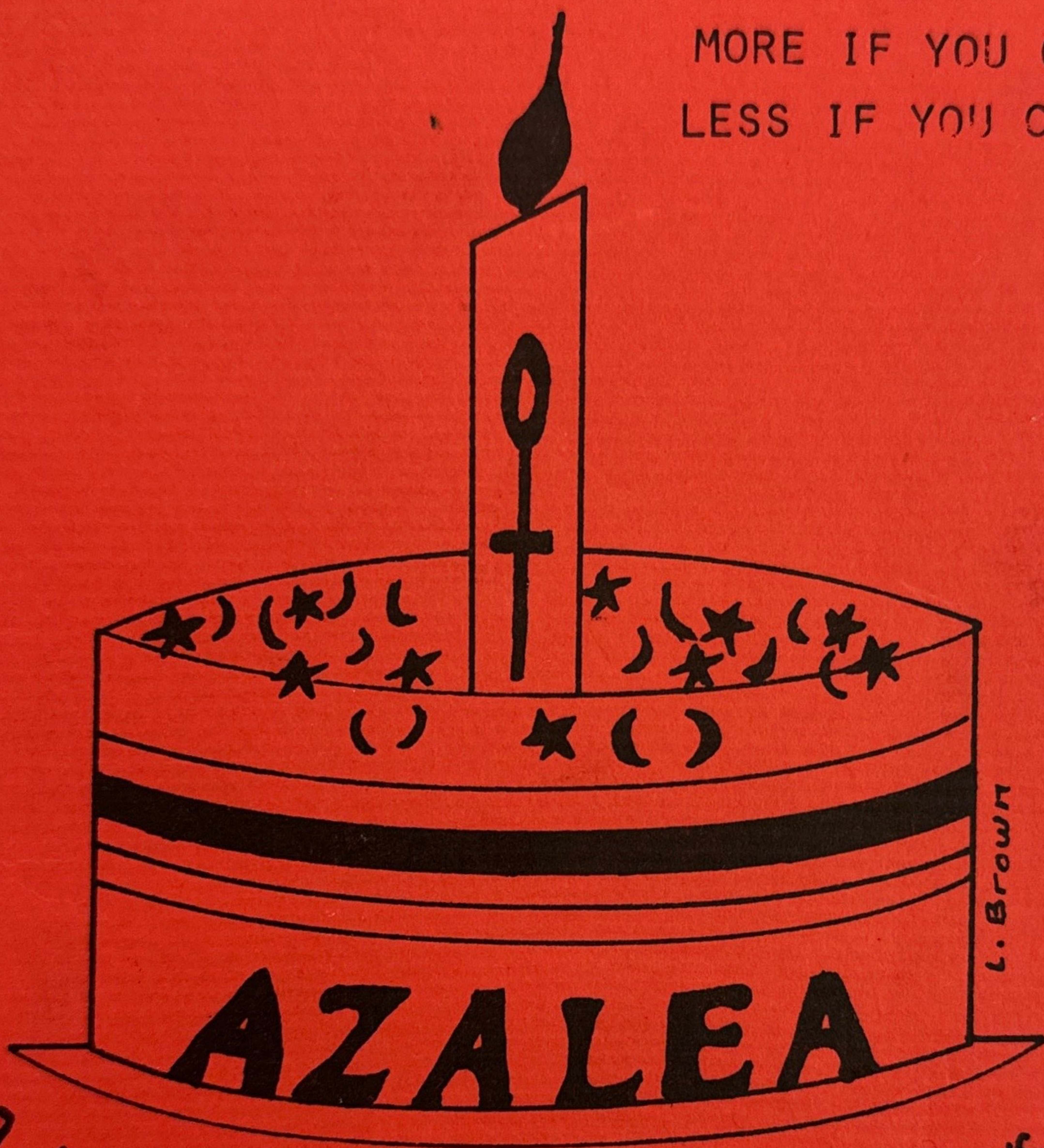


WINTER 1978 - 1979

VOL. 2 NO. 1

\$1.50

MORE IF YOU CAN,  
LESS IF YOU CAN'T



A MAGAZINE BY THIRD WORLD LESBIANS

*first anniversary issue*

Done at Come! Unity Press (13 E. 17 Street, NYC 10003 (212) 675-3043), a cooperative where we learned to do this printing. The press does not demand \$ from us or other movement people who print materials that provide equal access to the poor. The press needs the broad support of many donations: monthly pledges of \$2, \$5, \$7, energy, food, skills, joint benefits, etc. to continue movement access to printing facilities. Don't let this be the last month! YOUR MOVEMENT.





