

Respect

by Jeanette Cross

What you don't understand, sister
is that women are respected in Africa
Oh yes
We call a woman the light of the house

She is the one who fetches water
She is the one who cooks the food
She is the one who gives milk and brings wood
She is the one we come to
when we need satisfaction
We know where the light comes from
Women are respected

Is that so, brother?

Is that why she is the last to drink from the gourd?
Is that why she is the last to eat from the bowl?
Is that why she is the last to sleep and the first to rise?
Is that why she is the one for whom the only satisfaction
is another mouth to feed?

And tell me, brother

If the woman is the light of the house
where does the darkness come from?

And tell me, brother

What will happen if the light fades
or simply refuses to shine?

Then, sister
It must be made to shine again
or cast out
A light that does not shine is of no use to anyone

I see

Good, I knew you would understand
In Africa, my sister, women are respected

