

The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in shades of purple, pink, red, green, and blue. A large, white, irregular splatter shape is centered on the page, serving as a backdrop for the title and subtitle. The overall aesthetic is modern and expressive.

# GOING IN COMING OUT

*Writings by young  
lesbians in Namibia*

Women's Leadership Centre

# Introduction

Liz Frank

Welcome to this anthology featuring the voices of young lesbian women in Namibia! It was created through the Lesbian Empowerment Programme of the Women's Leadership Centre, which has brought the contributors together in numerous feminist leadership institutes, writing workshops and Namibian Lesbian Festivals over the past years.

We use creative forms of expression including writing, spoken word, storytelling, dance, drama, music and film as tools to build resilience and resistance among young lesbians to ongoing stigma and discrimination. Through increased self-knowledge, voice, visibility and feminist leadership, young lesbians empower themselves to work together creatively with courage and pride, in sisterhood and solidarity.

The participants in this programme hail from many different communities across Namibia. In this anthology they share their experiences with GOING IN: crafting their unique identities through facing up to the challenges of self-doubt, self-hate, self-destructive thoughts and actions, and learning to honour and love themselves. And their experiences with COMING OUT: taking the leaps of faith needed to find real friends, lovers, partners, family and community. Through accepting vulnerability they claim agency and power over their own lives and build the lesbian feminist movement in Namibia and beyond.

This programme contributes to the implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan developed under the auspices of the Office of the Ombudsman – Namibia's human rights watchdog, and adopted by Cabinet in 2014. This plan includes public education and awareness raising on the rights of LGBTI people in Namibia.

We thank the leaders who facilitated this project: Irene IIGaroës, Nadia April, Florence IKhaxas, Toshi Haufiku and Melanie Aiff, as well as international volunteer Mihret Sibhat. And a big shout out to all the courageous young lesbians who put pen to paper to speak their truth to power!

*When I first  
saw her*



# A fantasy at least

Ginger Rose

When I saw you  
My heart whispered  
She is the one

Your walk  
Your voice  
Your smell  
Are things I can never forget

I crave to be closer to you  
I thirst for you  
I want to lie on your chest  
To listen to your heartbeat  
I thirst for our first kiss

But you're too distant  
And I gave up trying to  
Make you notice me  
I can never have you  
But at least I have the greatest  
fantasy  
Of us making love until morning

And just to let you know  
That if I did anything right in my life  
It was when I gave my heart to you



# *She keeps me flowing*

*Chris-Zelda*

---

I had a life full of sorrow and sadness  
I thought I would never find real love  
Until I met this beauty  
Who adores me and  
Gives me so much love  
That I just can't get enough

Now I am really happy with her  
I learn a lot  
I embraced the stigma  
Her unconditional love  
Keeps me flowing





*Only pain  
for now*



# *A soul in pain*

*Nicky Lowkey*

---

Some of us are performing  
being survivors of rape  
for all the people around us

When the people disappear  
and the darkness closes in  
we are still victims

When we are scared to  
open our legs a bit  
because even the wind  
feels like that man...  
those men

So also  
we can hardly  
connect with our bodies  
without our skin  
trying to detach itself  
from a soul in pain