Copyright 1979 AZALEA  
all rights reserved

Editor: Joan Gibbs  
Contributing Editors: Linda Brown  
and Robin Christian

Contributions - articles, letters,  
prose, graphics, poetry, fiction,  
non-fiction - for the next issue  
should be sent to

Robin Christian  
314 East 91st Street, Apt. 5e  
New York City 10028

Joan Gibbs  
306 Lafayette Avenue  
Brooklyn, New York 11238

The proposed deadline for the next  
issue is March 21, 1979.

Subscriptions to AZALEA are \$5.00  
per year. Azalea will be sent free  
to any women in prison. Send us  
your address.

Cover graphic by Linda Brown

If you cannot afford the price of  
AZALEA, send us as much as you can.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PG.</u>
Copyright Procedures by Linda Brown	1
untitled poem by Irare Sabasu	2
"6th Grade Composition" by Irare Sabasu	3
untitled poem by Irare Sabasu	4
"Badeye" by Joan Gibbs	5-9
Photo by L. Brown	9
COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT	10
Graphic by Leocadia Daniels	11
3 poems by Jewelle Gomez	12-14
"sun day" by Linda Brown	15,16
"Praise of Lucina" by Robin Christian	17
order blank	18



## Introduction

Happy Birthday, Azalea!

\* \* \* \* \*

We would like to be more successful in reaching out to Third World Lesbians. After a full year of publishing we seem to be able to reach only a very few women who will contribute their work. We would therefore like to encourage all women reading Azalea to share it with Third World Lesbians that they know.

As we said in our last issue, "we see ourselves as editors functioning in a non-traditional, non-hierarchical, non-elitist role." Non-traditional because the content of each issue is determined by contributors. We are publishing solely for the purpose of sharing the work of Third World Lesbians. Azalea is not a profit making venture- we thusly publish in the least expensive, most efficient way and one which lets us have the maximum creative input. We type, lay-out and print it ourselves and invite others to share their and our skills.

(Monies for the publication of Azalea comes primarily from subscriptions, sales and our own pockets. Each issue costs about \$120.)

This is how we select pieces for publication: about a week after the deadline, we meet; after considering available monies and energy, we read all the material that has been sent. Our goal is to publish

(continued on back page)



COPYRIGHT PROCEDURES  
by Linda Brown

Copyrighting your work is the legal way of protecting your rights concerning ownership and publishing.

