



SPRING IS IN THE AIR

A PUBLICATION FOR PRISONERS IN MISSOURI AND BEYOND/SPRING2017

REVOLUTIONARY LETTER #58 by Diane di Prima

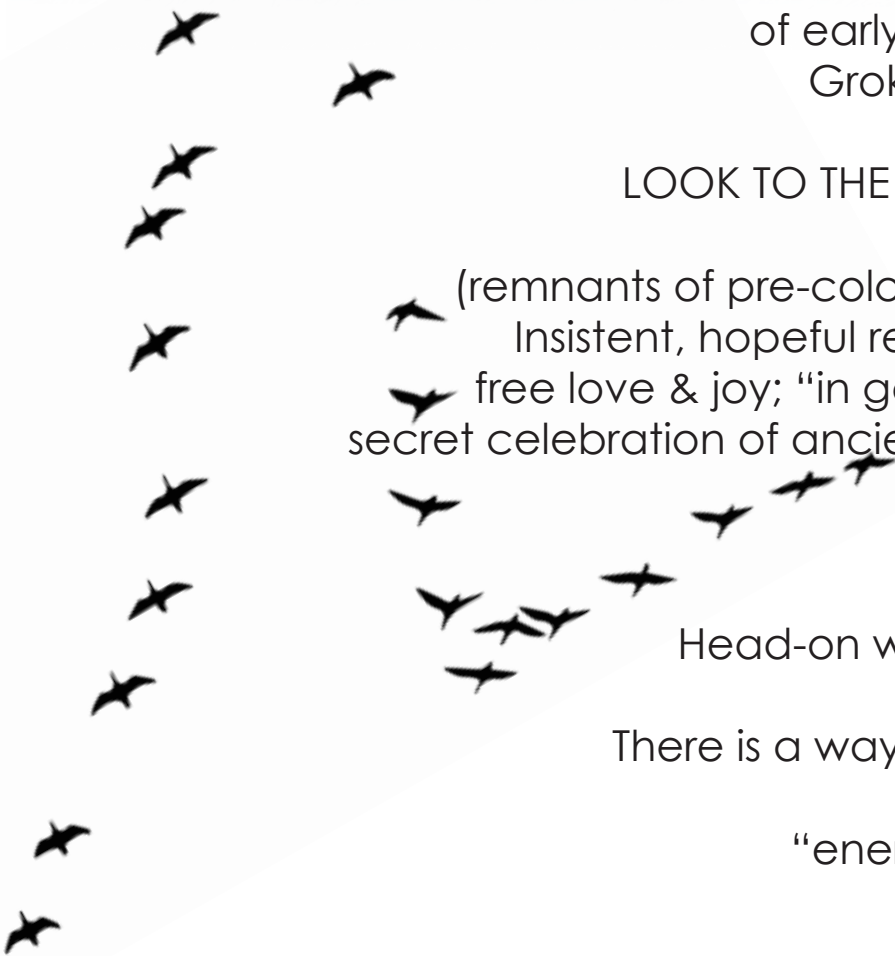
What we need to know is laws of time & space
they never dream of. Seek out
the ancient texts: alchemy
homeopathy, secret charts
of early Rosicrucians (Giordanisti).
Grok synchronicity Jung barely
scratched the surface of.

LOOK TO THE "HERESIES" of EUROPE FOR
BLOODROOT

(remnants of pre-colonized pre-Roman Europe):
Insistent, hopeful resurgence of communards
free love & joy; "in god all things are common"
secret celebration of ancient season feasts & moons.
Rewrite the calendar.

//

Head-on war is the mistake we make
time after time
There is a way around it, way to outflank
technology, short circuit
"energy crisis": retreat & silence
cunning
courage & love



GREETINGS AGAIN FROM THE MIDWEST!

Here wintertime has fluctuated with more warm days than harshly cold ones, which is strange but also becoming more normal. Even though it can't mean good things not having a true winter, most of us are enjoying the milder temperatures and the movement and activity it can provide. And still, this winter has also proven to be a very turbulent time as well.

As you all know, Donald Trump is now officially the president of the United States. WTF? Over the past two years we watched as he rose in power, riding the wave of a racist backlash against the immigration of latino/a people, and the black struggles for justice and equality. Trump's campaign slightly veiled his racist, sexist and xenophobic (the fear of outsiders, i.e. immigrants, muslims, anyone different than white, christian, conservative America), with the promise of "making America great again".

