

Dear Reader,

I often think of the birth of Sadie and Stokely, my now two-year-old twins. There were moments filled with both great anxiety and great excitement. To hold them for the first time and stare into their eyes, knowing that we were bringing them into a world filled with wonder, but also challenges and obstacles, terrified me beyond belief. I promised them that I would love them beyond measure and protect them with all my being.

As I set off on my journey of fatherhood, I wanted to arm Sadie and Stokely with the tools to love, to fight for justice, and to take pride in who they are. I began to whisper in their ears about how strong they were and the very proud lineage they came from.

But when we watched cartoons or read books together, I had trouble finding stories of the power of diversity and pride in oneself. I had to ask myself why little Black and brown boys and girls were reading stories about purple people. I wanted Sadie and Stokely to be able to see themselves in the pages. And learn that they too could do great things. They too could change the world.

There's a photo that was taken in the Oval Office on May 8, 2009. A five-year-old named Jacob Philadelphia had the opportunity to meet Barack Obama. Jacob told the president, "I want to know if my hair is just like yours." Obama bent over and responded, "Touch it, dude." The moment was captured in a photo by Pete Souza. That the president's hair had the same texture as Jacob's symbolized to the boy that he too could grow up to be leader of the free world.

I wrote *Who Are Your People?* to show the strength of our diversity, to help us learn and grow together, and most important, to give children like Sadie and Stokely the freedom to dream big dreams, knowing they stand on the shoulders of giants.

- Bakari Sellers