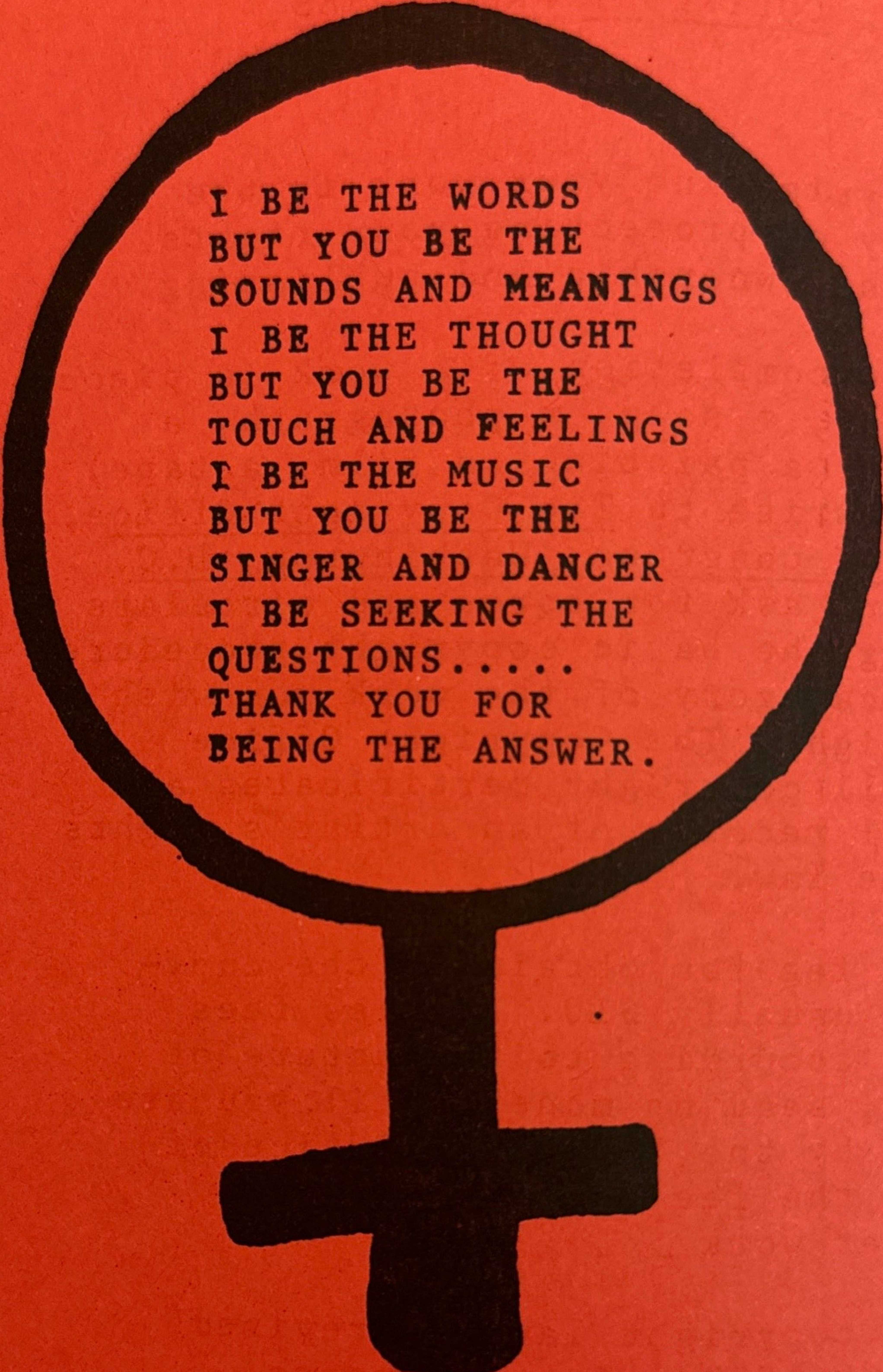
Upon completion of a work (a piece of writing, a song, a photograph, a drawing or a painting, a film, a tape) you must write to The Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20559, and ask for forms and circulars governing the basic copyright procedures for the category of the work you wish to copyright. The Copyright Office issues all copyright certificates and keeps all records of an artist's rights under the law.

The fee for obtaining the copyright is usually \$10. But, as fees may vary according to the nature of the work, send no money until you are notified by the Copyright Office of how much the fee will be for your particular work.

The copyright law was revised in January 1978, after 69 years.

More information concerning the change in the law can be obtained by writing Poets & Writers, 201 West 54th Street, NYC 10019. Ask for their pamphlet on the new 1978 copyright law. The numerous parts of this new law can be confusing, at times. This pamphlet does a very good job at explaining them in further detail.





I BE THE WORDS  
BUT YOU BE THE  
SOUNDS AND MEANINGS  
I BE THE THOUGHT  
BUT YOU BE THE  
TOUCH AND FEELINGS  
I BE THE MUSIC  
BUT YOU BE THE  
SINGER AND DANCER  
I BE SEEKING THE  
QUESTIONS.....  
THANK YOU FOR  
BEING THE ANSWER.

IRARE SABASU



## 6th. GRADE COMPOSITION

I AINT NEVER LEARNED TO SWIM  
 AN I DONT KNO HOW TO SKI  
 I NEVER BEEN INSIDE A PLANE  
 I AINT NEVER SEEN THE SEA  
 MOST ALL MY CLOTHES ARE HAND-ME-DOWNS  
 AN I GOT ONE HAT TO MY NAME  
 ...JUST ONE LIL OLE PARTY DRESS  
 BUT I LUVS EM JUST THE SAME  
 WE HAVE TO SHARE OUR PLACE  
 WITH THE ROACHES AND SOME MICE  
 THO LIVIN IN THE GHETTO  
 AINT EGZAKLY PARADISE.....  
 IT'S ALL I GOT, AN ALL I KNO  
 AN AINT NO PLACE BUT UP TO GO

