

FC, contella 1, 78

"Colored Girls"

Play

This book is for Ifa, Thulani, Jessica, Bisa, & June.

also available from shameless hussy is ntozake
shange's novella SASSAFRASS.

certain of these poems have appeared in west end,
broadway boogie, greenfield review, & anon.
they are also incorporated into the broadway
choreopoem FOR COLORED GIRLS WHO HAVE CONSIDERED
SUICIDE / WHEN THE RAINBOW IS ENUF
copyright (c) Ntozake Shange

drawings by wopo holup

copyright (c) Ntozake Shange 1975, 1976
second printing

ISBN : 0-915288-13-3



shameless hussy press
box 424
san lorenzo, california 94580

one

orange butterflies & aqua sequins
 esconsed tween slight bosoms
 silk roses dartin from behind her ears
 the passion flower of southwest
 los angeles meandered down hoover street
 past dark shuttered houses where
 women from louisiana shelled peas
 round 3:00 & sent their grandsons
 whistlin to the store for fatback &
 black-eyed peas/ she glittered in heat
 & seemed to be lookin for rides
 when she wazn'T & absolutely
 eyed every man who wazn't lame
 white or noddin out/ she
 let her thighs slip from her skirt
 crossin the street/ she slowed
 to be examined
 & she never looked back to smile
 or acknowledge a sincere 'hey mama'
 or to meet the eyes of someone
 purposely findin somethin to do in
 her direction/

she waz sullen
 & the rhinestones etchin the corners
 of her mouth

suggested tears
 fresh kisses that had done no good

she always wore her stomach out
 lined with small iridescent feathers
 the hairs round her navel seemed to dance
 & she didnt let on
 she knew
 from behind her waist waz achin to be held
 the pastel ivy drawn on her shoulders
 waz to be brushed with lips & fingers
 smellin of honey & jack daniels

she waz hot
 a deliberate coquette
 who never did without
 what she wanted

& she wanted to be unforgettable
 she wanted to be a memory
 a wound to every man
 arrogant enough to want her

6

she waz the wrath
of women in windows
fingerin shades/ old lace curtains
camoflagin despair &
stretch marks

so she glittered & smiled
honestly delighted/ she waz desired
she allowed those
especially schemin/ tactful suitors
to experience her body & spirit
tearin or so easily blendin with theirs
& they were happy
& lay on her lime sheets full & wet
from her tongue & she kissed
them reverently even ankles/
edges of beards

at 4:30 am
she rose/ movin the arms & legs
that trapped her
she sighed affirmin the sculptured man
& made herself a bath
of dark musk oil, egyptian crystals
& florida water to remove his smell
to wash away the glitter
to watch the butterflies melt into
suds & the rhinestones fall beneath
her buttocks like smooth pebbles
in a missouri creek
layin in water

she became herself/ ordinary
brown braided woman with
big legs & full lips/
reg'lar
seriously intendin to finish her
night's work
she quickly walked
to her guest straddled
on her pillows & began/

'you'll have to go now/ i've
a lot of work to do/ & i can't
with a man around/ here/ are yr
pants/ there's coffee on the stove/
it's been very nice/ but i can't see you
again/ you got what you came for didn't you'

7

& she smiled sincerely

& he wd either mumble curses
abt crazy bitches or sit dumbfounded
while she repeated her policy/

'i cdnt possibly wake up
with a strange man in my bed/
why don't you go home'

she cda been slapped upside the head
or verbally challenged
but she never waz
the ones who fell prey to the
dazzle of hips painted with
orange blossoms & magnolia scented
wrists/ had wanted no more
than to lay between her sparklin thighs
& had planned on leavin before dawn/
& she had been so/ divine
devastatingly bizarre the way
her mouth fit round
& now she stood a
reg'lar colored girl fulla the same
malice/ livid indifference as a sistah
worn from supportin a wd-be hornplayer or
waitin by the window/

& they knew
& left in a hurry

she wd gather her tinsel
& jewels from the tub & laugh
gayly or vengeful/ she stored her
silk roses by her bed & when she
finished writing the account of her exploit
in a diary embroidered
with lilies & moonstones/ she placed
the rose behind her ear
& cried herself to sleep.