Which makes us ask, "When exactly was America great?" The country was founded on the genocide and colonization of Native Americans, and the forced labor of African slaves, and the indentured servitude of poor whites — not to even mention the vast inequality and oppression of women, gay and transgendered people, and just anyone who seemed different. With Trumps rise to power, the rhetoric of racism and sexism has become more and more accepted. All of a sudden racists don't have to be so discreet, and can come out and state their ideas with less fear of being silenced. Now we are facing promises of border walls, mass deportations, crack downs of law and order against protests and riots, as well as what seems like a unrelenting attack against the environment through eliminating restrictions on industry.

While all of this looks very bleak and is very scary, the Trump regime hasn't risen to power without strong resistance. At every moment of Trumps rise we have seen people push back. On his campaign trail, there

were protests and fights at almost every rally. Particularly in Chicago and California, people stepped up to take a stand and demonstrate that the rhetoric and policy he was pushing would not be met without a fight. The night after Trump was elected, multiple cities across America saw violent riots, as people expressed their anger and rage. And most recently, at the inauguration of Trump, over 500,000 people participated in a "women's march" in DC, with over 3 million participating across the country. While that march is impressive in numbers, perhaps what was as impressive was the tens of thousands of people who resisted militantly in DC and other cities, showing that not only will we protest and hold signs, but we are willing to fight back as well.

With the rise of Trump, there has also been a rise of a new form of American politics, calling itself the Alt-Right. This is a ill-defined collection of groups that tend towards a more extreme right position. Almost always aligning themselves with a white supremacist ideology, filled with racism and misogyny (the hatred of and prejudice against women).

These racists have gained power by exploiting the fears and anger of poor working class white Americans, who have either struggled from pay check to pay check, seeing their hard work amount to still living in poverty, or have been excluded from the work force and sat by unemployed looking for a way to make it in this world. Or even though they may not live

Continued on page 3



in poverty, they fear any change in the white supremacist status quo. Trump and the Alt-right has focused the blame for these hard times on immigrants, Muslims, Black people, Brown people, “illegals”. It is more important now more than ever to confront these lies.

When you step back and look at the big picture, 95% of the ruling class, the bosses, the property owners and the politicians that make the decisions that keep the poor poor and the rich rich are white. And the ruling class pushes white supremacist ideology to keep poor whites from realizing that, their enemy isn't other poor people of color, or immigrants or Muslims, but is actually the white people in power, and white supremacy itself. The fact that factories have moved overseas, and people have been forced to immigrate to the USA, is and always has been the fault of the business class, not the immigrants or people of color. So, while these racist fuckers have gained a seat in power, it's time for us to get organized across racial lines and fight back against white supremacy, capitalism and the state that keep us divided and oppressed.

3

We hope you let us know what you think and share the stories of defiance you've seen from where you are.

**THOSE PRISON WALLS
CAN'T KEEP US APART!!!**

WRITE TO US!
SNOW DAY PRESS
POB 63333
STL, MO 63163

'we are the storm and

we will leave light in our wake'



Notes from Beyond

The following is an account of the few days surrounding the inauguration of the new president in DC. Several people wove their various experiences together in an effort to capture a more dynamic understanding of the ongoing and reflections that took place.

Thursday: We got to DC Thursday night, honestly not really expecting much. As we came upon the Deplora-Ball, we were pleasantly surprised. The police were heavily guarding the building where the ball of the alt-right was being held. Eggs were being thrown at the entrance. Further into the crowd, a little fire was burning with whatever socialist or commie placards people could find.

The police seemed to only want to keep us out of the ball, but didn't seem to care too much about the various alt-right Nazis who decided to venture out into the crowd. I assumed that police told such folks that they could leave or enter at their own risk. There were multiple exits, so clearly some chose to be stupid and face us. Friends started to call the sidewalk where the Nazis tried to walk, ass kick alley because really people could just get their kicks in no problem. When folks saw deplora-ball participants exit and walk down the sidewalk, there were sprints towards them, endings in scuffles, hands being thrown.

Loudly calling out antagonistic Nazis in the crowd of masked faces. Wishing I kicked his knee in and scraped my boot down his shin when he turned and squared up towards me. Friends were there though and threw punches. A leader of a group in Seattle got hit over the head, bloodied. The fierce bravery as people acted and blended back into the masked parts of the crowd. QT we shout to beckon for one another.

