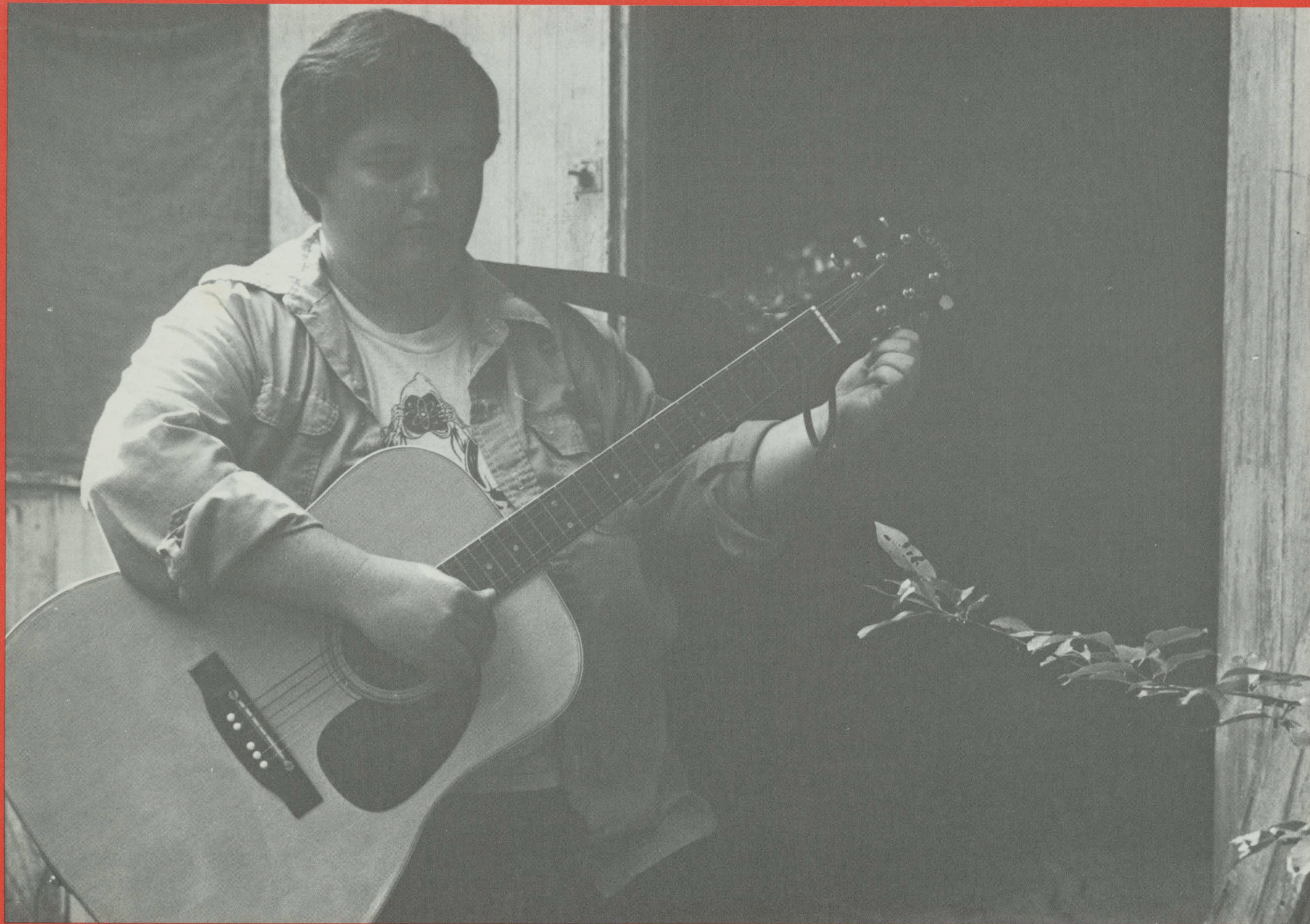


SONGS OF FIRE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 8585

Songs of a Lesbian Anarchist by Kathy Fire



M
1630.18
F523
S698
1978

MUSIC LP

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 8585

Side One:

