know

featuring Maureen Murphy, Nickie Conley written by Hawthorne "H.T." Armstrong (Kyshona's grandfather) @Armstrong Legacy (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy, Kelvin Armstrong, Natasha Armstrong, Bettye Armstrong, Nolanie Armstrong, Kelvin Armstrong Jr., Kaylen Armstrong Drums: Steve Potts Percussion: Jamie Dick Tambourine: Kyshona Bass: Jackie Clark Electric Guitar: Garry Goin Acoustic Guitar: Ellen Angelico

8 ALWAYS A DAUGHTER

You held my hand Now I hold yours An empty cup To fill with tears Shifting the tide Upon the shore A different view With every year

Who are you to me Show me who I will be We are like water Always a daughter

You covered up
You kept it in
The truth came out
and it cut so deep
Here as I stand
My vow is this
The story's yours
and mine to keep
Who are you to me

Show me who
I will be
We are like water
Always a daughter

Who are you to me Show me who I will be We are like water Always a daughter

Who am I to you I'm the living proof We are like water Always a daughter

Who am I to you I'm the living proof We are like water Always a daughter

by Kyshona and Jess Nolan ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/Jess Nolan Music (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy Harmonium, Singing Bowls: Rachael Moore Cello: Larissa Maestro Violin: Kristin Weber String arrangement by Larissa Maestro





IO WHAT'S IN A NAME

What's in a name Beauty and pain Power and joy Love and shame

There is a meaning
That goes back
through time
From the lines
on her face
To the same
ones in mine

When you call my name May it bring you peace May it make them proud May it let them see That I've become Their wildest dream What's in a name Everything When they were finally free They had the chance to be Somebody brand new Some one they could not see

They reached out and claimed it And they were finally free, finally free They had the chance to be Who they could not see

When you call my name May it bring you peace May it make them proud May it let them see That i've become Their wildest dream What's in a name Everything

May you remember What's in a name

May you remember When you say my name May you remember When you say my name May you remember When you say my name



by Kyshona and Aaron Lee Tasjan ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/ Big Deal Pub/Tasjan Music (ASCAP)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy Drums: Steve Potts Percussion: Jamie Dick Bass: Jackie Clark Acoustic Guitar: Ellen Angelico Electric Guitar: Garry Goin Horns: Marc Franklin, Kirk

Smothers, Art Edmaiston Wurlitzer, B3: Al Gamble

II WHERE MY MIND GOES

Feeling broken feeling empty But that's the thought I can't entertain Can't be weak now Can't slow down

If I ain't moving
I ain't living
If I ain't living
then who am I

Everybody says they understand But they don't know what I have inside If it don't kill me I'll keep pushing on

If I ain't moving I ain't living If I ain't living then who am I My body strains to keep me standing I ignore the signs and keep demanding My will pushes me 'til I'm falling down

If I ain't moving I ain't living If I ain't living then who am I

It's where my mind goes When you're telling me I just can't carry on Where my mind goes You can't stop me, I'll keep on moving on

It's where my mind goes Where my mind goes As long as my blood flows I'll keep moving on

If I ain't moving I ain't living If I ain't living then who am I If I ain't moving I ain't living If I ain't living then who am I If I ain't moving I ain't living If I ain't living then who am I If I ain't moving I ain't living If I ain't living then who am I



by Kyshona and Jamie Lidell ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/Corgi/ Kobalt (ASCAP)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy Drums, Percussion: Jamie

Dick

Electric Guitar: Ellen

Angelico

Synth, Strings, Synth Bass: Rachael Moore Piano, Synth: Al Gamble

12 COMIN' OUT SWINGIN'

Take me paper or plastic Charge it however you like it If you think you know the road I'm on You know nothing about it

Had my heart filled with hope And my chances shot down With my back to the wall There's no backing out

I ain't throwing that towel in
I things go wrong I still can't quit
If I have one less shot left to win
I'm placing that bet on me
I'm coming out I'm coming
out I'm coming out
I'm coming out
I'm coming out swinging
Comin' out swinging
Comin' out swinging

Talk it then walk it
If you see it you'll be it
Yeah this hustle builds muscle
No, I won't be defeated