two
(for thulani)

graciela and smoke waz like outta the same womb/ cept it waznt so/ graciela waz born some where in a different time from smoke/ but even when they spoke different languages/ the voice waz the same/ & the bangles the/same/ gods patted them to sleep at night/ & they never missed anyone else/ like they missed each other/ a deep hole crawled through all marrow/ so they stayed round/ together/ most time the thoughts they shared waz private/ aired only tween the two/ & solid fronts of ignorance or familiarity met any intruders/ some mother or man or lover wantin to know/ why graciela always knew when smoke needed quiet/ a hand/ some water or actual lewdness/ & smoke didnt allow anyone who waz distracting or gauche within a hair's breath of graciela/ waz prone to desperation when someone didnt understand/ & smoke understood/

one time at this ridiculous fete/ jumbled with glitter boys/ butch whacks/ wd-be dancers writers painters & butch whacks/ real dancers painters jewelers & writers in multiple tongues/ smoke and graciela encountered a mimist recently returned from europe/ where he'd endured boundless adulation & poverty/ pyssed in women's mouths on request/ & worked once/ in oslo/ the mimist haunted women/ cuz he had chosen celibacy/ & cuz he loved them more than himself/ & didnt offer the imperfect/ when more waz needed/ graciela waz a dancer & responded immediately to the flow of the mimist's hands as he spoke/ & smoke liked the way his lower lip dipped under an auburn mole/ then continued to the last hairs of his moustache/ graciela glanced at smoke & saw the same/ a desire to know this mimist more intimately/ & though he waz the flower to be plucked by each/ they laughed/ wantin to know what wd happen now the two/ smoke & graciela/ seriously plotted intentions/ for one other/ than themselves/

for aeons/ it seemed/ graciela & smoke attracted the same lovers/ at the same time/ or a while after someone met graciela/ he met smoke/ & began to harbor desires for his lover's closest companion/ usually confessing to graciela/ this coincidental lust for smoke/ & graciela wd buoyantly suggest/ this lover/ go right over to smoke & get it if you can/ but i dont think so/ smoke & i have an arrangement/ & they really did/ it waz called 'no trespassing'/ & the lovers were shared in conversations intricate and tactile/ as whoever's legs had been between hers/ & the lovers of graciela & smoke never knew both/ only one & that waz that/ the two prided themselves on loyalty rare among women/ & snickered when men insisted on some prerogative of choice/ choosin both smoke & graciela waz cosmically impossible/

& its said one or another lover never got over bein refused/ & here the two were quite emphatic/ 'no man on the face of the earth/ has enough to hold both of us/ it'd have to be a colored man from saturn or uranus/ not one from here'/ & then they wd go off to do what brought them secrets to cherish & purposes for rising at sunrise/ dancin & writin/ & possible lovers/ waz their lives & graciela & smoke waz good/ if not overwhelming & that too/ waz all they cared abt/

but this mimist/ waz the key to something both were looking for/ graciela heard him talking & he waz not talkin/ smoke felt his heat & his hands were chill-damp/ how waz a choice to be made/ neither knew how & both became the essence of themselves to avoid bein involved in the final tappin of shoulders/ the forces wd have to work/ & they did/ graciela waz energy of unseen waterfalls nurturin immense jungle vegetation/ & smoke flowed outta herself like horizons in tahiti/ hot rose & melon tinted vastness/ & the mimist thoroughly enjoyed himself/ never before in his very worldly life/ had he encountered two women of such/ compelling dimensions/ & he also performed/ becoming singularly muted language/ using each second/ every space of his body/ to project/ himself/ & the three of them/ smoke/ graciela/ & the mimist created so much energy/ they all thought they were walkin on the edges of the galaxy/

the mimist waz endowed with/ above all other things/ a sense of unity/ & between smoke & graciela/ he felt precise & categorical ties/ like those he'd known on mars/ before there waz no water/ & colored people moved in the same tone/ like graciela & smoke/ they had one voice & delighted in sharing secrets & food & like on mars/ where colored men placed themselves among two women/ & begat & beloved & held each closely/ the mimist set celibacy aside/ for smoke waz drawin him into her &

graciela waz plungin thru him/ & he chose to do so/ which is more important/ the two graciela & smoke/ didnt know why the choice waznt theirs/ the mimist/ bein a colored man from mars/ not from earth/ never admitted to makin one/ true unions are imperative/ are commanded/ transient lovers are chosen/ & occasions have no meaning/ it is the motions of unnamed stars/ burnin thru acres of sky/ that is not for sale/ & not arbitrary/ that the mimist respected & he took them both/ graciela & smoke/ assumed it waz god's will/ the mimist knew/ the integrity of his person/

one-half

furious moon
gold-red night/ she broke thru the crowd
like the sun in a bad mood/ her
bracelets burnin/ green cheap today/
rhinestones piercin her lips/ cracked red glass
round her moun/ she drank tequila from a paper bag
while passengers for portsmouth & savannah
shoved & bullied/ she fingered quarters in her
pocket/ not enough for anywhere & so old there
were no more ridges/ on the ends/ like the hem
of her skirt undone/ threads ticklin her calves
her hips dug into the rosa y tito heart/ where
the spray paint arrow shda been/ bronze statue women
off skyscraper long luncheon jobs/ piqued in suede & lipstick
cornerin each other & searchin for men who ate pussy
occasionally/ & never made love on the front porch
at dusk/ when the shadows cd fondle streetlights/
toes mingle in the hedges/ the statue ladies smelled good
had dollars of their own/ no where to take kisses
& she fingered quarters/ til the stranger in ochre velvet
rolled thru in gold lame boots laced above the knee/
his kisses drew blood/ he liked the scent of women's panties
she waz meticulously clean/ smooth & cold/ like a good horn
in the pawnshop window/ she waz waitin for a ticket/
some other place to be held/ naked-like soft/ some man