Crazy 3:43
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Flute and piano improvisation—Mojo
Words and music—Kathy Fire
City on Fire 3:58
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Flute improvisation—Mojo
Words and music—Kathy Fire
Goodnight Children 3:55
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Flute improvisation—Mojo
Words and music—Kathy Fire
Icy Winds 4:20
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Flute improvisation—Mojo
Words and music—Kathy Fire
I Want to Come Like a Lady 2:58
(But I don't Want You)
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Words and music—Kathy Fire

Side Two:

Kara 4:54
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Flute improvisation—Mojo
Words and music—Kathy Fire
Whethermen Song 3:55
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Words and music—Kathy Fire
Poetry 4:20
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Piano and flue improvisation—Mojo
Words and music—Kathy Fire
Mother Rage 4:20
Guitar and vocal—Kathy Fire
Words and music—Kathy Fire

Album Credits

Marilyn Ries—Sound Engineer and Sound Mix
Barbara Ruth—Sound Mix and General Support Person
Mojo—All flute and piano improvisation and Sound Mix
Kathy Fire—All guitar, vocal, lyrics, and music; Sound Mix.

Dedication

I dedicate this album to my sister, friend and lover, Barbara Ruth.

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43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., U.S.A. 10023

SONGS OF FIRE

Songs of a Lesbian Anarchist

by Kathy Fire

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FS 8585

SONGS OF FIRE

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BACKGROUND NOTES FOR SONGS OF FIRE SONGS OF A LESBIAN ANARCHIST

Crazy

Lady, dyke, commie, sinner and crazy are just some of the names used inappropriately by people who try to contain you, label you, out of their own ignorance and fear. "The Man," as I use it, is that thing in our heads and in our world which governs, limits, judges and tries to control all thought and life because it fears freedom and mistrusts anything outside of itself. In the meantime, "property, profits, war, rape, pollution, and caring only for what you can own" become this crazy Man's mainstay and passes for civilization. Now *that*, to me, is crazy. (P.S. You don't have to be a man to have a Man in your head.)

City on Fire

I want to live both in the city *and* in the country, so I compromise by traveling. It frightens me to see sisters and other comrades in struggle assimilate into mainstream America. It leaves me wondering and worrying whose war I'm fighting and who will be left to fight it. This characterizes how I have felt after many a difficult day.

Goodnight Children

A song of hope that the child in all of us may grow with a fiery passion for freedom. Will you coldly close yourself off from change and life, will you flow along like water with everything and challenge nothing, or will the flames of truth and justice rise up in you to make your anger a force for freedom in the world. Will you be ice or water or fire?

Icy Winds

I was trying to be sisters with my lover six months into a one year contract, at the end of which she had plans to move away without me. This song was written during the coldest winter in Philadelphia's history. (By the time the summer came along, she changed her mind about leaving me.)

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I Want to Come Like a Lady (But I Don't Want You)

This song is the composite story of a lot of wimin's lives as I saw them evolve during my early political development in the National Organization for Women. The spirit of the song made them laugh in the midst of painfully difficult transitions.

Kara

The true story of a lesbian mother's struggle to bring her young daughter, Kara, back home again. It was a hard-fought woman-victory that changed a lot of lives. (And, yes, the streetlights really did go out just before the getaway.) Kara and her mother are living together now in a community of wimin.

Whethermen Song

We are all potential targets for the insidious tactics and intrusive disruptions by FBI agents in their quest for self-righteous, state-patriotic loyalty. This song, written at the time of the Susan Saxe arrest in Philadelphia, has refer-

ences in it that are far more fact than fiction. As the threat of a Grand Jury hovered over our heads, we kept our cool and our sense of humor, educating people *NOT* to respond to questioning. Since the FBI will harass you *whether* you've done anything "wrong" or not, I call their agents "Whethermen".

Poetry

A love song for Barbara.