# *It does not flow*

*Jahara*

---

They call me names  
to kill my being

They always know  
what's best for me

Tossing and turning  
sleepless nights are all I have

Life no longer flows  
through my veins







*I own  
my body*

# Glittering Diamonds

Christian !Garas

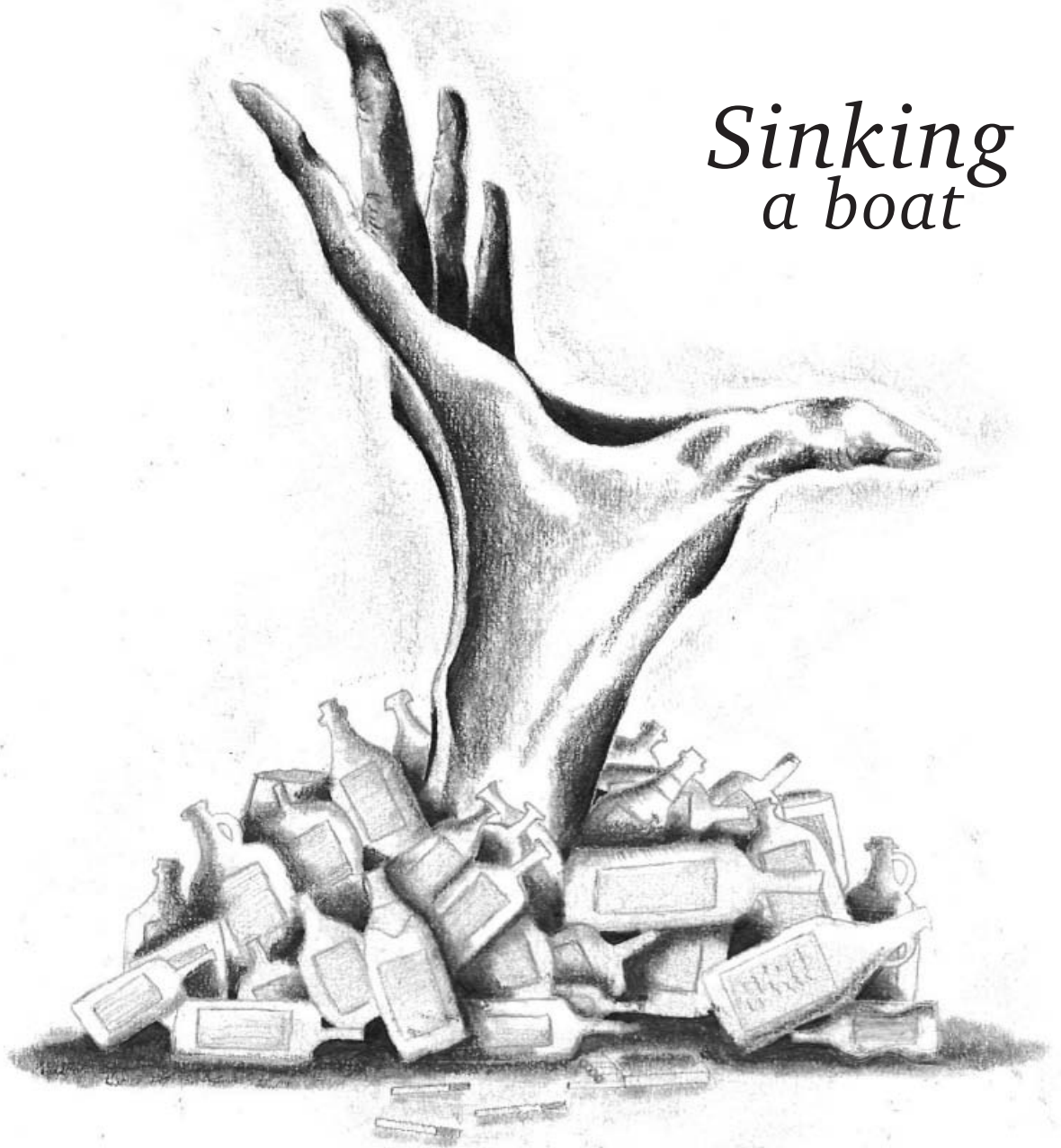
---

As warm water rushes  
over my body  
each droplet reflects the  
moonlight on my skin  
glittering diamonds!

When the evening breeze  
turns too cold  
I cover myself with the body  
of my beloved!



*Sinking  
a boat*



# *Sinking a boat*

*Laina "Die Kat" Nairenge*

---

Driven to the pits of life  
As no one sees the change within me  
I have been fighting this demon all my life  
But it only leaves me for a second

"Just one glass" they would say  
And the scars burst and reopen  
One bottle leads to the next  
As depression sings songs of death  
Knocking on my door  
Losing self-esteem  
It continues to sing a false note

It stinks like a mermaid  
Sinking a boat of emotions  
Just one glass, a bottle  
Or two to take the pain away

Looking in the mirror to  
See if I can find myself again

Again

# Our 'freedom' country



# Happy for a miracle

Leesha

---

We are being discriminated  
against by our own too  
because we have both sides  
feminine and masculine

We fight between ourselves  
as if we don't already  
suffer enough discrimination  
from others just because  
we are two women

We are put in the margin and  
forced to be on the lookout  
even in our own homes and streets

We live in fear every day because  
men are made to believe that  
they can do anything to us  
After all, a book says so