where

she waz music -warm/ innocent cuz she cd love him/
when he waz insane/ like the dancer with no legs/
pirouette on tongues & bosoms/ sucked waz all/

sechita

once there were quadroom balls/ elegance in st. louis/
laced mulattos gamblin down the mississippi/ to memphis/
new orleans n okra crepes near the bayou/ where the trash
wd sing, moanin/ strange liquid tones thru the swamps/
sechita had heard all these things/ she moved/ as if she'd
known them/ the silver n high-toned laughin/ the violins
& marble floors/ sechita/ pushed the clingin delta dust
with painted toes/ the patch-work tent was polka dotted n
stale lights snatched at the shadows/ creole carnival was
playin natchez in ten minutes/ her splendid red garters
gin-stained & itchy on her thigh/ blk diamond patterned
stockings darned with yellow threads/ an old starched taf-
feta can-can fell abundantly orange from her waist round
the splinterin chair/ sechita/ egyptian goddess of creativity,
2nd millenium/ threw her heavy hair in a coil over her neck/
sechita/ goddess/ the recording of history, 2nd millenium/
spread crimson oil on her cheeks, waxed her eyebrows n uncon-
sciously slugged the last hard whiskey in the glass/ the
broken-blurry mirror she used to decorate her face made her
forehead tilt backwards 3 inches/ her cheeks appear sunken &
her sassy chin only large enough to keep her full lower lip
from growin into her neck/ sechita/ had learned to make
allowances for the distortions/ but the heavy dust of the
delta left a tinge of grit n darkness on every one of her
dresses/ on her arms & her shoulders/ sechita/ was anxious
to get back to the city/ st. louis/ the dirt there didnt
crawl from the earth into yr soul/ at least in st. louis/
the grime was store-bought/ 2nd hand/ here in natchez/ god
seemed to be wipin his feet on her face/ cling cling clang/
the bells rang/ one of the wrestlers had finally won/ tonight
the mulatto was sposed to hold the boomin half caste/ searin
eagle/ in a bear hug for 8 counts/ get thrown unawares/ fall
out the ring n then do searin eagle in for good/ sechita/ cd
hear red neck whoops n slappin on the back/ she gathered her
sparsely sequined skirts/ tugged at the waist-clinchin from
under her greyin slips/ n made her face immobile/ she made
her face like nephritite/ approachin her own tomb/ she sud-
denly threw her leg full-force thru the canvas curtain/ a
deceptive glass stone sparkled malignantly on her ankle/
her calf was tauntin in the brazen carnie lights/ the full
moon/ sechita/ goddess of love/ egypt, 2nd millenium/ per-
formin the rites/ the conjurin of men/ conjurin the spirit/
in natchez/ the mississippi spewed a heavy fume of
barely movin waters/ sechita's legs slashed furiously
through the cracker night & gold pieces hittin the
makeshift stage/ her thighs/ they were aimin the coins
between her thighs/ sechita/ egyptian goddess/ harmony/
kicked viciously thru the night/ catchin stars tween
her toes

steada slingin hash/ waltzin proper & wanderin demure/

(for ifa & kuka)

sweet lucy ponce rams candi mitchell

& skates cat like joseph jarman

gone mad/ bass clarinets romp wid

sitar winin women/ helmuted

daughters of garment workers & tootsies best friend

lucy ponce

barely blonde borinquena flutterin afro & legs for climbin
from roof to roof/

holdin men tighter/

when she wanna

lucy ponce rams candy mitchell in philadelphia

& straps herself to the ring like last plantana in the pan

shakin hips & wingin her arms to the crowd/

candy mitchell

starts singin BOOGIE DOWN.....

BOOGIE DOWN.....

