

The LIFE of LUCYTERRY

*From Slave to the First
African American Poet*



*Written & Illustrated
by Clarise Seguin*

Dedicated to
the lives of Lucy
Terry Prince and
Obijah Prince,
two beautiful souls
who deserved
much better.



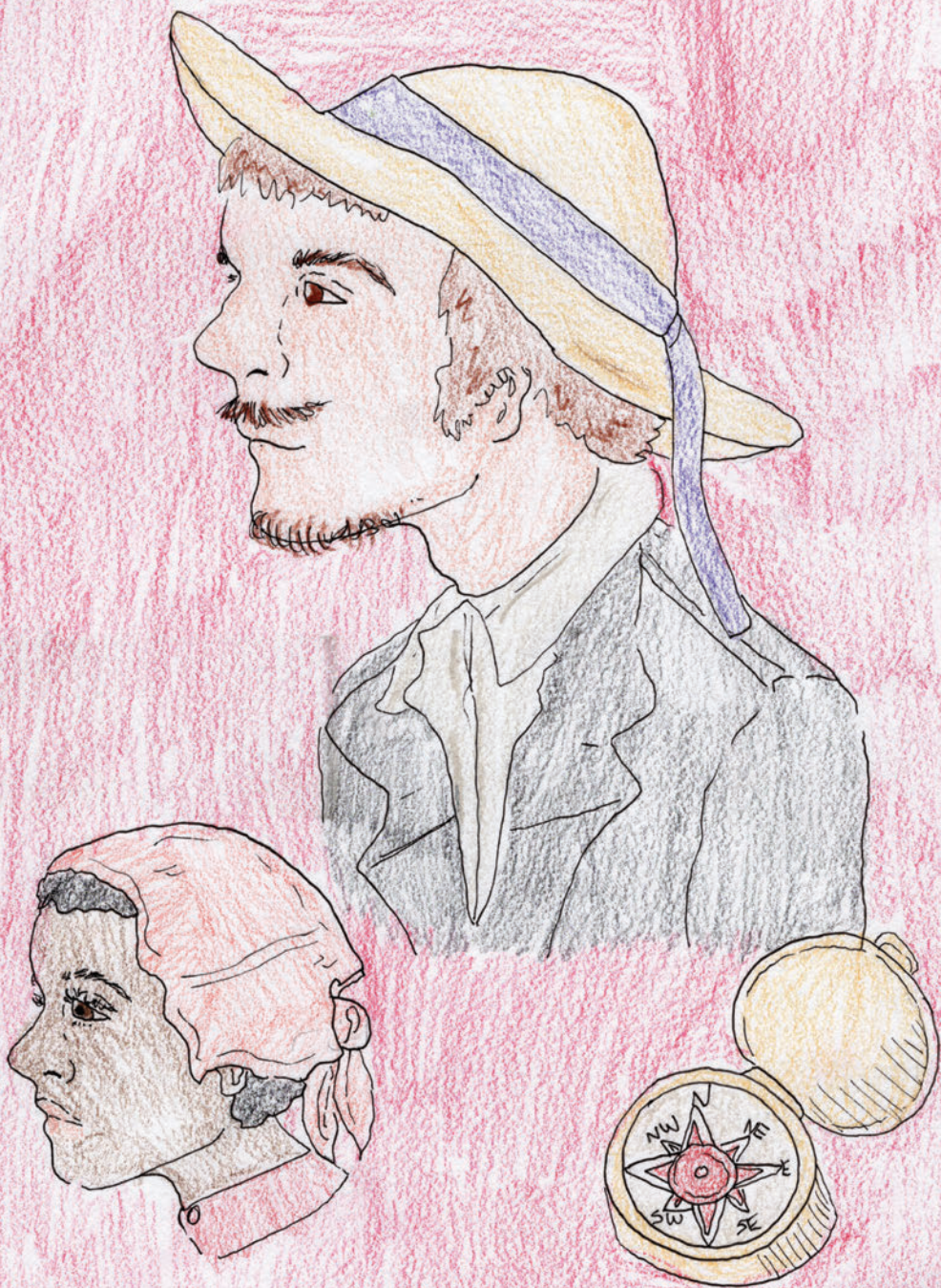
My name is Lucy Terry Prince. I was born into my family in 1733 in my homeland of Africa.



