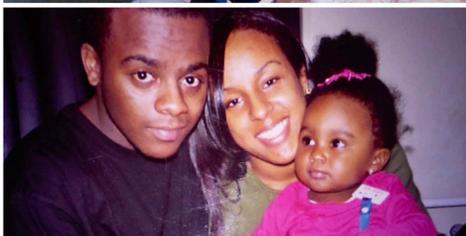


BROOKLYN'S BLACKOUT BABY

by Milani Hudson



THE NIGHT of August 14, 2003 was a night full of chaos and bliss for Eddie Hudson. Hundreds of generating units and power plants were shut down during the power outage. At least 600 subway and commuter rail cars were delayed or trapped due to loss of electricity. NYPD and the Fire Department were called into high demand that night in particular. Eddie's daughter, Milani Hudson was also born on this humid August night.

Eddie, 38, both anxious and nervous of bringing another daughter into this world, he's always wanted a daughter because of only having brothers growing up. Hudson grew up in Park Slope, Brooklyn. His daughter being born in the hospital that he was familiar with in the neighborhood is so eerie he says. "My daughter being born on my mother's birthday reminded me when she said to me 'A mother's hug lasts long after she let's go' I see a lot of my mother in my daughter and I believe she is my mother reincarnated" Hudson says.

Cell phone towers were down, the darkness overcame the streets so much that the only thing recognizable were beige and white buildings nearby. During this blackout the looting, robberies, and crimes were rampant throughout New York City. "I remember my house phone disconnecting as soon as I got the call to rush to the hospital because she was being born" Hudson says. "I feared what was about to happen on the way to the hospital that night" he explained.

Brooklyn Methodist Hospital was trying to accommodate patients as best as they could due to the circumstances of the blackout. There was no telling what would happen next without electricity. "I forgot so many things to bring to the hospital, I was so excited for her to be born" All Hudson family members couldn't gather in the waiting room to await the arrival of the newborn baby. Therefore, only Hudson, and his eldest daughter, were able to stay at the hospital that night.

"3:37 a.m to be exact she was born and then the name choice took just about all night, until the sun rose" Hudson says. Hudson's mother's first name was Lani, and as he held the newborn baby he could hear his mother's voice faintly he said. That's when the idea came to him to name her Milani. "Despite the distress the blackout brought that night, I looked into my daughter's eyes with great exuberance as she gently cooed looking around". Hudson said.