BABEEEEEEEEEE/

the arena ceilin gets ta doin the jump-up & brown bottoms

from north broad street strut on the police's head/

reminiscin/ cuttin up/

old times

young girls

like the philly dog & bristol stomp/

oilllll times

south street showed the delfonics

what

they know bout

saaaaaaaave

honey

that special

shoulder shimmy

bessie rodriguez kicks bj peterson in the gut

the vikin lassies falls in her own tangles/ bessie rodriguez

grins a minute/

the lebron brothahs hoo-chi-coo-woo her in brooklyn

she mambos

in the skates & tito puente crawls down her arms/

boom-boom-boom-ba-du-wah/

bessie

rodriguez snares melissa jones/ rears roland kirk whistles in the arch of her back/

like a trombone singin in cypress trees/ jungles & spurs & thick legs tight navelled

big asses on skates rhumba-get down-funky shoo-doot-n-doo/

the blockades/ bessie & candy mitchell is mtume's congas/ tornadoes in rouged cheeks/

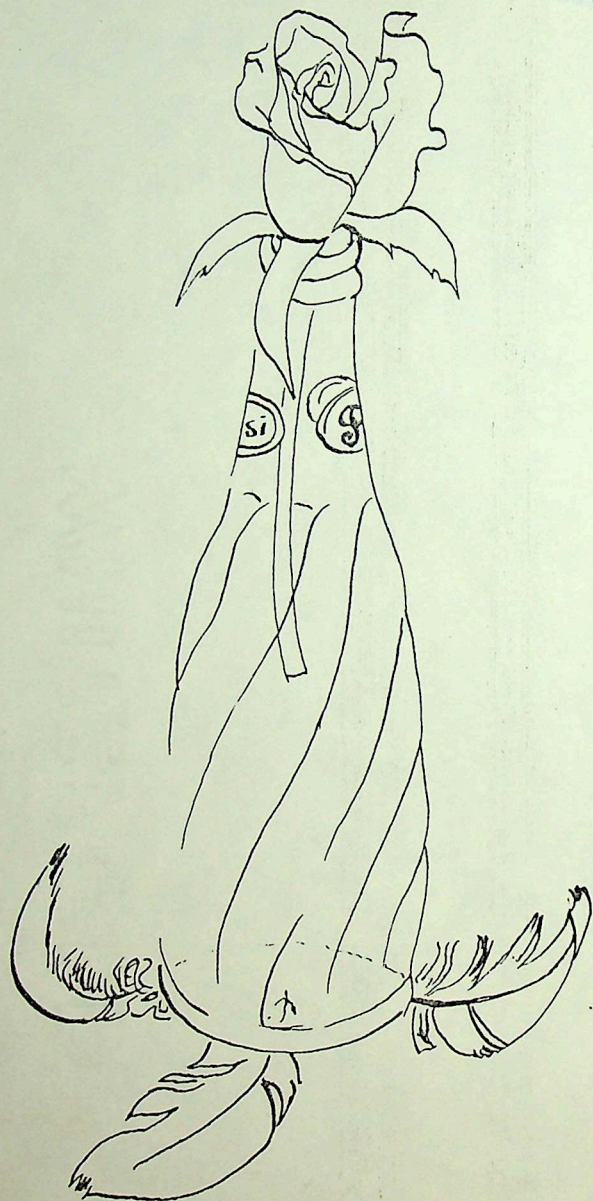
punch/ chacha/ slop/ watusi/ strand the hell outta melissa jones just wanna spit on em/

the del vikins croon from sidelines in velvet capes/

lee andrews & the hearts parade up & down de aisle/

chuck jackson & lil blue blkbirds/

refusin to die/



winter etchings

(with love for jules)

she comes on a dark cloud
the moon had turns/ we were without conscience
when i looked at you spit out the oceans
& let sorrow fondle the dark lady

i ran to kill someone

a friend who had raped me

(inez garcia is a dangerous woman/ several hours after

the initial incident/ she murdered a friend who had raped her)

watchin/ divisadero street & dark ladies on dark clouds

i pummeled masses of peaked hats & feathers

drawn tight & smelly in the rains from yr mouth

i wiped my face w/ brown paper bages softwrinkledsweet-winebags

& nobody saw the scars she left/ the dark lady on a dark cloud

& the moon turned

but i caught one fallin star/

burnin out i laughed in the cops face/

i didnt know who built the mile high roller coaster

on divisadero street/ & i dint carry my birth certificate

on me/ i was indeed an alien/ & yes it wd happen again/

someone i was tryin to kill slipped by

boozin it up on a tarpaulin stretched down haight/ the victims

were all guzzlin-nasty-whiskered-breath of dogs- in fur sleeves-

i gave my red garter to a lost afrikan girl &

put paisley bowls by each girder of the roller coaster

i saw the dark lady devourin yr flesh/ i used the bowls

to catch yr bones/ i am yr woman/ wearin yr bones on my neck

if she come again a dark lady on a dark cloud

yr bones & the full moon cross my stomach'll

send sorrow screamin SCREAMIN SCREAMIN

& yr flesh hangs dark in natural lights/

yr kkiss spreads warm waters

2)

silence is too much for a poem

but i want it here

space for the blueness of you & yr jackie mclean alto playin frenzy

here here in this space you havin me roll on the

roomin house rug naked/ once more for photo-essay

'woman with string' & me lettin the tampanx rest correct

on thigh/

here you are in the mornin/

'i wanna fuck/ you/ go wee wee'/ & here a whistle &

you are & the dark lady

take this space is for you are here/

i can be quiet now/

3)