To me, Africa was my home. It was beautiful there, full of tall trees and many, many bright animals.



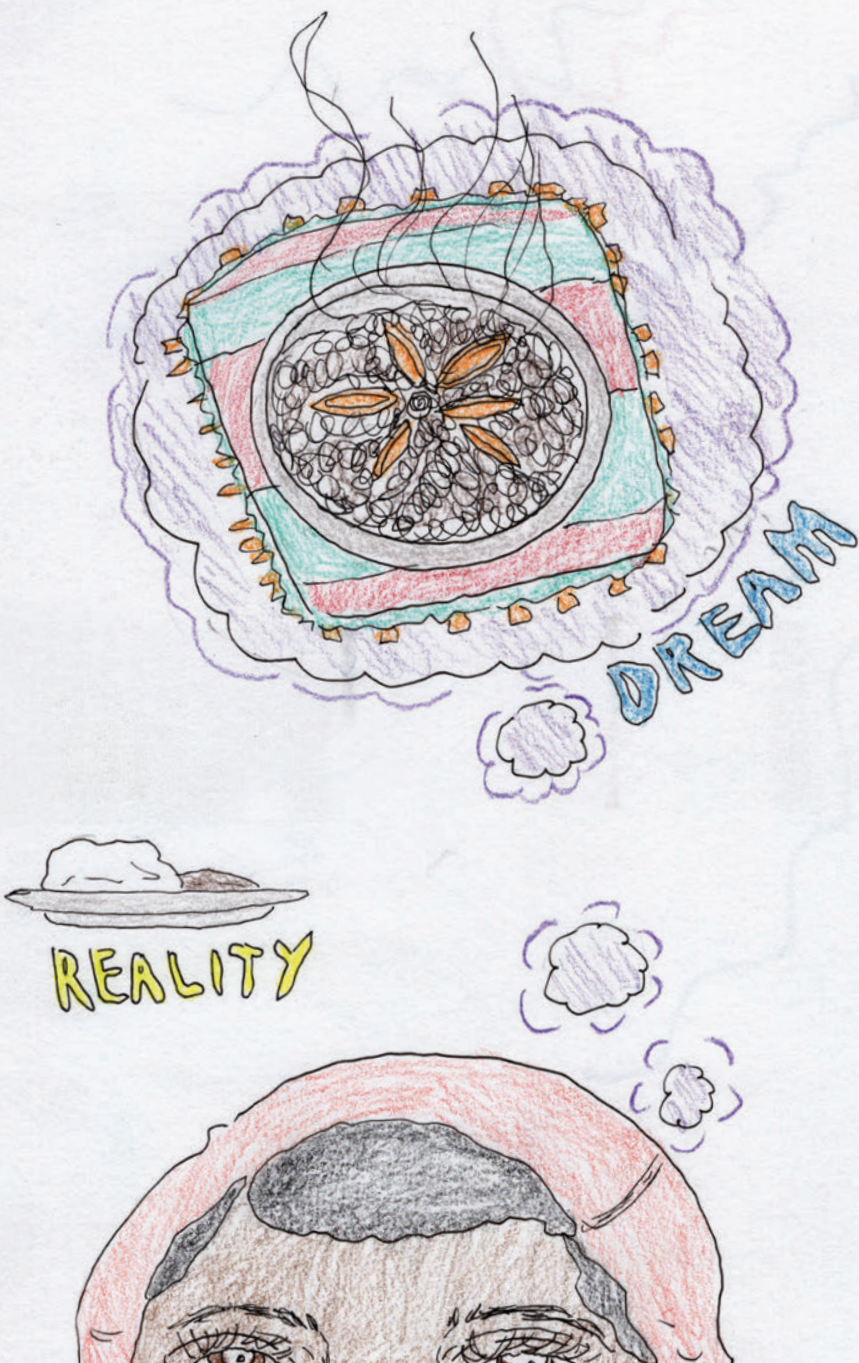
It is still my home. I think of it and my family often. One day when I was a child I was forced to leave home.



I was taken by strangers with white pale skin and taken onboard a huge ship.



My parents were nowhere to be seen as the ship sailed away into the deep blue sea.



All I wanted was my Mom and Dad.
This food was not very good. My Mom
was a much better cook.



Time went by so slowly on the ship. But eventually the ship got cold. I could tell we were no longer home but somewhere else.



