

learning
from
lorde

ANNIE ENBOM

“if i didn’t define
myself for myself, i
would be crunched
into other people’s
fantasies for me and
eaten alive.” – audre
lorde

after reading ‘the uses of the erotic’ by audre lorde, i knew i needed to read more of her works. it spoke to my soul. it made all the sense in the world and none at all. her words were absorbed by the least logical, most real part of myself. i read “sister, outsider,” many poems from “the collected poems of audre lorde,” and more. i noticed that the more i read, the more i wrote. the more i tracked my feelings. the more i allowed myself to feel, completely unashamed. i decided to get a blank journal and start putting all of these thoughts and feelings onto paper. little did i know it would bring/help me through three main events/themes. so here it is:



MISS
YESTERDAY

part i. the election

TODAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2024, IS
ELECTION DAY. I AM
FEELING HELPLESS, OPTIMISTIC,
AFRAID, AVOIDANT, EMPOWERED,
ANXIOUS AND OVERWHELMED.
IT'S INTERESTING, HALF THE
POPULATION FEELS GENUINE
FEAR FOR IF ONE
CANDIDATE WINS, AND THE
OTHER HALF ARE ANGRY,
VIOLENT. WHAT DOES THAT
SAY ABOUT THEM? WHAT
DOES THAT SAY ABOUT

OUR COUNTRY? IT IS
INTERESTING BECAUSE ALL
THROUGHOUT HISTORY AND
TIME AND PLACE GOOD
AND BAD THINGS HAVE
HAPPENED AT A LARGE
SCALE - YET KNOWING THIS
DOES NOT MAKE ANY
OF MY NERVES
SUBSIDE. ALL I CAN DO IS
WAIT. IT IS A WAITING
GAME. I AM SCARED FOR
WHERE I'LL BE WHEN
WE HEAR THE OUTCOME.

DONALD TRUMP WON
AND I FEEL GENUINE
FEAR. I FEEL SUCH
FEAR AND ANXIETY.
AMERICA, WHAT CAN
I CALL IT NOW? HOME
OF THE SCARY, SEXIST,
RACIST PEOPLE? AND
OUR ~~WOL~~ WORLD?

WHY DO WE NOT
CARE ABOUT HER?

HAVE WE GONE TOO
FAR? I HOPE THE
SYSTEM OF CHECKS
AND BALANCES KEEPS
HIM FROM DOING
ANYTHING TOO
DETRIMENTAL. PLEASE.
PLEASE. PLEASE.

I Prayed to God
last night,
I Prayed until I went
to sleep.

'Please God, let Hamas
win. Please God save
our country.'

I woke up feeling hopeless.
If God were real
he would never let

Trump win.

If God were real he
would never let the
American people go through
this.

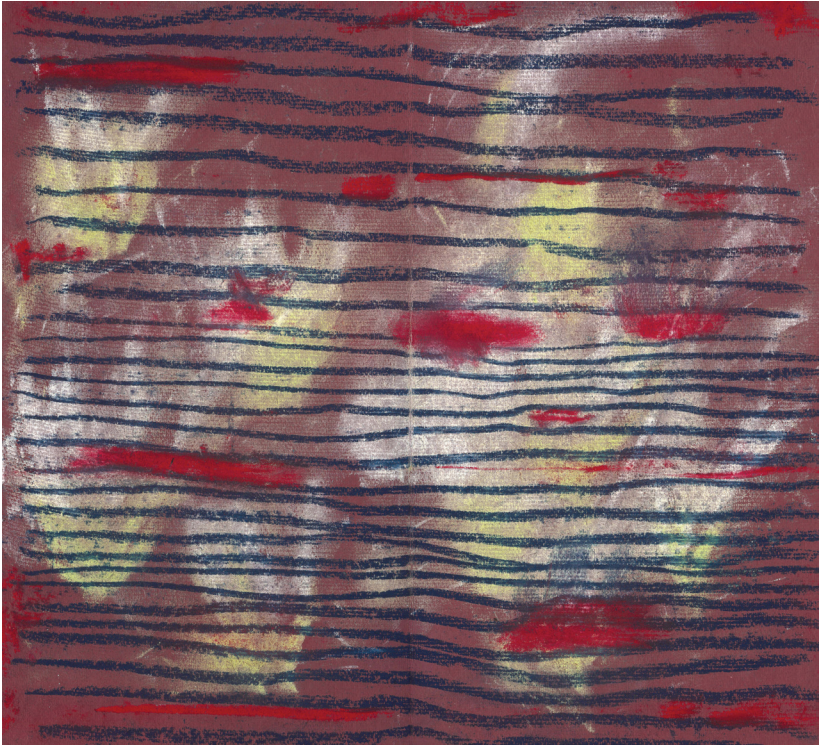
It cannot be a lesson-
this is too severe,
to our earth, to women,
to LGBTQ+, to immigrants,
to so many people.



