



## Women

by Alice Walker

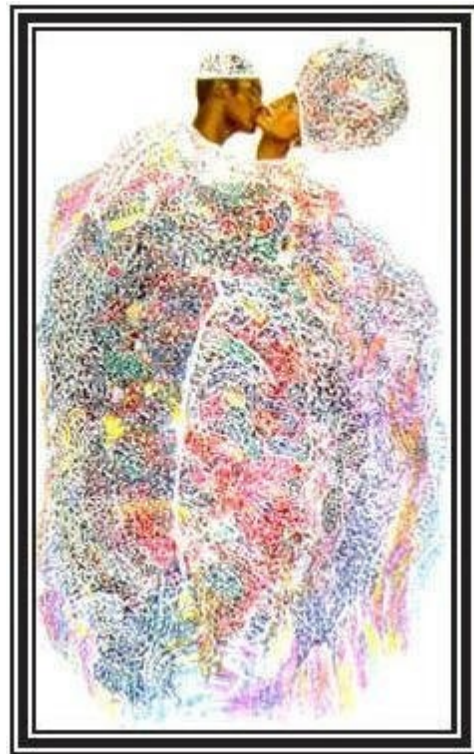
They were women then  
My mama's generation  
Husky of voice-Stout of Step  
With fists as well as Hands  
How they battered down Doors  
And ironed Starched white Shirts  
How they led Armies  
Headragged Generals Across mined Fields  
Booby-trapped Ditches  
To discover books, Desks  
A place for us  
How they knew what we Must Know  
Without knowing a page Of it Themselves.

*Following are Photos and Commentary that I received from Cousin Agnes. I am not going to link the Commentary to the Pictures. You can draw your own conclusions. ENJOY!*

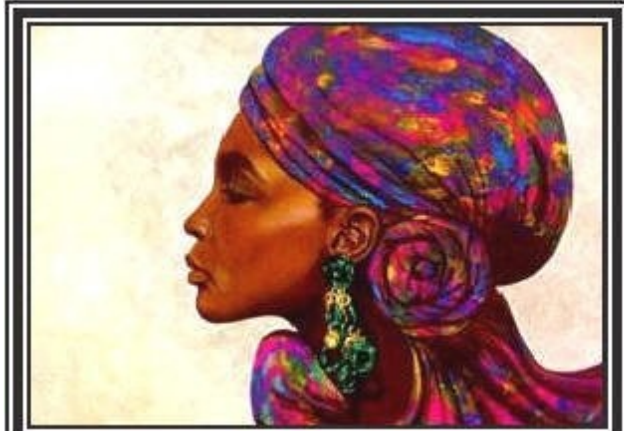
## Where Have All The Mommas Gone?

- There used to be a time when Black children were the best behaved children in the world
- Have you ever had to pick your own switch off the tree and she sent you back because the one you picked was too little?
- Have you ever been burned on your ear with a straightening comb?
- Have you ever been hit in the head or knuckles with a comb or hair brush?
- Have you ever been told to "Shut up or I'll give you something to cry about while she beats you with a belt ~ pronouncing every syllable, "Did-n't---I---tell----you---not---to-do!----- That--no -- more?"
- Your ponytails or plaits were so tight, you got those little bumps around your scalp.
- The people in the school office (principal, secretary, etc) were afraid of her?
- You were scared to go home when you had a bad report card?
- Alcohol, peroxide, cocoa butter, and Vaseline were the main items in the bathroom cabinet. And that red hot water bottle hanging behind the bathroom door?
- Have you ever been pinched (or thumped) for going to sleep in church?
- She made you participate in every church activity (choir, Sunday school, Jr. Usher Board, Easter play, Christmas play, etc.)?
- Has she ever come inside and picked you up from school dance in hair rollers and her gown or pajamas on under her coat?
- When you ask her for something, her response was... "You got a job?"
- Have you ever been beaten for something your brother or sister did just because you were around?
- She vacuums everyday just so the carpet can have lines in it
- Have you ever been told to turn off the TV, get off the phone, or sit down and be quiet when it's storming outside because the Lord was doing His work?
- Friends, family and friends of the family try to keep you out of trouble because they know your mother and how she is?
- You were afraid to call the child abuse hotline (because you weren't allowed to use the phone without her permission)?
- She had to talk to God... "Lord, please don't let me hurt this child!" before she gives you a whipping.
- You knew NOT to talk about what went on in your house with anybody (other family members, friends, school authority, etc), because you were told, "What goes on in this house, stays in this house!"

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