

V'ahavta by Aurora Levins Morales

Thus spoke the prophet Roque Dalton:
*All together they have more death than we,
but all together, we have more life than they.*
There is more bloody death in their hands
than we could ever wield, unless
we lay down our souls to become them,
and then we will lose everything.
So instead,

imagine winning. This is your
sacred task.
This is your power. Imagine
every detail of winning, the exact smell
of the summer streets
in which no one has been shot, the
muscles you have never
unclenched from worry, gone soft as
newborn skin,
the sparkling taste of food when we know
that no one on earth is hungry, that the
beggars are fed,
that the old man under the bridge and
the woman
wrapping herself in thin sheets in the
back seat of a car,
and the children who suck on stones,
nest under a flock of roofs that keep
multiplying their shelter.
Lean with all your being towards that day
when the poor of the world shake down a
rain of good fortune
out of the heavy clouds, and justice
rolls down like waters.

Defend the world in which we win as if
it were your child.
It is your child.
Defend it as if it were your lover.
It is your lover.

When you inhale and when you exhale
breathe the possibility of another world
into the 37.2 trillion cells of your body

until it shines with hope.
Then imagine more.

Imagine rape is unimaginable. Imagine
war is a scarcely credible rumor
That the crimes of our age, the
grotesque inhumanities of greed,
the sheer and astounding shamelessness
of it, the vast fortunes
made by stealing lives, the horrible
normalcy it came to have,
is unimaginable to our heirs, the
generations of the free.

Don't waver. Don't let despair sink its
sharp teeth
Into the throat with which you
sing. Escalate your dreams.
Make them burn so fiercely that you can
follow them down
any dark alleyway of history and not
lose your way.
Make them burn clear as a starry
drinking gourd
Over the grim fog of exhaustion, and
keep walking.

Hold hands. Share water. Keep imagining.
So that we, and the children of our
children's children
may live

What To Tell The Children by Rachel Kaan
<https://hevrria.com/rachel/what-to-tell-the-children/>

Tell them that this is the great awakening.
Tell them that we humans have made some huge mistakes
And that's how we now find ourselves in this tenuous place.
Teach them that hate is the poison.
Teach them that love is the remedy,
That it is better to be readied for what comes next,
Even if the revelation is painful.
Tell them that this is the paradigm shift,
That the old is collapsing in on itself,

That this death rattle is simply a temper tantrum;
The last gasp of a dying goliath.
Remind them of how they get wild
When they are most tired,
And then pass out,
That this is what it's about,
That this is what is happening to a decrepit and ineffective empire.
Tell them that everything is not ok,
And knowing that is ok.
Tell them that pretending
That what is unacceptable is fine
Is what got us to this sick and dysfunctional spot on the timeline.
Apologize for any prior attempts to teach them denial.
Tell them you were blinded by desire for comfortable numbness.
Express that you had the best of intentions,
That you were working within a broken system,
Where few benefitted at the expense of many,
That you laid low,
Kept to the status quo,
Obediently played your role,
But those days are over, because
Now you know better.
Tell them that they have no responsibility
To follow someone blindly based solely on a title.
Teach them to practice discernment.
Tell them authority and respect
Must be earned and are not inherently deserved.
Teach them that there are good people and bad people
From every background, ethnicity and belief system,
That they must align themselves with kindness,
That there is no more time for divisiveness.
You tell
Them that just because something is legal,
That doesn't mean it's right.
You tell them
To stand up and fight.
Remind them of all the lawful atrocities
Committed in the sick and twisted history
Of this violent country,
That Rosa Parks righteously broke a law and the world took notice,
That Harriet Tubman is our modern-day Moses,
That women would not be allowed to vote,
And no one would have proposed another notion
If the blessed rebels hadn't taken a stand.
Tell them love will win this war,
But only if we remember

That love is not just one unending cuddle puddle,
But fierce as a mother bear protecting her cubs.
Tell them that although this existence is damaged beyond repair,
They must not despair,
There is possibility,
And we will willingly and willfully open ourselves
To new ways of being because
The old way is not working,
Has never worked,
And the world deserves better,
And we're worth it.
Tell them they are not free
While another suffers under enslavement.
Teach them that we are all limbs on one body
And we cannot chop off our own arm without deep suffering.
Teach them humility,
But also to re-learn to trust their intuition and
Beg their forgiveness for unintentionally misleading them previously.
Tell them their gifts are useful.
Tell them they are beautiful.
Tell them they are the truth.

Imagine the Angels of Bread by Martin Espada

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?view=detail&mid=12256C00A05A605011FF12256C00A05A605011FF&q=Imagine+the+Angels+of+Bread+By+Martin+Espada&shtp=GetUrl&shid=3d30e748-be24-43f0-a7ac-f494a1e12357&shtk=TWfYdGluIEVzcGFkYSBjbWFnaW5lIHRoZSBBbmdlbHMgb2YgQnJlYWQ%3D&shdk=TWfYdGluIEVzcGFkYSBjbWFnaW5lIHRoZSBBbmdlbHMgb2YgQnJlYWQ%3D&shhk=DpsV5qasccRv3oO1%2FGJ7HtXKUPGx5ubkIBGRfu%2Bte%2Fw%3D&form=VDSHOT&shth=OSH.CE6StTFn5K49KsWCtN%252BM0A>