i met tlazalotl at the top of the ferris wheel

of do-city bar-b-que on fillmore street/ she is filth & fecundity

& claimed me as one other colored daughter/ misplaced

familiar with dirt & bound to ovary & moon/ i was collectin trash

when tlazalotl smudged my neck with her purple lips/

i lathered my skin with high floatin fog/ she said good

& let us lay together under her skirts/ i have you here

& the trees pose as whores naked by the curb/

16
three
(for international women's day)

she hold her head on her lap
like mama usedta when he didnt show up
when her new dress waz damp from tears
not dancin sweat & giggly spilled wine

she held her head on her lap
like mama when he didnt show up
didnt call just didnt didnt rememberrrrr....her

her face still perfect/ fadin in shock
the lap of her sister soakin tears

2/

heard a story when i waz a girl
mama & me lookin at a show bout white people
whose lives waz irregular
& this woman's sister took the woman's husband
away (tho' husband played a trumpet)
left the sister to go back to the woman in the rain
wid the trumpet

& mama cried/ grandma sucked her teeth
i kept lookin at the woman cuz she waz tired/ pale/ po' white trash
junkie sorta in the rain/ her hair creepin round her face like a wet dog's
the man & the trumpet in the rain/ like a song got lost
starved & mad til it found a mouth to sing it right again
like a moooooooooan/ long fulla achin/ & she took it back
this man run off widher sister was her song to sing/ gotta

(mama took us aside/ serious
like she waz when i made fun a christ
or said mean things bout white folks/
mama meant me to understand/ meant it like fear a god/
'dont ever let a man come tween you & yr own blood'
never. never. yr sister is the only one you'll have
a man/ cd be another one.

&

me & my sisters didnt pay this no mind cuz we waz all different ages
different types/ didnt nobody like us no way/ we cdnt figure out
how to give it up/ even when we wanted

3/

i hadda boyfriend who hadda friend
whose girlfriend stayed at our house &
then my boyfriend took his friend's girlfriend
outta town to a motel & that waz the same woman stayed wid me in our house.
& i never liked her after that
never liked none of the women he ever took out
after that /

i went off wid his twin brother
& came back to see him walkin my best friend down the street/
soon as she came back from goin off wit him
i knocked on her door/ threw her three dresses/
some money i owed her/ a few trinkets/ &

17
three charles mingus albums/ i asked her
for everythin waz mine she had/ to give it right back to me
right away.

i went back to the twin brother of my ol boyfriend
wdnt have no friends who were women/ cdnt trust em.

4)

i found out the twin of my ol boyfriend preferred houston persson
to archie shepp/ i hadda let him go/

ol boyfriend went cuz she waz lonely & he waz nice.
found out my friend who went out wid my

& i waz outta my mind

no one cd listen to music like her & walk to the apollo in the rain/
eat chock fulla nuts franks in saurkraut while analyzing brecht & baraka/
she waz the only friend i had cd read me like a miles davis solo/

she waz like a sister/ i remembered what mama said/ so
i went & got her

she waz also alone/ we made a pact/ brought ice cream/ cried/ cuz we
waz not betrayers but sisters/ widout the same mama/ but sisters
cuz we loved each other/ & wanted no more pain.

5)

once i waz pregnant & shamed of myself
so i stopped speakin to my friends cuz i waz a
jackass/ how cd a jackass have friends
this awful man jammed all kinda shit thru
my legs to get rid of the thing

i waz delirious/ clawin air in philadelph

she waz clawin air somewhere else

& our blood clotted/ trickled down thighs/

no one waz waitin for us

we didnt speak/ filled our lives wid bitterness

& guilt/ i usedta cross over to the other side of the street less she wd
see me/ small death between my legs/ but she rarely left her house
we cut off our hair/ separately/ makin hateful remarks to ourselves/

how we each know/ the other wdnt understand/ cdnt know/

what it waz like/

bein dirt/

havin no one

6)

well, she aint nothin to me/ no sister of mine

so i guess i'ma hit on that one right there

he aint married her or stopped lookin

yeah. that one is available

she must know she aint gotta hold of it. not really

he's free/

least she alnt no kin/ yeah i'ma get some of that.

7)

he moved in.

me & my sister hadda whole flat, but he needed her studio to practice &

i needed the front room/

he kept attackin her ways/ how she didnt show proper
respect/ didnt like hls friends.

i kept quiet

not wantin to lose my man/

when she left/ i crumbled/ screamin/ hatin him/ not givin up pussy

waz almost like throwin him out/

i got my sister back/ but lts never been the same.