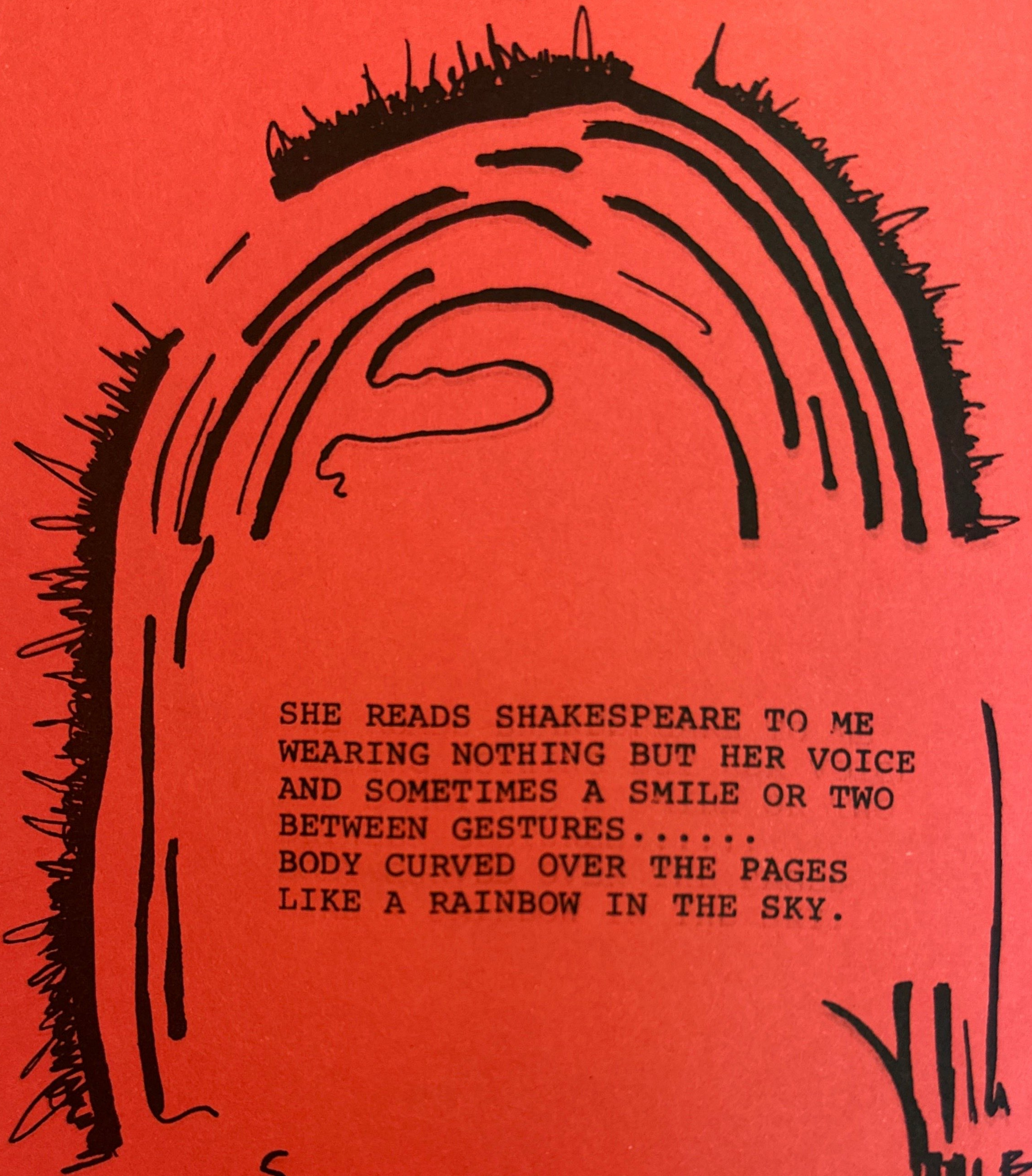
MY MOMMA SAYS:

"THE LORD SURE DO WORKS IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS."