This is the year that squatters evict landlords, gazing like admirals from the rail
of the roofdeck
or levitating hands in praise
of steam in the shower;
this is the year
that shawled refugees deport judges, who
stare at the floor
and their swollen feet
as files are stamped
with their destination;
this is the year that police revolvers,
stove-hot, blister the fingers
of raging cops,

and nightsticks splinter
in their palms;
this is the year
that darkskinned men
lynched a century ago
return to sip coffee quietly
with the apologizing descendants
of their executioners.
This is the year that those
who swim the border's undertow
and shiver in boxcars
are greeted with trumpets and drums
at the first railroad crossing
on the other side;
this is the year that the hands
pulling tomatoes from the vine
uproot the deed to the earth that
sprouts the vine, the hands canning tomatoes
are named in the will
that owns the bedlam of the cannery;
this is the year that the eyes
stinging from the poison that purifies
toilets awaken at last to the sight
of a rooster-loud hillside,
pilgrimage of immigrant birth;
this is the year that cockroaches
become extinct, that no doctor
finds a roach embedded
in the ear of an infant;
this is the year that the food stamps
of adolescent mothers
are auctioned like gold doubloons,
and no coin is given to buy machetes
for the next bouquet of severed heads
in coffee plantation country.
If the abolition of slave-manacles
began as a vision of hands without
manacles, then this is the year;
if the shutdown of extermination camps
began as imagination of a land
without barbed wire or the crematorium,
then this is the year;
if every rebellion begins with the idea
that conquerors on horseback
are not many-legged gods, that they too
drown if plunged in the river,

then this is the year.
So may every humiliated mouth, teeth
like desecrated headstones, fill with the angels of bread.

“The First Week” by Laura Eberly
<http://www.lauraeberly.com/>

If we all agreed to, on Monday
we could plant a pollinator garden on every corner
and turn over one parking spot per block
to vegetables and fruit.

But first, on Sunday
we should assemble all the healers –
all the yogis, chiropractors, sangomas, and sage smudgers –
and ask them to have coffee with the matriarchs,
and the refugees,
and the trans sex workers,
and the small town queers,
and anybody who has yelled at a marble building through a
bullhorn,
or raised a child in times of war,
and by lunchtime all of us would learn
to locate, heal, and fortify our spines.
That evening,
the musicians would find our diaphragms
and teach us new songs
to sing while planting.

On Tuesday
after the gardens,
we would repair every roof,
install rain barrels and solar panels,
retrieve the lost balls and frisbees and kites,
and remember we are tiny beneath the sky.

On Wednesday,
we'd fix the heaters
so the gas could never be cut off,
and install a tiny lead filter in every faucet.

By Thursday,
we would know each others' names
and begin to tell our stories.
Then

the farmers and the roofers and the plumbers
would be honored by the lawyers and the doctors,
who had spent their first week ever listening.

Next, veneration and reparations
by the bankers and professors,
who will learn that education isn't learning
and money isn't value
and nothing is the feel of soil in your hands
or throwing back your head to sing.
We will ache for love and owning nothing
and for the first time
that will make us unafraid.

By Friday,
we will be too busy
healing, tending, and child-rearing
for waging war,
so the soldiers will have no orders.
The police will have quiet radios and no calls,
so we will tear apart the prisons
and send the guards to rehab,
where first-graders and nursery workers will teach them
slowly
to trust humanity again,
beginning with their own.
We will use the bricks and fences
to build community centers with wide porches
where the grannies can knit and keep watch instead.

Saturday would be for rest:
hammocks,
creeks,
and lemonade.
We would listen to the earth
and the spirits
and our ancestors
and our lovers
and our beloveds
and the bullfrogs
and the songbirds
and the tall grass
and the redwoods
and the oak trees
breathing
for one day
every week.

Breathing.

And by next Sunday,
we would know who else we need.

Blessing in a Time of Violence - Jan Richardson

<http://paintedprayerbook.com/2015/11/16/blessing-in-a-time-of-violence/>

Which is to say
this blessing
is always.
Which is to say
there is no place
this blessing
does not long
to cry out
in lament,
to weep its words
in sorrow,
to scream its lines
in sacred rage.
Which is to say
there is no day
this blessing ceases
to whisper
into the ear
of the dying,
the despairing,
the terrified.
Which is to say
there is no moment
this blessing refuses
to sing itself
into the heart
of the hated
and the hateful,
the victim
and the victimizer,
with every last
ounce of hope
it has.
Which is to say
there is none
that can stop it,

none that can
halt its course,
none that will
still its cadence,
none that will
delay its rising,
none that can keep it
from springing forth
from the mouths of us
who hope,
from the hands of us
who act,
from the hearts of us
who love,
from the feet of us
who will not cease
our stubborn, aching
marching, marching
until this blessing
has spoken
its final word,
until this blessing
has breathed
its benediction
in every place,
in every tongue:
Peace.
Peace.
Peace.

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Say these words when you lie down and
when you rise up,
when you go out and when you return. In
times of mourning
and in times of joy. Inscribe them on
your doorposts,
embroider them on your garments, tattoo
them on your shoulders,
teach them to your children, your
neighbors, your enemies,
recite them in your sleep, here in the

cruel shadow of empire:
Another world is possible.