

Dear four,

It must be past 3 a.m. as i write this, it feels like hours since i last looked at the clock. I'm sitting on my kitchen floor right now noshing on cold leftovers (who has time to use a microwave, im gonna have to head back to the clinic in a few hours anyways). much like the israelites in the story of exodus who didn't have time to let bread rise as they prepared to set out on their long, protracted struggle ahead, i do not have time to make cold pasta warm again before the sun rises... oy gevalt.

I'm sorry that it's taken me so long to write this letter. I don't know how quickly or in what form information gets to you, wherever you are, though i imagine you've heard enough to understand why i've been quiet. We all knew the raids would come. That they would send their fascist gangs to try and intimidate us, to harass and threaten and vandalize our comrades and our community. We knew that they would use your bravery and initiative as a justification to arrest our nurses and brutalize our siblings who come to us in need of care. And we knew that the community would protect us by any means necessary. That night when the pigs opened fire on a crowd of clinic protectors, i was helping a young woman with an estrogen injection. She was quiet but not shy at all, so curious about our politics, our history, so filled with righteous anger and a desire to fight back against the hordes who jeered at her on her way into our building. i swear she was ready to tear them limb from limb. her fire warmed the room. She had grabbed a book from the shelf in the waiting room, George Jackson's Blood in my Eye. "we will have our freedom even at the cost of total war".

I heard the shots ring out along with the terrified screams of our beloved community. In the chaos that followed another nurse told me that they were getting as many people in as they could before barricading the doors shut. I'll never forget the sounds of wailing, of crutches and wheelchairs skidding and crashing across the floor, of coughing, retching, screaming, gasping for air as people carried in the bloodied bodies of their comrades, friends, lovers, neighbors, begging us to do something, anything. Our operating rooms filled up. We treated gunshot wounds in the waiting area. The pigs didn't even try to break in and finish us off, they just stood outside and laughed as they kicked around the limp bodies of those who had loved us and each other so much. I dont need to tell you

what they said, what they told us they would do to us if they caught us. I wanted to be too busy to be scared, but i was terrified. I jumped when I heard a knock on the exam room door: another nurse told me I was needed asap. My hands shook as i fumbled around for clean needles for the girl, sitting in silence through it all across the room from me. i felt so guilty as she looked at me for comfort. i wish i had something, anything to give her, i curse myself that i wasn't strong enough, that that child had to become my caregiver in that moment. She understood that i had nothing, i was laid bare before her. she flashed me sympathetic eyes that held back tears she should not have had to stifle. she smiled ever so subtly and touched my arm gently. i hope she felt just how powerful she was. that single gesture kept me alive.

I know there must be a part of you that feels like all this leads back to you and to the other comrades who took the steps that you did. that since the pigs justify their violence by saying they're looking for y'all, somehow this violence is your fault. I debated not bringing it up at all in this letter, it's not a thought worth entertaining, but i wanted to offer some kind of reassurance. I wince thinking about how long its been since we we've been able to call, to eat a meal together, cry together, be our most vulnerable and fragile selves, break apart and put each other back together with nothing else but sheer love for the people and belief in the forward momentum of history. I wish i could look you in your eyes and say that you have nothing to blame yourself for, that you and all our beloved warriors are a beacon of light and joy and hope. I wish you could see that the community buzzes with love for you and your guerrilla siblings, that our elders pray for your safety in church, synagogue, and mosque services, at dinner tables, on street corners. That when the pigs started raiding our clinics, the whole community came out to protect us and each other. That in retaliation for the massacre, some comrades went and bombed the local police precinct, and none of them have been caught (like the dragon said, let there funerals on both sides).

Most importantly, i hope you know that we understand. we know that you would never do anything to hurt us.

I know i had eluded to exodus earlier, but the lessons of that particular section of the Torah have been burning away at me lately. indulge me a bit here, i don't have all my thoughts together and i know you're not a religious person, much less jewish, but bear with me. I remember talking with other comrades about the escalation of revolutionary

violence that the 10 plagues entailed, the way that pharaoh's heart was only hardened to further repress the israelites and further subject his own citizenry to unimaginable violence as the liberation struggle advanced. The closer the israelites got to their liberation, the more intense Pharaoh's repression became. the exodus itself was only the beginning of a 40 year long struggle for survival and homecoming. I dont know when i'll next see you, but i know that you are also working to come home, that our fight is one to make the entire world a home for everyone. I dont know if i ever told you, but an important part of that torah section is how many egyptians ended up joining the israelites and leaving with them. the masses were moved by their struggle, much like the foolish old man that our Mao told us about. Much like the people here, right now, who are aching to join the revolutionary movement, who shout "long live the peoples army!".

i'm also somberly reflecting on the reality that in that same torah passage, there were israelites that had to be left behind. for whatever reason, there will unfortunately be community members who will not join us. they may have been consumed by nihilism, reactionary ideologies and chauvinism, they may be killed or worse. they may harm us in ways that cannot be repaired. We both are nursing wounds given to us by people who we loved, people who we yearned to grow old with. The pain of realizing that not everyone can come with us is enormous. it's enraging, its betrayal, its unprocessable, it has left us both, at various points, feeling more defeated than any pig or fascist ever could. But we aren't defeated, those wounds are not fatal, and there is magic in the hands of the people who have helped heal us.

I dont know when i'll get to speak with you next. I dont know what will happen to either of us. I dont know where you are(thank God) but i will make sure this letter is sent to someone who i trust will get it to you safely. i miss your words, your guidance and your wisdom. but i know that you are where you're supposed to be. i'm where i'm supposed to be too, because of you.

Know that your love has kept my love strong.

Stay safe, stay dangerous, look for me in the whirlwind.

All power to the mf people

- your sister in struggle

*"The most beautiful thing
for those who have fought a whole life
is to come to the end and say;
we believed in people and life,
and life and the people
never let us down.
Only in this way do men become men,
women become women (people become people),
fighting day and night
for people and for life.
And when these lives come to an end
the people open their deepest rivers
and they enter those waters forever.
And so they become, distant fires, living,
creating the heart of example
The most beautiful thing
for those who have fought a whole life
is to come to the end and say;
we believed in people and life,
and life and the people
never let us down." - otto rene castillo*