I am waiting for
my zone to board
in New Orleans to
Atlanta. Its 5:42.
I just ate a sketchy
Chili's soup. I am
tired!

part ii. atlanta

I am in the hotel
now - its 12:04 am here.
I am feeling anxious. I
have never traveled on
my own like this before.
And I am feeling a little
scared! I am in a new
place, and that ~~is~~ scary
and exciting. Its okay
to feel both things.
But I am safe. I am
safe.



(video letter from 3 women)

Today I rode an Uber to Spelman College. It felt good to have a conversation with someone here. He told me he was from Florida. He had just welcomed his 18th grandchild. I told him I was here for the weekend for research Audre Lorde. I mentioned I was here alone. 'Never mention that again to anyone here,' he said. 'That could put you in danger.' 'Okay,' I said. And I quickly thought up a little story of

Why I was here. Traveling with
family? Here with my boyfriend?
Just another reminder that
being a young woman means
having to be ultra aware of
my own safety. The balance
between worrying about it is
something I'm still trying to
figure out.

Box 18 folder 105 "The Erotic
as Power"

Hand written version of "The Erotic
as Power" - I can't describe
what it feels like to be seeing
her handwritten draft, it almost
makes me want to cry. It brings
a sensation into my heart. She
was real, so smart, pages now
browned from time.