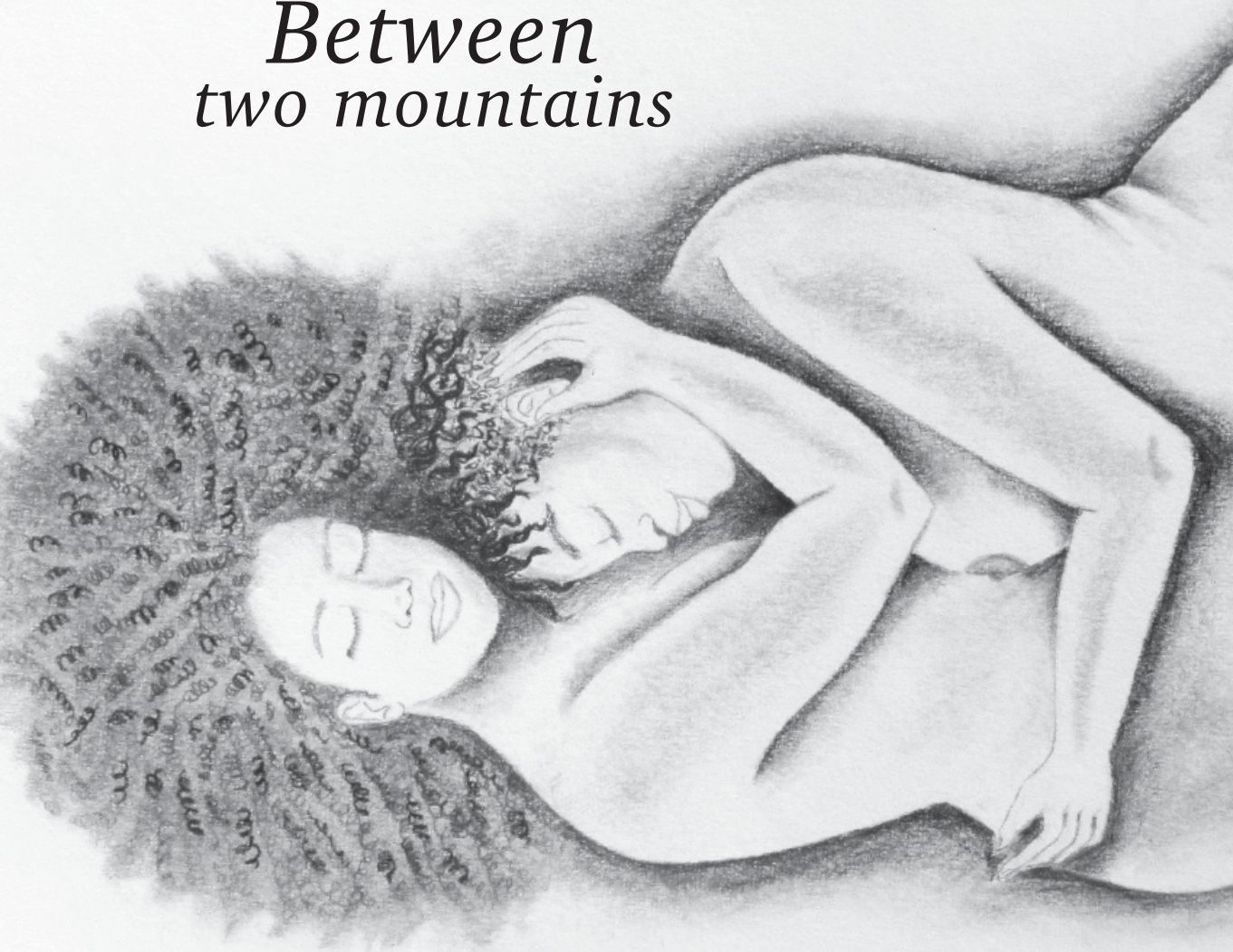
I don't believe we will be free from  
this  
unless we stand up

But then again many of us are too  
afraid  
to even open up because  
of the violence we experience

I'd be happy for a miracle



*Between  
two mountains*



# *Goddess Juice*

*Dantu*

---

Bring your body next to mine  
Let my hands go down to your thigh  
Let my lips touch your skin  
Let me tease you  
Please you  
And fuck your hand  
Even if it seems bizarre

I can feel how wet your pussy is  
I like you to call my name  
Telling me not to stop

Pulling you to the edge of the bed  
Dipping my head  
Sampling the fruit of your Goddess juice

# Our names are strength

Florence  
Zelda  
BIANCA  
Jicky  
LAINA  
Leosha  
Deon  
Ndiiku  
Koskiema  
Maggy  
Hakeem  
Irene  
Madden  
Iyaloo  
DANNY  
Marianne  
Tatiana  
Nadia  
Idda  
Amabe  
Khoetage  
Verona  
Alpha  
Landi  
Deon  
Rose  
NICKY  
Toshi  
Buhle  
Zelda  
Florence  
Role  
Happiness  
Jahara  
Desmoria  
Lil Dee

# Healing ourselves

Flora | Khaxas

---

I would not have made it this far  
if it wasn't for my sisters.  
Black women have been and  
are still essential for my wellbeing.  
Black women have held space for me  
and took care of me throughout my life since birth.

Healing myself means healing  
the mothers that came before me.  
Healing myself, as painful as it can be,  
is a radical act of expressing my feminism.  
When I speak out about my pain,  
I teach and give others the tools  
to learn and take care of themselves too,  
which contributes to our healing as a community.

As I heal myself I accept myself  
for who I am, which leads to me  
taking care of my community.  
Taking good care of my body means  
I am leading by example,  
especially for young lesbians still growing up  
so that they can truly express their sexuality  
without perpetuating harm and self-inflicted violence.

By analysing feminist texts written by our sisters,  
I learn and gain the confidence to create  
a healthy lifestyle.

Healing my wounds is an  
act of radical self-love that  
defines my feminism.

Healing my wounds also dismantles the  
oppression and discrimination created  
by patriarchy that I have withstood

Healing myself is *my freedom* that  
I share to all my sisters so  
they too can enjoy their freedom and  
stand up for themselves.  
That is community care.



# *Strength is my second name*

*Zelda*

---

I feel pain and torture as I  
Sit and watch chances fade  
We don't ask for many things  
All we ask for is love, honour and respect  
That's all we ask for

But what do we get from you?  
Nothing but discrimination  
So enough is enough!  
Who I am can never change

Strength is my second name  
You throw me down  
But I get up  
I am creating myself in my own image





I JUST WANT TO BE WITH YOU

*Bewise Tjonga*