The white men were very angry, yelling as we got off the ship. Wherever we were, it was not Africa.



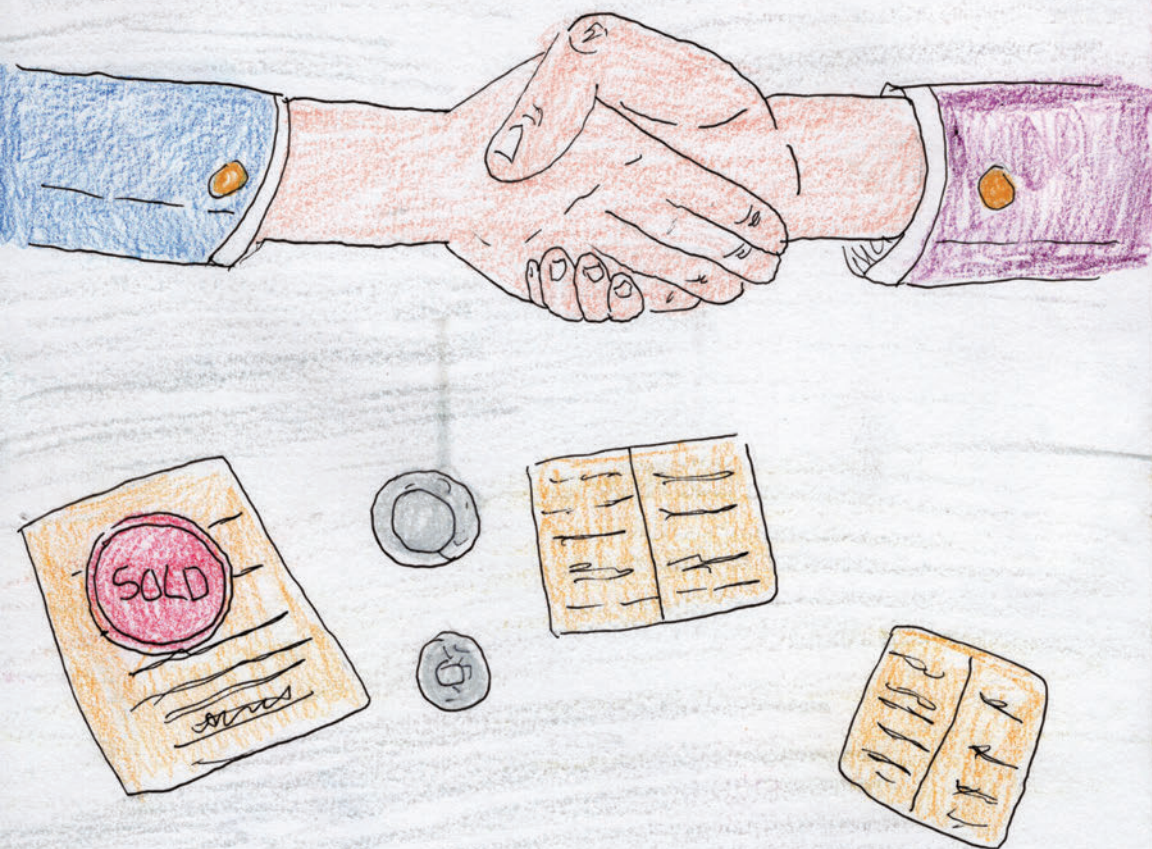
I was no longer home. It was very dull outside, the grass was yellow, and the birds were small and brown. I felt so out of place here.



The white men led us to a crowd, who were all yelling as we each were shown to the group like livestock. Many families were scared and were getting separated by the men. Taken away by different people.