I learned how to get by (how to get by) With my faith and my pride (faith and my pride) Yes I'm in it to win it I pour my heart in this life Heart in this life

I ain't throwing that towel in
When things go wrong
I just can't quit
If I have one less shot left to win
I'm placing that bet on me
I'm coming out I'm coming
out I'm coming out
Comin' out swinging
I'm coming out swinging

I didn't come this far only to come this far I didn't come this far only to come this far I didn't come this far only to come this far I didn't come this far only to come this far

I ain't throwing that towel in Things go wrong I still won't quit If I have one less shot left to win I'm placing that bet on me

I ain't throwing that towel in
Things go wrong I still won't quit
If I have one less shot left to win
I'm placing that bet on me
I'm coming out I'm coming
out I'm coming out
Coming out swinging
Coming out swinging
I'm coming out swinging

featuring Kelvin Armstrong

by Kyshona and Kelvin Armstrong (Kyshona's brother) ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona

Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy

Drums: Steve Potts Percussion: Jamie Dick Bass: Jackie Clark

Acoustic Guitar: Ellen Angelico Electric Guitar: Garry Goin

B3: Al Gamble

13 CAROLINA

I can't separate the wonder from the why The dying tree I used to climb still got blood on the vine I went searching for redemption Found what I was missing in a song

I can't help but question
if we cut the ties
Am I better off without you
Or is my memory a lie
I've been searching for the magic
Might be where we started long ago
I don't know
But I'm headed south
Carolina take me home
I don't care what all went wrong
Take me in, take me in

Been on my own Had a dream and had to go Took me high it take me low And brought me back to you Back to you

Well if I could live without you hell I would Still taste the venom in your water A little trouble would do some good Are you searching for redemption Do you pretend to listen anymore

Grew up south
Carolina take me home
I don't care what all went wrong
Take me in, take me in

Been on my own Had a dream and had to go Took me high it take me low And brought me back to you Back to you Back to you (Carolina)

You still feel the same
Yet distant as a memory
Wish that I could stay
Your secrets keep me
running and running
There is pain in every rock
And hurt in every hill
Crow in every trill

Carolina take me home I don't care what all went wrong I still belong to you

Been on my own Meet me halfway on this road We got many miles to go It all comes back to you

Grew up south
Carolina take me home
I don't care what all went wrong
Take me in, take me in

Been on my own
Had a dream and had to go
Took me high it take me low
And it got me back to you
Back to you

Back to you (Carolina)

featuring Keb' Mo'

by Kyshona and Brittney Spencer ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/Bspencer Publishing (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona

Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy

Drums: Steve Potts Shaker: Jamie Dick

Tambourine: Keb' Mo', Jamie Dick

Bass: Jackie Clark Electric Guitar: Keb' Mo' Electric Guitar: Garry Goin

Keb' Mo' recorded by engineer Bobby Louden



I feel the sun turning towards me I feel the ground underneath my feet When I have music and song I know I belong Going right back where I started from

The smell of backyard barbecue at the family reunion Kids playing tag and running all around It's like heaven on Earth there's no need to search

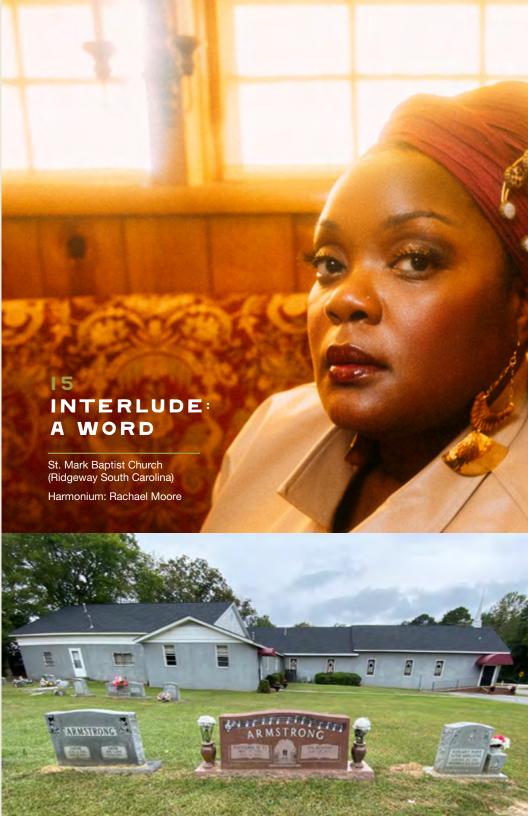
where I started from

I feel the sun turning towards me I feel the ground underneath my feet When I have music and song I know I belong Going right back where I started from