18
8)

she been there for years wid this dude
but he needed a change & well, she wd manage
nothin gonna last forever/ but i hesitated cuz she seemed so fragile
i waz fulla vitality & gall
'get rid of that bitch or leave me alone'.
he did.

i ignored all that talk bout the woman who tried to
burn herself alive/ waznt none of my business
what some weak bitch did to herself.

9)

cant figure out which of these women in the room he's been wid/
which ones he wants/ which ones want him
guess/ i just wont talk wid anybody/ i dont want no woman stickin some more
knives in my back/
i just wanna meet some more men...yeah. men.

10)

no. no. allia them are her friends
i wont go. i cant go round a bunch a people who are her friends.
they'll laugh at me/ talk bout everythin i do/ cuz i'm bein wid
her ex-ol man.

11)

no. no. i wont go. allia them are her friends.
i cant go round a bunch a people who are her friends.
they'll laugh at me & talk bout everythin i do/ cuz he left me
for her...

12)

my good friend fell in love & told him bout me/ cuz i waz like a sister/
& he told her he wd like to make love to me.
& she waz afraid.
he told me he'd like to make love to me/ & i waz afraid
i cda loved him.

13)

he waz whatchu call a bastard/ i waz whatchu call a fool/ but i hung in there/
cuz his real lady waz asian & i fell for that tall-tale bout asian women bein
passive/ forever forgive/ apologetic/ so i worked a colored girl's way
of actin how she tot asians acted/

we both missed him a lot.

never made trouble/ never asked each other nothin but/
'have ya seen him'

& bunglinly hung up phones.

we took messages from each other/ misspellin our names on purpose &
leavin numbers by his friend's house cuz we never knew whether
he wd come by/

i only knew her name/ her voice suddenly cheerful when she hadta speak to me/
& she didnt know where he waz either/

we dont look at each other/ she lovin the same man as me
knowin the same/ he will find one more of us...

14)

three of us like a pyramid/ three friends & one laugh/ one music/ one
 flowered shawl knotted on each neck/ we all saw him at the same time/
 he saw us/ i felt a quick thump in each one of us/ didnt know what
 to do/ we all wanted what waz comin our way/ & we all split/

but he found one/ & she loved him.

the other two were tickled & spurned his advances/ when the one who
 loved him waz somewhere else/

he wd come to her sayin/ 'yr friends love you very much/

i have tried & they keep askin where you are'

she smiled/ wonderin how long her friends wd hold out/

he waz what they were lookin for/

he bided his time.

15)

he waited til romance waned/ the three of us made up stories bout
 usedta & cda been nice/ the season waz dry. no men. no quickies.
 not one dance or eyes unrelenting.

one day after another cept for the one who loved him.

he appeared irregularly/ expectin graciousness no matter what.

she cut fresh strawberries/ when he cd get by.

her friends called less frequently/ went on hunts

for passin fancies/

she cdnt figure out what waz happenin/ then

the rose she left by his pillow she found on her friend's desk

& there waz nothin to say

nothin to feel

no friends...

16)

she said/

'i wanna tell you/ he's been after me/ all the time/ says he's

free & can explain/ what's happenin wit you is nothin to me/

he loves you/ too/ & i dont wanna hust/ you know i need someone/ now/

'you know how wonderful he is'

her friend cdnt speak/ cry/ they hugged &

went together to where he waz wit another woman/

he said goodbye to one

told the other he wd call/

he smiled a lot...

17)

she held her head on her lap

the lap of her sister soaking up tears

each understandin how much love stood between them

how much love between them

love between them

love like sisters

20

*experiese girl
wanted*

I)
whatchu gonna do
wid all them
ho-mo-ny grits, gal
donchu know
up north
niggahs
don' eat no fried grits
we eat blueberry
pan...cakes
like at the Pan Cake House
there is some fools
think they african eatin rice & shit
but they dont bothah nobody
naw they don' mean a thing

II)
Pass the salt, Pulease there honey
i wanta put some salt
on these eggs 'n grits
hey girl

where's my check
cantchu move no fastern that
come up heah 'n forget how to act
if i waz a white man
sheeeit if i waz a white man
i betchu wd jump
cross that counter
wantin to gimme
some of that there
bushy pussy
huh, gal