Mother Rage

An anti-authoritarian song of anger and outrage about life here within the belly of the beast. How *long* it took to realize that my political and personal pain was suffered at the hands of The Man. (See "Crazy".) My kid sister was brutally raped and murdered last year. The year before that, I was the victim of a political abduction. I join with my sisters and comrades as the terror and fear of my nightmares translates into focused political rage.

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CRAZY

WORDS & MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

If you wish to name me, don't you call me no lady
Oh no, that is not what I am here for
A lady ain't nothing but a puppet of men
And I know I'm not one

Refrain: That man in your head,
He calls me crazy don't you know
Oh woman, Why do you give that man a home?

If you wish to shame me don't you call me a dyke
Don't you know that's a name I am proud of
It's me and my sisters rising up stronger every day
In a world wide kind of way

If you wish to scare me, don't you call me a commie
I'm an anarchist free and defiant.
If you don't know the difference,
What words do you know anyway?
Or are you still dealing with "gay"?

If you wish to blame me don't you call me no sinner
It's the sins done by men that are many
Oh why don't you know that this spirit of life is your own?
Why can't you grow?

If you wish to name me, don't you call me a crazy
You ought to see how you look from where I'm standing
Property, profits, war, rape, pollution,
And caring only for what you can own
that's crazy.

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A CITY ON FIRE

WORDS & MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

Refrain: *TRAPSH*

My heart is a city on fire
I've got this country desire
I don't know where it will lead to
I just know I'm traveling on.

Verses:

The city can break your heart, the city can tear apart
Images that you once held so dearly oh, of
Who is the target and who are these people
you gamble your life for
Do you think you can handle it? (Refrain)

The country life's fine, they say
My sisters can hardly wait
To take in an air that is clean and healthy
In interdependence, the work moves on smoothly
Does it really quiet your mind? (Refrain)

Struggles can make you see like no other kind of sight
What we can do if we move together
Don't talk about cost—
If you're fighting, you know the price.
Do what you must and move on. (Refrain)

My sisters, the time is short,
I don't know what words to sing
I want you to know that my fears are for you and me—
You can hide from your cities, your country, your struggles,
But where will you hide when you realize you're alone?

My heart is a city on fire
I've got this country desire
I'm looking for a people who remember why we're fighting
And I don't know if I'm ever going home.
I'm looking for a people
Who remember
Why we're fighting
And I don't know if I'm ever going home.

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GOODNIGHT CHILDREN

WORDS AND MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

Good night children, sleep tight little friend
As the sun in your eyes starts to smoulder.
Good night children, it's the stars' time to play
Who will you be when you're older?

Will your heart become cold, or will your mind justify,
Or will you rise up in anger?
You were born with a style and a soul of your own,
Will you be ice or water or fire?

I remember when I was as young as you are.
There are times when my heart is no older.
I have a yearning inside that I'm trying to revive
And it tells me to nourish your freedom.

Well I have no regrets for the life I have lived
And my life is still far yet from over.
I erase what I've known and learned to write my own songs.
It's taken time, but I'm feeling stronger.

(Repeat verses one and two.)

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ICY WINDS

WORDS & MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

Icy winds rattle my window pane
She lies warm in her blanket cave.
I click on the music and keep it low
She turns and wraps her leg round my own
I'm all caught up in this woman's game.
She drives the hardest bargain.
I get to thinking it's all a joke.
She'll turn around and kiss me and make me love her
I give her more than I knew I had inside to give

Still, icy winds rattle me just the same
It's not a matter of placing blame
She's leaving come summertime anyway
It haunts my nights as I count my days
I'm all caught up in this woman's game
She drives the hardest bargain
She looks at me with those "past tense" eyes
I smile, nod, and curtsy and try to please her
She talks about going away

I love her like I love my life—Make a wish upon this rising star
Count down the hours, and on the summer horizon
So long, goodbye. I do wish you well, my crazy friend.