One Nazi sieg-heiled us all. He and his friends, feeling confident to do this, no longer felt so confident after folks punched, kicked and threw shit at them, drawing blood. Turns out one of the sieg-heil fucks is the leader of a Republican group in Seattle. So, anything that could be thrown was thrown. There wasn't much really. In desperation, folks ripped plants out of the ground to throw, grabbed crumbled up paper, bricks, eggs. One guy was hit by a wooden stick right smack dab on the head. You could hear the hit so loud. A couple Nazis, scared, ran back to the police who pushed them back behind their line. It was a little ambiguous sometimes whether folks were fighting an alt-right intellectual or just a random Trump supporter—made me wonder how to be more selective about who we attack, tho fuck em both. I was happy to hear that many of the folks who got got were alt-right celebs.

Curious about the reality and use of violence. Attack feels

necessary and how can it feel accessible and reproducible for the masses of people to take part. Violence against police has become more normalized and generalized especially in the past few years. Now more so there is a new enemy to engage as well. What is the goal of attacking white supremacist leaders? The goal seems to be to humiliate them, emasculate them. In a moment I didn't feel fast enough or fearless enough. Throwing things felt more possible than using my fist, but not as demasculinating. Is it just that I'm not as comfortable with this form of violence yet?

Throughout it all, the police played more of an escort role. Eventually, the anti-nazi crowd forced their hand to take a more protective and crowd control stance. As more and more folks were getting hit or attacked physically, they started escort and defend them against attacks by spraying pepper spray. Eventually, riot police showed up in their gear and marched into the crowd, yelling their trademark "MOVE!" robot noise at us, mostly as a means to intimidate and quell us. Not arresting anybody though.

Friday: The next morning we got to Logan Circle around 10:15. The crowd was much bigger than I expected. Pleasantly surprised, I saw some old friends I hadn't seen in years. There were some older folks serving coffee. They told us they couldn't participate in the march but wanted to do something to help us, specifically pointing out that they were also there to challenge the stereotype of the young rascal anarchist.

The march left a little early, either because folks were impatient or because it seemed like the police were starting to gear up and surround Logan Circle. We walked at a brisk pace

Continued on page 5



and for a while I thought we were at the end of the bloc, but actually we were somewhere in the middle. From my vantage point, it was hard to see the beginning and end. Jumping up and down to see, it looked like there must have been 600-800 people—all dressed in black.

I had heard before that this march was more about holding space, not immediately destroying shit, but fuck it, there's really too much in the way. Ya know, banks and stuff. I don't think some people got that memo anyway, and that's totally fine. We have no chill and rarely get this opportunity. So let the proverbial smashing begin. Doing what a black bloc does best, the newspaper boxes made it into the street, cop cruisers smashed, corporate business windows hit, etc. I remember seeing a Starbucks in the far off distance. "Are they gonna hit it? It would only be fitting." I was reminded of the anti-globe and anti-war days when we really had it out for them. How many stories I had heard from older comrades about the great war on the Starbucks. Watching videos later, I find one from a conservative media outlet, she's screaming in terror as "antifa" wreak havoc on Starbucks and Bank of America windows; the words "total anarchy" comes out of her mouth a few times, albeit derisively. Where does she think she is?

As we weave through downtown DC, mere blocks away from the White House, with the sound of glass breaking and newspaper boxes scrapping across the street, the police start to get themselves together. They're on bicycles and motorcycles, clown car-ing it in vans, as well as on foot. Because we are mobile, have no central command to command us and we are not really weighed down with riot gear, we have a little bit of time.

A riotous crowd can do a lot of damage in a short time, especially one versed in the tactic of a black bloc. Damage is often the point, in fact some fiend for it. The police have

to put on riot gear, organize themselves to form a line, radio and call their commander or something before they can get ahead of us. I don't exactly know how it works, but I know they move like turtles compared to us at our best. We're like cats, elusive and under no command. They often miss us by minutes as they amass their forces. Basically for as long as one can destroy a bunch of shit, we are able to move a little bit faster than the police until they come in with overwhelming force.

Running and undressing, shedding the layers of black clothing. At the motion of a friend, dipped off the street onto the sidewalk, blending into a group of random onlookers, later to realize this kept us from the kettle. Walking the streets, avoiding cops and looking out to see that friends were safe and free.