III)
i seen ya wid that dude
BLAM BLAM baang
0000000 oooooooh
i say i seen ya
tits pushed halfway down his throat
BLAM BLAM BLAM
00000000 oooooo oh honey

chicago in sanfrancisco & you/ me/ wait/ love is musik/ touch
me like sounds/ chicago on my shoulder/ yr hand/ is now a kiss

i get inspired in the middle of the nite
when you make love to me

& sperms dance on my thlghs/
after i've held you & kissed you & felt alla that
i get inspired get cherished/ free of pain/
not knowin anymore what is dream/ but is love like they are singn to me
odawalla/ reese & the smooth ones/ here where you kissed me
& i feel you/ i cd make it up again/ but we're already musik
joseph roscoe lester don & malachi/ i hear em in our sweat
& nobody is speakn/ but the rhythms are chicago/ melody on the loose
when you make love to me/ i shout like the colors on joseph's face
am bound to air like roscoe's horn/ like the 'cards' are stacked
in our favor/ one slight brown thing blp-bloo-dah-shi-doop-bleeeehahaha/ uh
refusin false romance/

when it waznt what ya wanted/ or who ya thot waz comin
but it waz real tenderness/ cant lie

i remember
cards always gotta have a full deck/ gotta have a woman/ queen of spades/
like malachi slipped in wit the grace of nephritite or eubie blake/
this aint what we expected

the art ensemble of chicago

but it waz colored waz truth waz gotta rhythm like you feel to me
i really wanted to be a waitress to serve em in a negress way/ push
my waist thru a tight black skirt & amble like a alto in bird's mouth
a secret/ is too sweet to hold tears/ i wanted musik/ & they brought
love in a million tones/ & i am not the same anymore/ not any more/
you wanted a sigh/ i made like a flute/ i pull/ sperms dance
i ease back & splee-bah-wah-she-so-she-so-so/ ring like a new reed
cant stoppa cherokee/ a jackson in yr house/ congliplois/ all round
the art ensemble cd make ya love more/ more more/
real

chocolate or miz t. In hersilver/ dont inspire me like i got inspired
when you hold me in chicago/ harmonies/ & we waltz like vagrants/ get up
signal the release of pain/ scream/ sing/ then/ sigh/ groan/ sound make
the sound that kisses me/ one note/ you/ makememelody/ is/ is musik/ uh true
uh/ yes/ musik is the least love shd bring ya/ most ya'll ever have/ you/
yes/ musik/ you/ let love musik you/ you kiss me like the sound/ we/ let
love/ is the musik/ watch us dance/ & let the musik/ you take it all/ get
the musik/ let the musik love/ close like silence

25

*musicians lookin for life insurance
or any one else considerin this sort of policy*

(refrain) #1

i have no money

no influence

& we have nothin to talk abt

i have no money

i have no influence

& we have nothin

important

to talk abt

(lyric)

whatchu mean you been

walkin streets

dingy staircases

the fire escapes know yr can of beer

'n you got nobody to talk to wishin

you cd get some good pussy

a lil security a couple of bags of shit

'n a new mouthpiece

you always knockin on doors

that ain't there tryin to

convince someone to answer

so you can bust 'em upside the head

leave 'em bleedin steal the money 'n the ol lady's

weddin ring get on down to the pawn shop 'n

pick up yr ax so when you finally make a gig

you got somethin to blow abt

blood gettin brown on the ol lady's night gown

big dog jumpin in yo face 'n drunken

droolin folks who believe, you helpin

miz jackson move to queens hey get it

get it blow yr soul from outta that

grave w/ lice 'n needles you gonna

get 15¢ tonight 'n whathisface gonna

hear u play so maybe tomorrow you can talk

bout how u-talked-to-him who gonna

hitch you up w/ this chick who works

'n is lonely in the night don' let

nobody see how raw yr nose is don'

let nobody get next to you or some

tripped out crazy women will start to

screamin goddamit goddamit goddamit

(refrain) #2

there is scum floatin
round the rim of our melody
'n we aint singin like
we oughtta be got disease
& death standin round the
sun & our children believe
our children believe grass
only grows where there are
cracks in the sidewalk

between a dancer & a poet

she swayed from the barre taut in control
her legs hurt mercilessly she even laughed
while he took notes

 'i wanna love you like i dance
 when i hurt i'm gettin better'
the poet signed his name to lines eclipsin reality
he cdnt catch his breath the language waz
overpowerin

 'i can love what i understand
 when i dont understand i worship'
he put his pencil in his pocket & sat
 in the middle of a whimsical circle
the dancer plieed she contracted she sweat
& grew confident in her struggle
to surpass form transcend calves ankles hips merely
accoutrements like a music stand

dance is of the spirit the body her sacrifice
to dance

 & she pranced before the poet
 leaped
 chaseed before the poet she struck
the air waz an impudent lover & the dancer
was righteous chosen to conquer space

she panted she sweat & her leotard smelled of heat
& woman & she laughed
while the poet fondled his own cheek
she slid round him her body swirled like a cobra-wind
& she located the poet's soul in space

 he lost his spirit in the rush
of her darin & she screamed

 'i wanna love you like i dance
 wild & delicate reachin for what i do not know
 i wanna love you all round yr body
 in-out-of-it no grounds no floor