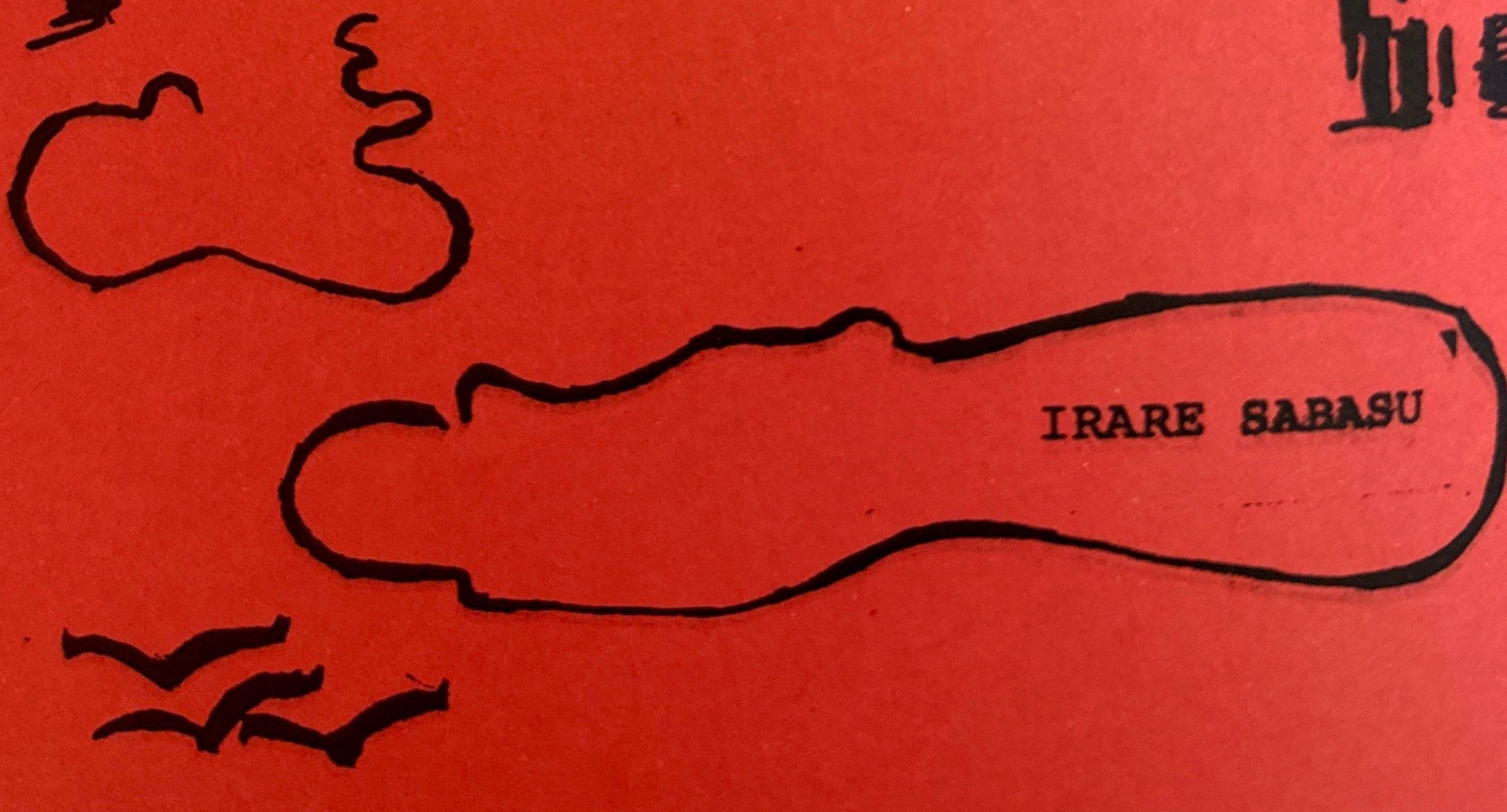
IRARE SABASU

\* First printed in JEMIMA, FROM THE HEART





SHE READS SHAKESPEARE TO ME  
WEARING NOTHING BUT HER VOICE  
AND SOMETIMES A SMILE OR TWO  
BETWEEN GESTURES.....  
BODY CURVED OVER THE PAGES  
LIKE A RAINBOW IN THE SKY.