It definitely felt like the police weren't really trying to arrest us, just trying to manage us and disperse us. There were many times where I saw folks run into police in ways that would normally be called assault only to be pushed back into the crowd by them. DC police have lost lawsuits for mass arrests and in many peoples minds made it unlikely they would mass arrest folks. That is, until they kettled and arrested 90 folks, with the number throughout the day eventually growing to 217 (is that what happened?). The city can easily cut their losses to the windows and police cars, but we must of forced their hand a bit. When they surrounded large group, many bravely rammed their way through to escape. Some of the comrades that got away were searched by police and turned loose. Others were not so lucky to even get out and were mass arrested and forced to stand on a corner for 12 hours as punishment and probably because the police were forced to deal with the ensuing riot afterwards.

We watched as friends and comrades were surrounded and arrested. Police vans showing up and they were being processed to get in the vans, all their black clothes were taken as evidence.



Eventually word came through that there was a plan to storm the line to break our friends out. It was a crazy idea, every type of cop was there now, with two layers of police turtles in front of us, as well as some national guard standing around. It prolly wasn't going to work, but what else were we gonna do? Sometimes you gotta be reckless. A line of folks starts to surge toward the police line and the police shoot pepper spray at us. People are running, the police are throwing flash bangs. A Native elder is hit with pepper spray, as well as a little kid whose Mom

Continued on page 6

is holding her. It's chaos. People are screaming for dear life.

Pepper sprayed and blinded in one eye, grabbing the wall to guide myself away from the crowd, away from the police line. A kind stranger gave me a wipe for my eye and let me use her clean shirt. My only thought was to get away bc i couldn't see, but i wish i had recovered and thought to go back to see what was happening, to not feel taken out. I didn't realize people were still fighting, throwing rocks and feeling strong back where I got sprayed. Wishing i could've returned a stone for taking me out. Instead I felt lost without a phone or a friend, unclear of where to go, eager to engage but didn't know how. Worn down by the intense cold without really realizing it, needing to warm up but not thinking to do so. I'm glad friends got to retaliate when I couldn't.

As people are running, many folks are staying behind and grabbing whatever projectile they can find. Sidewalk paving stones and bricks are being taken from their places and broken into smaller pieces through complex riot science technology that can only be learned in such moments as this. This intuitive science has allowed people to make one big rock into multiple rocks, to be distributed amongst the rock-throwing constituents. Rocks are flying as fast as people can break them up, but there isn't much because downtown DC is actually a functional place where paving stones don't so easily come up. It's two birds one stone, because you might as well rip apart the city in addition to throwing rocks at them. The police are slowing their roll a little bit because of the rocks; they have stopped moving so fast towards us and instead make movements as a pack when they see a window.

For the next few hours, there are periods of chilling, celebration of power and then periods where rocks rain down. In shorter periods of peace, brave souls rush to the police line to yell expletives and outrage at the police, only to eventually be sprayed and have loud grenades thrown at them. As folks run away, rocks are thrown. It's sort becomes a little bit comforting after awhile, the ritual. Like we know their rules of engagement. There are certainly limitations to this, but the hope is that engaging in more combative tactics against the police—who ultimately protect class society and white supremacy—will help us learn how to take, defend and occupy space, which can open doors to other possibilities.

We are eventually pushed back about two blocks from the kettle to McPherson Square. Multiple street fires are started at various times, very quickly surrounded by photojournalists, making it hard for folks to even get the fire they might of started.

These journalists are quite annoying, every one of them wants piece of the action. There's some many of them, almost a bloc of their own. They can sometimes act as a

buffer between the police, forcing the police to hesitate in their crowd control of us. But often they so clearly show the worlds desire for a spectacle to record. My most cynical dystopian feeling is that some day all protests will become whittled down to medics, legal observers and photojournalists surrounding just one person who is fighting back. Maybe they'll get an award or some money? It is a job after all for most of them. It's a complete mystery where all these photos and videos go.

At one point, a poor kid gets shot in the crotch by a flash bang and he's in excruciating pain. As he is being carried away, cameras surround him, harvesting his pain for voyeuristic viewers. And what the fuck, they're impeding the way for him to get out of the crowd faster to get medical help. Exasperated, some of us run to clear the way. We're yelling for them to get out of the way, eventually pushing them away, some of them are falling to the ground. One of them yells, grabs me and rips my coat. He tells me he's on the same side as me, and as nice as I can try to be, I tell him he should get the fuck out the way then because this kid is seriously in pain! Seeming to get it, the guy calms down. But god damn, the struggle is real..