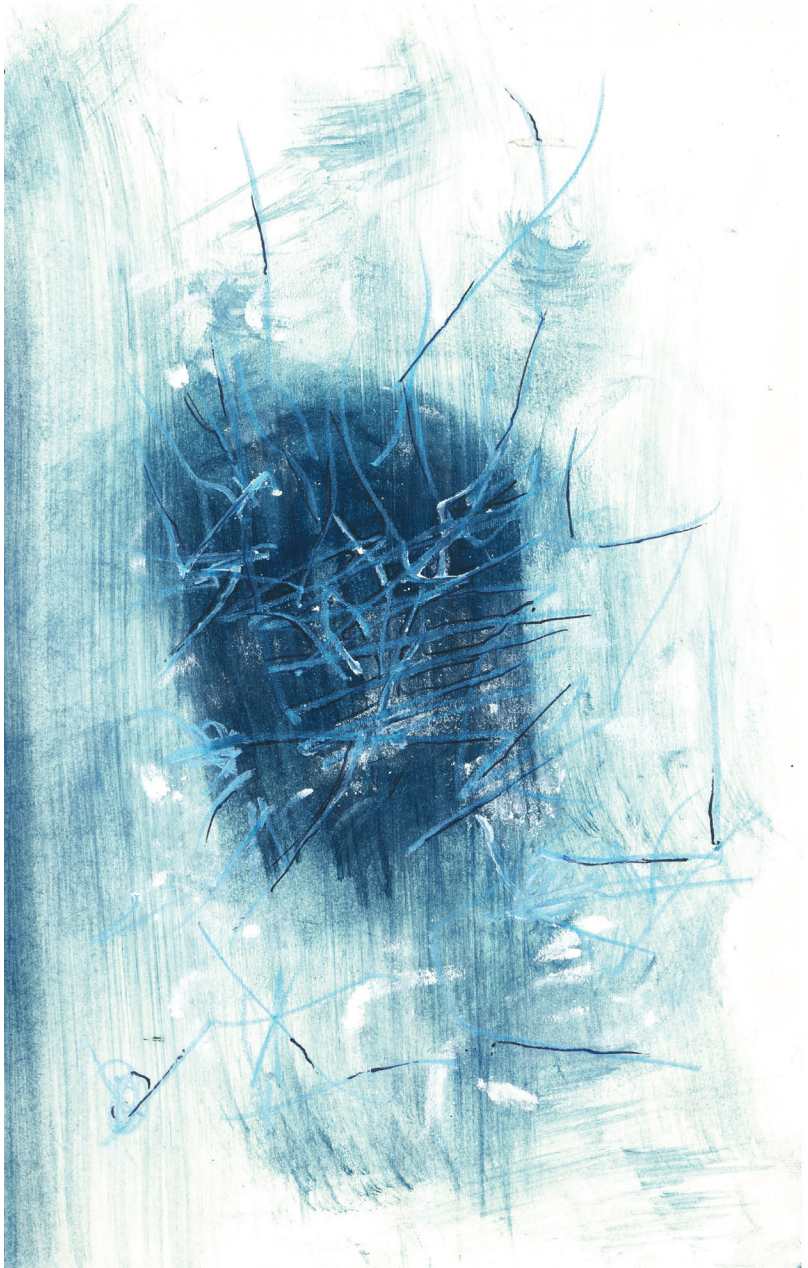
"As we come together here
it is important to maintain
contact within each one of ourselves,
between the experience and our
purpose; to remember that we
are making women's history
this instant, each one of us."

Box 18 Folder 118 "Self-Definition
and My poetry" -

"How aware I am of those
selves, and how much I accept
those many parts of me will
determine how my living appears
within my poetry."

"And I tell you this. My friends,
there will always be someone
seeking to use one part of your
selves, and at the same time
urging you to forget or destroy
all of the other selves. And I
warn you, this is death. Death to
you as a woman, death to you as
a poet, death to you as a human
being."

"fucker does women."



part iii. self





~~I am so~~
sorry. You
are safe now.
With me.

UNTITLED (1)

outside, small in the tall grass,
the sweet scents of forever,
small and afraid of the hidden
squirming creatures beneath my feet.
My brothers,
protectors,
salting the slugs, watching them
die in the summer heat.
We knew it was wrong, but
at least my fears could be put
at rest.

And now, I sit alone at night and
I am once again flooded with
a million unwanted creatures,
with no ability to fight them off.
So I salt my wounds,

try and bury the memories.
I am afraid of what they may
find, crawling between
the store walls,
finding the cracks made from
crumbling brick
to push their way through.

But once they find Me,
I sigh a breath of relief.
A million eyes become
a million arms,
bringing me back to myself.



It can be scary to embrace the parts of myself that have been left covered for years. It is easier to move forward at a pace that leaves so much of myself behind. But in the tender moments, the moments where I feel companionship with the center of myself, sitting in my room, lights dimmed, looking my past right in the eyes, and telling little Andie, I'm so sorry. I remember, I remember my strength, my compassion, my unwaivering resilience. It is in this moment, I realize I am not alone. I have gone through immense pain, and decided to learn.





✖✖

a big thank you to the tenenbaum tutorial for supporting the making of this zine, professor rebecca atencio for your guidance and inspiration, and spelman college for all their help showing me their audre lorde collection. and of course, a huge thank you to audre lorde herself. you have taught me more than i could have ever imagined about what it means to advocate for myself.

** "Photo of Audre Lorde- (In Color) Sent by Rakike. Spelman College Archive, Box 64, Folder 9."