IRARE SABASU



## Badeye

by Joan Phyllis Gibbs

To a woman, everybody in Lake Haven's Black population hated Badeye. The reasons being, or so they claimed, she drank too much, spent too much time "over the hill" and allegedly slept with anything in pants with a d\_ \_ \_.

"Her with five youngins, a bad eye and all - it's a shame."

"I know her Mommy, God bless her soul, done turned over in her grave a hundred times."

"God sure don't like ugly."

Then as if all of this wasn't enough, Badeye was reported to be sleeping with one of the husbands of a Mother of one of the churches and him, a preacher to boot.

When I first heard tell of this here whole thing, this is what was said: "Between you, me and the bedpost, Minnie, Badeye is sleeping with Rev. Williams." You might know who it was that told me: Ananias, hiccuping and acting like I was the only one he was going to tell it to. Everybody was always saying that Ananias had gotten that bad case of hiccups; which no amount of water, keys down his back nor doctor were able to cure; in punishment for all his lying. Now I ain't no doctor myself and I don't quite know about all that other stuff but I do think his drinking must to have helped some too.



I guess when Badeye supposedly started to sleeping with Rev. Williams she must to have been about thirty-nine. I say this because I was thirty-four and she had been five years in front of me in school. Also it was the year that all those white people who passed through here on the way to some white convention in Pinesburg died when their bus ran over in the Big Lake. She could have been older though. I know she lost her right eye in a fight with one of her men, Nat Andrews I think it was, shortly after her mommy died. Everv since then everybody had called her Badeye and not Angela like her Mommy had named her.

Badeye had one good friend in those days- Nasty Gal, and you never saw one without seeing the other. Nasty Gal, she got that name cause as a child she had always been seen running around with shit or stains from it in her pants. She and Badeye both had five kids and all of them had different fathers. Badeye was a pretty thing and it wasn't just cause of the color of her skin neither. She was what folks used to call a 'blue-black' with long dark hair.

You know, "over the hill" wasn't really a hill at all but a joint on the side of the road leading up to the crab house. It got that name I guess cause it was built on a slant, with the back part sort of up in the air. On week-ends though, it was the place to be and some week nights too- everybody went there. For awhile though after



the owner was shot dead on the spot by his nephew, it was closed down. He spent all of one afternoon and part of an evening in jail and then was let out. Some people said it was because the white folks just didn't think that a nigger's life was worth shit; others said it was on count of his Mommy and those rumors about her being able to work spells.

I used to go over the hill myself sometimes and it was there that I always saw Badeye and Nasty Gal.

The Sunday after Ananias told me about Rev. Williams and Badeye was first Sunday and as usual I went to church at Mount Matthew's. By then he had gotten to most of the Baptists in Lake Haven at least. Everybody was talking about it. This from Sister Máry: "Child, did you hear about Bad-eye and Rev. Williams? I don't believe it myself but I hear tell that they are sleeping together. If it is true and mind you I don't believe it, she probably seduced him into it. Child, Satan is capable of reaching the high and the low."

That Sunday, Rev. Simon, the pastor at Matthew's at the time, took his text from Corinthians and he kept making references to the story of Lot. At the end of the service the choir with Mrs. Grace at the piano brought everyone to tears with a long rendition of "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?"



Stories about Rev. Williams and Badeye circulated around Lake Haven for years. From Ananias I learned that she and Nasty Gal had stopped speaking and that Rev. Williams', who had continued to preach at The Rock of Paul Church over Mapletown, congregation was getting smaller and smaller.

"I think Williams (the Rev. was informally dropped from in front of his name after the first six months) must to have been trying to burn both ends of the candle at once...You know they done quit that building drive over at The Rock of Paul."

Then something happened that brought an end to all the gossip about Rev. Williams and Badeye: Badeye was found up a dirt road with no clothes on and the whole lower part of her body blasted away: dead. And, there wasn't nobody that thought that it was Rev. Williams that done it cause killing Black women and leaving 'em up a dirt road like that was something that only a white man or men would do. After that Rev. Williams' congregation started to increase again and they started to building another part on the church too- seems like all those folks who had done all that talking about him decided that they wanted to join up with him. And Nasty Gal who was pregnant when Badeye was killed named her next child Angela.