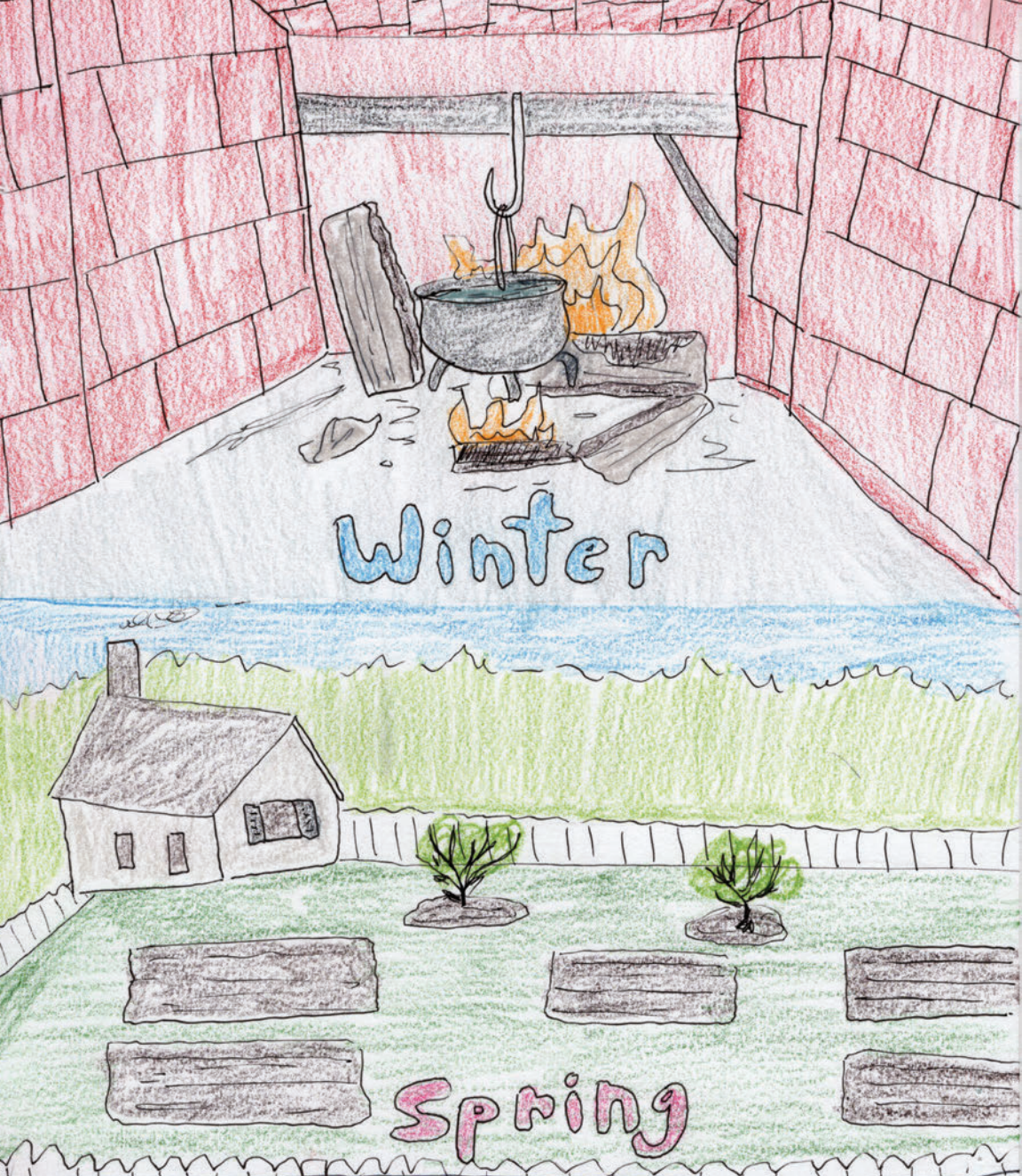
I was brought in front of the crowd, and I was a man and woman waving their hands. The man holding me smiled and pushed me towards the couple.



They exchanged a handshake with the man and coins and papers were exchanged. The couple smiled and pinched my cheek, and in a short time I was brought to their home.



They told me I was in Massachusetts. A state in America. “Where is America?” I thought. I did not know at the time except that I was far away from home and my family.



I was told I had a job, and that job was to tend the fire in winter and tend the garden during spring.



And so, I did just that for years and years. Getting used to the cold weather and always **ALWAYS** missing home.