 in
 space i wanna love you where i can dance'
& she caressed the air like an ocean fern
 blazin in the pits of ancient sunflowers
 carryin the poet's soul in the blush of her cheeks
his heart lingerin in her sweat

i dont care if he never comes
i do care if he never comes
but i cant worry myself abt somebody else's affairs
i'm not gonna have insomnia til he gets here
since i dont know when he's comin & i'm not
gonna drink myself to a hoarse voice before he gets here
cuz thin i wdnt be what he waz lookin for & i dont care
if he cant dance or if he doesnt like hominy grits
but i do care if he's comin & it doesnt matter
but that he wants to be strong & tender & free
more than anythin/ even free of me/ & honest
i just dont care if some dry ol critic says i only
write love poems/ cuz i dont know what's goin on til i
write it/ & he's comin & i dont know when/ but i'm
gonna be clearheaded abt it/ & yeah there is nothin but
the now/ & now he is still comin & not here & now
i wanna know him/ but now is not the time/ so
i dont care anymore/ but i do care cuz i'm keepin it
tight/ got my own song to hum/ & the sun
is always a possibility

*my name means my own & this is for me
(not for but cuz a miz t.)*

somebody almost walked off wid alla my stuff
not my poems or a dance i gave up in the street
but somebody almost walked off wid alla my stuff
like a kleptomaniac waz workin hard & forgettin
while stealin this is mine/ this aint yr stuff
put me back & let me hang out in my own self
somebody almost walked off wid all a my stuff
& didnt care enuf to send a note home sayin
i waz gonna be late for my solo conversation
or two sizes too small for my own tacky skirts
what can anybody do wid my stuff/ i know it waz
a niggah run off wid somethin of no value
on a open market/ did you get a dime for my things
hey man/ where are you goin wid alla my stuff
this is a woman's trip & i need my stuff
to ooh & ah abt/ daddy i gotta mainline number
from my own shit/ wontchu put me back & let
me play this duet wid the silver ring in my nose
honest to god somebody almost run off wid alla my stuff
& i didnt bring nothin but the kick & sway of it
the perfect ass for my man & none of it is theirs
this is mine. ntazake 'her own things'. that's my name.
give me my stuff. i see ya hidin in my laugh & how i
sit wif my legs open sometimes to give my crotch
some sunlight & there goes my love & my toes & my
chewed up finger nails/ niggah wif the curlers in yr hair
mr. louisiana hot link/ i want my stuff back
my rhythm & my voice/ open my mouth & let me talk ya
outta throwin my things in the sewer/ this is some
delicate leg & whimsical kiss i gotta have to give
to my choice/ is not you runnin off wif my shit/
get this stealin & hoardin offa yr mine/ you
cant have me/ less i give me away/ & i waz
doin alla that til ya ran off on a good thing
somebody almost run off wif alla my stuff/
conyus knows/ he saw me lookin for a \$5
orchestra to play this sad symphony on market street/
jessica saw them wash my hair down a halloween nite
& where is my stuff/ i know when i aint me
who is this you left me wif/ some simple bitch wif
a bad attitude/ gimme my things/
i want my arm wif the hot iron scar & my leg wif
the flea bite/ i want my calloused feet & quik language
back/ in my mouth/ fried plantains & pepsi or pineapple-pear
juice/ & sun-ra & joseph & jules/ i want my own things

how i lived em/ & give me my memories/ what it waz
to be me/ how i waz when i waz there/ ya cant have it/
or do nothin to it/ stealin my shit from me/ dont make it
yrs/ makes it stolen/ somebody almost run off wid alla
my shit/ & i waz standin there lookin at myself the whole time/
& it waznt no spirits took my stuff/ waz a man whose ego
walked round like rodan's shadow/ waz a man faster than
my innocence/ waz a lover/ a niggah/ i made too much room for/
almost run off wif alla my shit/ didnt know i'd give it so quik
& i'm standin there wid no stuff/ & the one runnin wid
it dont know he got it/ & somebody almost run off wid
alla my stuff & i'm shoutin this is mine/ & he dont
know he got it/ my stuff is the anonymous ripped-off
treasure of this year/ did you know somebody almost
got away wif me/ in plastic bag under their arm/ me
danglin on a string of personal carelessness/ i'm
spattered wif mud & city rain & didnt get a chance to
take a douche/ hey man/ this is not yr prerogative
i gotta have me in my pocket to get round like a good
woman shd/ & make the poem in the pot or chicken
the dance/ what i got to do/ i gotta have my stuff
to do it to/ why dont ya find yr own things & leave
this package of me for my destiny/ what ya gotta get
from me/ i'll give it to ya/ give it to ya/ give it to
ya/ round 5:00 in the winter when the sky is blue-red
& do-city is gettin pressed/ if its really my stuff
ya got/ ya gotta give it to me/ if ya want it/
i'm the only one can handle it/