Copyright (c) 1976 Joan Sibbe



(Please note: The above story, "Bad-eye" is from a collection of short stories that I am working on about Black women. I would very much like to receive feed-back on it. Any woman who reads it and wants to write to me about it can. My address is 306 Lafayette Avenue/Brooklyn, New York 11238. Thanks, Joan)





My pain of yesterday  
has passed on  
to tomorrow

Merely leaving memories of sadness  
damp handkerchiefs  
and promises of joy.

JEWELLE GOMEZ



After grotesque efforts to

be correct and womanly

and kinderly and strongerly

more quietly

I am left with only

out of joints and

bluely blackness

The mark of all good washer women

JEWELLE GOMEZ



I paused a lasting moment  
before I entered the frightening door  
to love with you.

The threshold threatened me  
with jealous eyes and  
splintered teeth

There was no light of memory  
to know you by  
or myself,  
merely trepidation.

And I found, like with all portals  
there was only open space  
waiting to be filled by me.

JEWELLE GOMEZ



copyright (c) by L. Brown

sun day

linda brown

a cold, wet, gray morning. you have finished running and have come into the house - cold - adrenalin pumping; with red cheeks and clear eyes. you climb into bed beside still, sleeping me, and wake me first with a kiss; then devilishly, with your cold hands all over my stomach and breasts. they soon become warm, and we make beautiful, silent, almost motionless love before falling back to sleep.

later, i am lying between your thighs, which are wrapped in english wool tights - my head in the warm center of you. i simultaneously take small sniffs and bury my head in the darkness. i am bleeding this morning - with alternate, unbearable cramps and nausea. you are rubbing my back and womb with your large, firm hands. massaging my legs. it is like labor, we say. i can feel my womb contracting and relaxing - tightening and resting. between pain, you brush my hair and part it with the ivory african comb. you put sweet-tasting cocoanut oil in my scalp. we make plans for the solstice celebration next week. we decide on a colour to paint our faces, later, for pictures - we will play and pose in front of the pin-box camera we made.



i tell you i smell like amonia and egg between my legs. you bend over smelling, tasting the red, saying it is bitter - like metal, iron. you sing to me; a song you are composing, still. i try to find the harmonies in myself for you. then the pain again, and i whisper and call to you. i think it is like coming, now. you wrap me inside your arms; rock me gentle, baby-like into sleepless oblivion.

you slice the figs with your pocket knife and feed me the pieces. staring into the black tea - cohosh and rich - i say, "ariel, i am a fish today. i am swimming in salt water - bobbing in and out; moving swiftly with the currents; feeling them rush around me." you play me a current tune on your wooden flute.

all day. all morning. all afternoon. all night.