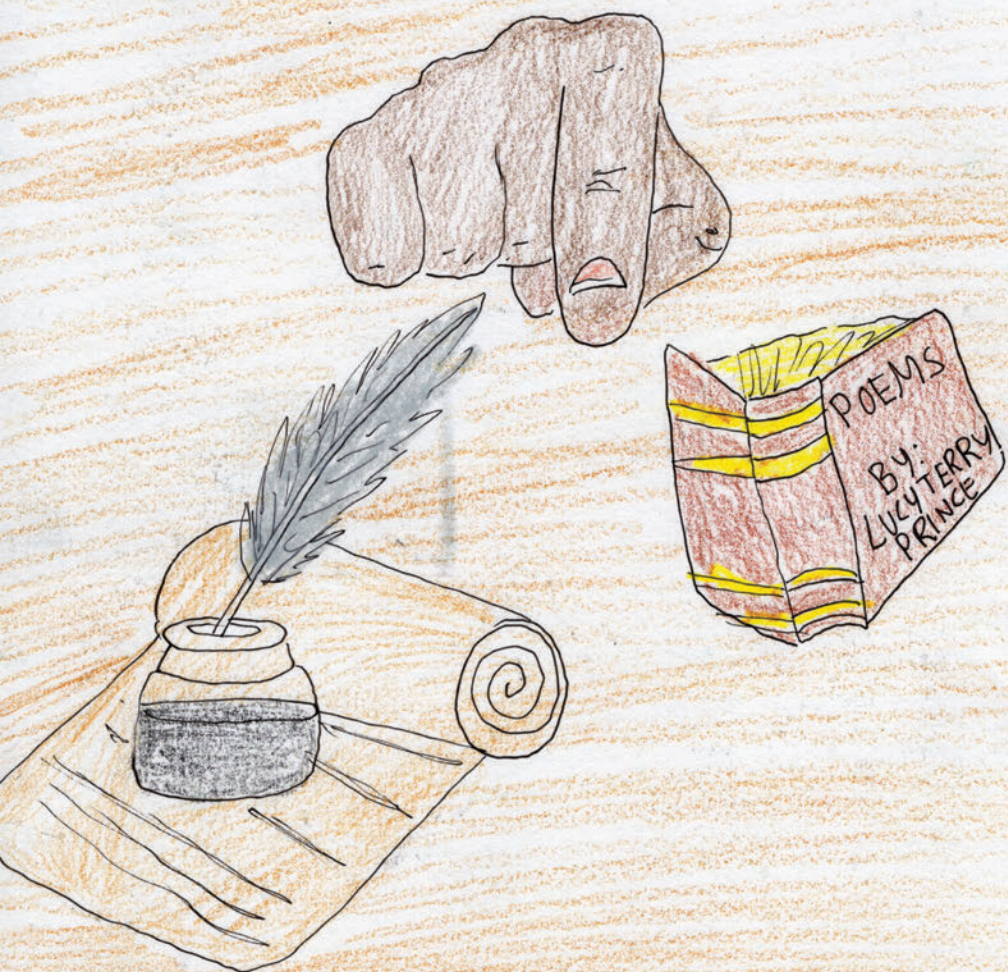
When I was just sixteen years old, I began to write, creating poems based on my surroundings. These earned me local fame, however, I still felt alone.



I did not fit in, in the small town of Deerfield, Massachusetts. There was nobody there like me. Or so I thought until I met Obijah Prince.



Obijah Prince truly was a prince, as we fell in love he soon asked for my hand in marriage. Then he paid the couple I cared for, freeing me from their home.



Together in 1760, Obijah and I moved to Vermont, where I became recognized as a storyteller. Telling my travels to all who were willing to listen, people like you.



My work and poems are now known as one of the oldest know works of literature by and African American, especially a woman. Life may be tough at times, but you can still always be successful.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Clarise Seguin is a junior year Art History Major at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. In her free time, she makes a lot of art such as drawings, paintings, and jewelry.

HELPFUL SOURCES FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING ABOUT SLAVERY

Teaching Hard History: Grades K-5

Introduction, Southern Poverty Law Center
Learning for Justice

How to Talk to Kids about Slavery and Freedom,
Washington Parent

How do you explain Slavery to Kids? National
Geographic, Cassandra Spratling

ABOUT

Lucy Terry Prince was kidnapped as a child from Africa in the 1730s and lives as an enslaved person in Deerfield, Massachusetts. This story follows the life of Lucy Terry Prince through her own lenses as she grows to become the first African American to write literature.

MORE ABOUT LUCY TERRY PRINCE

Lucy Terry Prince, PBS Online

Lucy Terry Prince Composes a Poem, Mass
Moments

Lucy Terry Prince, Vermont History Explorer

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