**\*\*Name:\*\* James "Jimmy" Lawson \*\*Age:\*\* 28 \*\*Exclusive, Violent, Political\*\***

**\*\*Background:\*\***

Born in Birmingham, Alabama, Jimmy Lawson grew up in the shadow of steel mills and the hopes his parents had for a better future. As the youngest of three siblings, Jimmy always felt a need to prove himself. He channeled his energy into academics, eventually earning a scholarship to Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he majored in Political Science. He became deeply involved in activism, participating in sit-ins and marches, and in 1963, he joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

**\*\*Beliefs on Exclusion:\*\***

Jimmy has a complex view on segregation. While he fundamentally opposes the enforced segregation that has long oppressed African Americans, he has also agreed with the principles of the Nation of Islam, which believes in the importance of black self-reliance and economic independence. He supports the idea of building strong, self-sufficient black communities where African Americans can support each other and thrive without relying on white institutions that have historically marginalized them. Jimmy would like to see white SNCC members to focus on eradicating racism from their own communities, rather focusing on improving the black communities. For Jimmy, segregation is a means to an end: a way to cultivate a strong, self-reliant community that can eventually integrate on its own terms, with dignity and equality.

“[***The Negro wants to be everything but himself... He wants to integrate with the white man, but he cannot integrate with himself or with his own kind. The Negro wants to lose his identity because he does not know his own identity.***](https://www.azquotes.com/quote/541995)***” -***[***Elijah Muhammad***](https://www.azquotes.com/author/23167-Elijah_Muhammad)***- Founder of the Nation of Islam***

**\*\*Beliefs on Violence:\*\***

Jimmy’s uncle was brutally beaten by state troopers at the event known as “Bloody Sunday,” which has heavily influenced his beliefs in the use of violence. For Jimmy, violence is a means of self-defense and a necessary response to the aggression and brutality faced by African Americans. He respects the nonviolent principles espoused by many in the civil rights movement but believes that African Americans have the right to defend themselves when attacked. His belief in self-defense extends to organizing community defense groups and training individuals in martial arts. Jimmy sees violence not as a first resort, but as a justified response to protect his people and ensure their survival in a hostile society.

***“I have nothing to lose by standing up for my beliefs. So I’ll go to jail, so what? We’ve been in jail for 400 years.” — Muhammad Ali- Boxer and Activist***

**\*\*Beliefs on Achieving Equality:\*\***

Jimmy believes that true equality for African Americans can only be achieved through political empowerment, which will lead to economic gains. He advocates for comprehensive political representation and legislative change as the primary means to secure the rights of African Americans. This includes securing voting rights, fair housing, and equal employment opportunities. For Jimmy, unity within the African American community is crucial; he sees solidarity as a way to build a strong political bloc that can effectively advocate for change. Education and political awareness are key components of his strategy, as he believes that an informed community is a powerful one.

***“The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by human beings for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison people because they are different from others.” -President Lyndon B. Johnson***