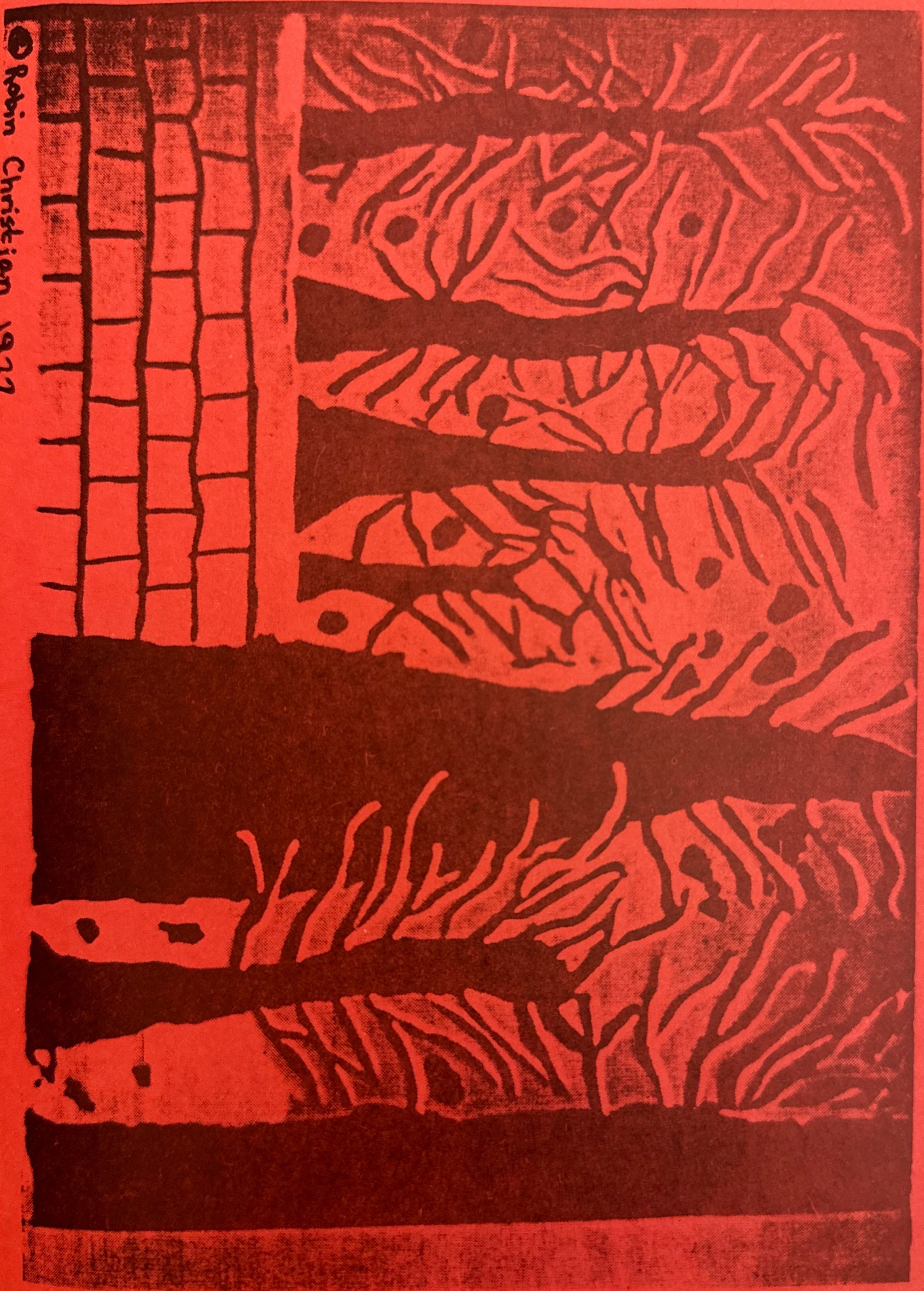
"put on your coat! come, look at the stars and silver trees with me." i am up, fastening boots and coat, almost at once; grabbing your hand. we are out of the door, following trails of hickory smoke from the stove fire inside - as far as we can see them, alone, together, in the clear, cold night air, we sit on a rock and watch the sky show.

evergreen trees grow deep and tall around us. they make a path back to the house. we follow along, behind, between, around them; picking up pine needles to dry and burn for incense.

it is a fine night. the ancestors are riding their stallions across the moon. their faces are reflected in your eyes.



Robin Christian 1977





# AZALEA:

A MAGAZINE BY THIRD WORLD LESBIANS

fiction poetry reviews essays graphics journals  
special features

ORDER BLANK

please send only checks or money orders. thanks.

Published Quarterly \$1.50 per issue \$5.00 yearly \*

40% discount to women's bookstores and organizations.  
All orders must be prepaid. Postage is paid on orders of one(1) magazine (single issue). On all other orders add 25¢ per book for postage.

Quantity \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAKE ALL MONIES PAYABLE TO JOAN GIBBS 306 Lafayette Ave.  
Brooklyn, New York 11238 \*more if you can, less if you can't



(continued from front page)

something by each contributor, and in cases where a woman has sent in more work that can be included in the current issue, we then choose a maximum of 3 poems (if poetry) or one story (if prose and depending on the length) or one article (also depending on the length) or three graphics or photos.

We want to publish the works of lesbians of color because we usually do not have access to, nor in many cases, the desire to be in the "star-creating media".

If you have comments, questions or general feed-back on Azalea we would appreciate hearing from you.

On Feb. 24, 1979 we will be holding an all day conference for Third World Lesbian Writers. The conference is both a benefit for Azalea and an opportunity for us (Lesbians of color and others who would like to join us) to get together and share our work. We hope that you will join us. On page 10 of this issue you will find a leaflet describing more fully what will happen.

In closing we would like to thank all of those who have given us support during the past year and especially Mercuri at Come! Unity Press.

Linda, Robin and Joan