There's plenty of things I might rather say
Like—how can she do this? Why won't she stay?
She's a hard driving woman, I love her soul
Part of her craziness is my own.
I'm all caught up in this woman's game
She drives the hardest bargain
I get to thinking it's all a joke
She'll turn around and kiss me and make me love her
I give her more than I knew I had inside to give

I love her like I love my life, I'll miss the maddening woman
that you are
Count down the hours, and on the summer horizon
So long, goodbye—I do wish you well my friend

Don't worry 'bout nothing, I'll be all right
Just take it easy and keep it light
Good luck finding doctors with wimmin's names
I wish you the best in your try for fame
You're all caught up in your writer's game
You know you drive your own hardest bargain
Just close your eyes and forget your name
And dream about the places that we have traveled
Oh don't forget the places we've been

I do wish you well my friend.

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I WANT TO COME LIKE A LADY
BUT I DON'T WANT YOU. WORDS & MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

1. Oh I want to come and I want to go
But I don't want you.
I'm coming like a lady and I go where I go
But I don't want you
Don't you remember how you told me
That I needed you
And don't you remember how you sold me
And I believed you
That this is really "where it's at"
Well, this is *it*, goodbye
And that is that.
2. Oh I want to come and I want to go, but I don't want you
Oh I don't want to be a friend of yours, and I don't want
you.
All of the years that I wasted here, all the crying and all
the tears,
You've got the kind of loving that it made me feel old
But I opened up my eyes to my heart and my soul.
I'm getting my feet back on the ground and
I'm clicking up my heels and I'm heading for town—with
my lover
3. Oh, I want to come and I want to go, but I don't want you.
I'm going to get a going while the getting is good, and I
don't want you.
You can have back your name and the game and the
blame
And I don't give a damn what the neighbors' going to say
Ain't another man could ever take your place,
But you can be sure I won't be alone—
My lover and I and the baby makes three,
We're going to start a new branch in the family tree
in the front of the bible.

(Repeat first verse)

4. Oh I want to come and I want to go, but I don't want you
I've got one more surprise for you, before your face turns
blue
You're psychoanalyzing my childhood days, well listen
mister,
She's the one who came looking for me and she's your
sister—
I love her now like I never did before—
That's her now she's knocking at the door.
I'll see you at the family picnic.

Well I want to come and I want to go but I don't want you.

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KARA WORDS & MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

Kara, be a strong loving womon like your mama
Oh she carried you home safe and warm
Oh she carried you home safe and warm

A thousand miles away and four months later
She track you down
Helpin bring her baby back home in a hurry
Are two wimin she didn't even know

But we know that our quiet determination
Will end in cautious celebration
Before too very long

We come into town with our hopes flyin high
and our gunnysack full of schemes
Each one telling the other
It won't be as scary as we know it seems.
And our faith among us growing
We knew our victory'd be showing up
Before too very long

The night—it was dark when the street lights went black
And my hands gripped the steering wheel
We been through this plan about a hundred times
Oh sister grab your baby and get out of there!
I got to calm myself down for a quick, safe, and sound
Getaway. Oh we know that our quiet determination will end
in—
Here she come! And she ran to the car, and we all sped away.

And your mama told us that you like to sing the song:
'sunshine on your shoulders'
And we sang it as we drove along
And she carried you home.

Kara, be a strong loving womon like your mama
Oh she carry you home safe and warm
Oh she carry you home safe and warm.

Kara, be a strong, loving womon like your mama she was
Oh she carry you home safe and warm
Oh she carry you home safe and warm.

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THE WHETHERMEN SONG
WORDS & MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

Refrain: Whether you're right, whether you're wrong,
wrong, wrong
Whether you have to sing about it in a song.
Whether you talk when you walk down the
street
Whether you don't, don't, don't,
When they come and ask for answers, say
say you won't.

Verses:

1. Listen little missy, won't you come out with me
I got questions to ask and pictures to see
And, I flash my badge and see how I shine my shoes—
In your trash we found a notice for an all-womon's dance.
I'm being straight with you, why don't you take a chance—
You probably can't tell us anything that's new. (Refrain)
2. I understand you know a bit of 'Women's Liberation'
In your old hometown, you surely caused a big sensation
When we asked if you and Patty Hearst were ever
childhood sweethearts.
Now we're curious to know exactly who you are.
We found *The Anarchist Cookbook* in the back of your car.
If the fingerprints are yours, well God help you if they are.