I feel the sun turning towards me I feel the sun turning towards me I feel the sun turning towards me Going right back where I started from

by Kyshona and Kelvin Armstrong, ZG Smith, Ryan Madora ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/ Classy Hound (BMI)/Mad Ry Music (ASCAP)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy Drums: Steve Potts Bass: Jackie Clark Acoustic Guitar: Ellen Angelico Electric Guitar: Garry Goin Horns: Mark Franklin, Kirk Smothers, Art Edmaiston





Hands over your eyes Make believe it's night There's a power in the loop that plays Inside your mind

And if your worst fear Is all you ever hear Maybe the truth is a lie, in disguise

You don't have to compromise Haven't you heard You are covered

Feel you're running out of time Don't be concerned You are covered by the ones you love

When we try to speak
We fall back into the repeat
Follow the lead of the friends
Who move your feet

Who take you higher
Tell you to dance with your desire
remind you the fire you
have isn't burning out

You don't have to compromise Haven't you heard You are covered

Feel you're running out of time Don't be Concerned You are covered By the ones you love

Covered by the sun
Covered by the moon
Covered by the light inside you
Even when there's no proof

Covered by the wind Coming in again Just To tell you

You don't have to compromise Haven't you heard You are covered

Feel you're running out of time Don't be consumed You are covered You are covered

by Kyshona and Jess Nolan ©Armstrong Legacy (BMI)/Jess Nolan Music (BMI)

Lead Vocals: Kyshona

Singers: Nickie Conley, Maureen Murphy Acoustic and Electric Guitar: Will Sexton

Cello: Larissa Maestro



THANK YOUS

This album is dedicated to all who came before me, even the ones whose names we do not know yet. It is because of their sacrifices and perseverance that I am here today sharing our family's story.

I'm very grateful for my great Aunt Verna Byrd and my cousin Sarah Martin, who have been the family historians for my mother's and father's sides of the family throughout the years. Thank you to my cousins who have helped me piece together our memories from childhood. Thank you to the genealogists who have shown me the way to research the family line. They have shown me how much patience is needed for this work.

To Mom and Dad, thank you for supporting me throughout the years. At no point have you made me feel like my dreams are too big or impossible. You've never questioned the path that I'm on. You have only ever encouraged me and I know that is rare for many. I'm so grateful that God gave me you, the coolest and dopest people I know, as my parents.

To Nickie, my adopted sister, thank you for being on this journey with me. You have encouraged me to continue pushing through even when the grief has set in. You have reminded me that this story is bigger than us.



To Shannon, Heidi, Maureen and Ellen—y'all have carried so much more than just notes and harmonies these last few years. You allowed me to lean on you when I was too tired to stand on my own. You made sure there was always laughter when life was a little too heavy to hold. Thank you for being a safe place.

To Rachael, I'm still amazed by what we were able to accomplish with so little time. You let me see how possible it is to make a dream come true. The fact that you were there with me to witness the ancestors at work in the studio is something so very special. I will cherish our friendship always. You're stuck with me kid.

To Ruthie Foster, Keb'Mo, Odessa Settles, and Chris Pierce, thank you for saying yes to lending your voice and talents to this project. Each of you are part of my sonic upbringing so having you featured

To my co-writers, thank you for carving out the time to listen and help me process all of the big emotions into something tangible.

To my team, thank you for seeing me, for hearing me, and helping me through this entire legacy journey. Michelle, your enthusiasm to support me in my research and story gathering has been a real gift. Your desire to know my family stories and their names has shown me how deeply you care for this work and for that I thank you.

Nolanie, KJ, Kaylen—this album is for you. I hope one day you will listen back and hear the voices of your family and understand that you are never alone. You will always be covered. xo, K



