

ences of the local women who were my co-researchers. This type of research is neither "objective" nor is it "reproducible." However, it is a collaborative research process where the participants learn to become co-researchers. In Jd Sao Saverio both the women and myself could grapple with the issue of reproduction and women's health in ways that are mutually beneficial using a shared process of thinking, learning, collective education, and action. This type of inquiry process is more than just research but a process which, because it was locally defined and based within the community, provided the opportunity for women to identify for and by themselves some of the health issues that the women's movements have struggled to get incorporated into the various UN documents. This process also allowed women to begin taking action around those issues, in their individual lives, within the local health movement, and by lobbying the local health units for more appropriate services. I believe this type of a conscious methodology is one way that feminist researchers can through the inquiry process diminish the gap between UN rhetoric and the reality of women's lives, contribute to the process of women's empowerment and gender equity, and start to make true and lasting bridges between academia and community.

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PATIENCE WHEATLEY

Uncle Potto and the Stars

Our mother dropped an egg on the kitchen floor and started to cry I was frightened and found our father *mummy's crying in the kitchen* I said our father came running and later our mother sat down in her big easy chair with her feet up on the red leather fire guard drinking from a round glass with a rooster on its side and cheered up at least for a while and our father was nice to her but a few days later he put on his black leather flying helmet with ear flaps and tubes hanging down and said he was going for his flying lesson our mother had that look on her face that said the devil you know is better than the devil you don't know christine and I went over the back fence into the copse looking for blackberries we saw a spider hanging from a web its huge bloated body reminded me of our brother with no clothes on though he was only one year old I pointed it out to christine and she dipped her finger in a tin can full of stagnant water and marked her forehead with a cross she'd just been sent to the convent because someone thought we should be separated but which one of us was a bad influence on the other we never found out perhaps christine had been talking about uncle potto and the stars I knew somehow I should keep my mouth shut about both potto and the stars and did until just now

This poem is taken from a longer poem, "The Astrologer's Daughter." Patience Wheatley has had two books of poetry published by Goose Lane Editions: A Hinge of Spring (1986) and Good-bye to the Sugar Refinery (1989). She has appeared in a number of anthologies including The Voice of War (Michael Joseph, 1995), and Vintage 94 (Quarry Press, 1995).