THE WHETHERMEN SONG (Cont'd)

3. You did a high school paper on social change
Now what exactly did you want to rearrange?
It's a lesbian conspiracy as far as we can tell.
If you give us some names, we'll protect you well
Cooperate now and be a good old gal
And we promise not to tape your phone or read your mail.
(Refrain)

Now we've been to your mom and we've been to your boss.
We've been up and down and back and across
And we've been to your bars and we've waited on your
doorstep.
Your friends are claiming their I.D.'s are being stolen away
And they suspect the FBI? What a thing to say.
We're all honest men and anyway it was the CIA.

5. Now won't you take some pity on a man like me
I've got my job to do and a family.
Lying for a living's no fun, but jobs are hard to come by
We're going to get to the root of this conspiracy
And save the world for democracy
Then we'll have to find another cause or make one up.
(Refrain)

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POETRY WORDS & MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

Take a little space, add a little time
Work it out, type it up, and send out your poetry rhyme
Poet friend of mine.

Choose your colors well. Say just what you mean
Don't worry, you're not as along as you seem
In your multi-vision dream

Oh how I love making love to you

Sitting at your desk, pouring out your soul
Change a word, add a line—Type up your poems so fine
Poet friend of mine

You choose your colors well, you say just what you mean.
You're something—your poems are melodies free
And your style is right on key

Oh how I love making love to you
Oh how I love making love to you
Oh how I love—is my poetry to you.

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MOTHER RAGE

WORDS & MUSIC by KATHY FIRE

Verses:

1. Get your rapist hands off my shoulder now
Damn your sweet smiling mask of care for me
Fuck your little boy games you charlatan
I've seen what you've done and I know who you are.
2. You'd as soon take my life as you would have me work for
you
Damn your greed and your need to protect your ass
I'm crazy furious, filled with Mother Rage
I'm after your head now and you can't get away (Refrain)
3. Damn the power of your corrupt institutions
We blast their cancer walls in your face as you
Try to hide behind suit-wearing puppet men
There is no place safe for you to sit free from my hand
4. Well you rape mother earth and exploit all her people
You're long overdue for your hour of castration
I'm one among many who lives for the day you die
And my spirit won't rest til I see you in your grave (Refrain)
5. Get your rapist hands off her shoulder now
Damn your greed and your need to protect your ass
We're crazy, furious filled with Mother Rage
We're after your head now, and you can't get away.

Refrain:

Come sisters, rise
We have been scarred by this war upon all womankind
Stand side by side
We can be healed by the passions of lesbian pride!
You can't believe all those lies you've been handed!
Take a look at the damage his lies have done to us.
Can't you feel we're rising up stronger?
The power of wimin grows on!
And we fight for control of our lives;
Oh let me kindle that spark in your eye!
We could give a new meaning to fire & light.

© 1978 Kathy Fire

Dear friends. You are probably accustomed to hearing professional musicians performing songs written by professional songwriters, sung by trained vocalists, taped and duplicated in professional studios and sold to you through professional distributorships. Well, this isn't one of them. You may well wonder why a woman who does not define herself as a musician or a singer has made a tape of her songs in the first place. Part of the answer is found in the title "Songs of Fire." With this limited edition, I hope to be able to reach more wimin with these messages of passion and struggle and victory. I encourage your feedback.

The tape enclosed was produced in an hour of (private) "studio time" and what you hear is exactly what happened the first time through with no re-taping or editing. I do not play all the right chords and I don't sing all the right notes. Considering the limits of cost and time crunches, I offer you my best effort at communicating my spirit as a political worker and organizer. I hope you will hear these songs in this spirit. A friend once remarked that what I lack in talent, I made up for in energy. With this in mind, I give you "Songs of Fire,"

with love,
for the revolution,
Kathy Fire

LITHO IN U.S.A. 