Walked again finally to more commotion and gathering in the street, a limo on fire. Instantly my body temperature warmed, my spirits soared - from one extreme to another, it felt crazy to notice the shift in my body. Hands up to protect my head from flying flash bangs, pushing up towards the police, then drawing back. Conversations in the street. Trash cans on fire. Plastic, stinky, anything that will burn because there wasn't much to burn, on fire.

After awhile, the police keep their distance, having possibly learned that the rock/pepper spray and grenade ritual was only pissing us off more. Better to let the crowd tire or dwindle and come in. And the crowd does dwindle, the black bloc ninja suits leave. It becomes more a street party, folks are talking, arguing, sitting around fires and such. It's pretty cool in itself. Oh, and eventually a busted out limo is epically burnt for about 10 minutes.

Things to remember for next time: bring dozens of eggs to throw at fancy alt-right party-goers fur coats, bring spray paint,

Continued on page 7



bring something else to hold in my hand, don't forget how easily side mirrors of cop cars can be kicked off (how awesome it looks and how good it feels), don't forget how much time and space was ours and stop to feel it more fully in the moment, don't hesitate to kick his knee in, gather things for throwing, remember to go with a buddy you can act with, go with a group you can feel a sense of togetherness with, find a language for which to express ideas and reassure each other and take a break to warm your bones when if you feel yourself fading.

What went down in DC was hopefully part of a trajectory that comes from the rebellions of the last 5 years, whether it was the Oscar Grant riots or the Ferguson uprising. We can only hope. It's hard to tell if we are in the middle of an era of upheaval or a coming time of extreme State repression. Will we look back on these times like we do the 60s and 70s? Has Trump galvanized people to fight back? We can only hope so, because many of us have been waiting years of our lives for people to rise up.

Preparing for likely scenarios feels important. More than swinging a stick it feels necessary to integrate a readiness and desire to do such a thing. Where much of the context for fighting over the past few years has been against the police, it feels necessary to have a clear mindset of what attacking white supremacists can materialize to be and the different ways that can look as well and knowing how I want to act.

Sayings like snitches get stitches and bash the fash are understood as a given. With the terrain more and more ripe with white supremacists and the seeming violence necessary to confront them, how do we avoid the negative aspects of machismo and how do we defend ourselves against the affect meeting violence with violence has upon us? Can we materialize a wider range of ways to attack besides, or in addition to, going out with fists and bats? It can feel spectacular and specialized. It imperative to attack and each person has to determine what ways are most reproducible for themselves.

It's important we do not exaggerate or romanticize what went down. We must celebrate our power but it's important to be critical. The riots in DC are nothing to compared to uprisings in Ferguson and Baltimore. Riots and smashings

Morning Yoga



Mountain Pose



forward fold



downward dog



Warrior 1



downward dog



Warrior 1



downward dog



child's pose



upward dog



downward dog



forward fold



Mountain Pose

Repeat this sequence x6

*Breathe deeply and evenly, focus on your form,
keep your back straight.*

tonedbellyplease.tumblr.com

might get us our kicks and licks, but of course, they need to go further than that. How to do that is hard to figure out. The same energy we had for the police, we should have for all the institutions and authorities that enforce the status quo. We can dream of us poor, hungry, rabble looting a grocery store to eat and show our power together. Or if we need the medical care we've been refused, we make our own and/or take over the hospitals, organizing them ourselves instead of waiting to die. Or if we are homeless, we occupy buildings and liberate them from rent. If one of us is under threat of deportation, we safe house each other.





WE HEARD FROM YOU

Letter excerpt from a prisoner in Michigan

I'm not wishing anyone a Happy New Year. [We gotta get serious] about organizing others to reshape the world otherwise frustration, heads held in hands and abrupt good-byes will characterize the coming year. The relatively few that profit and benefit from the misery of the majority know how to hold on to their power and privilege. I mean, could they have held it this long otherwise?

Waiting passively for the final verdict of history is not making revolution. It's time to move, right now, with determination. Repression is here now and we will not reach the next level of revolutionary consciousness until we meet repression with a counter-force to demonstrate to the oppressed masses that resistance is possible. Oppressed people require a model not only of what we are building but a model of the new man and new woman required to build it. Oppressed people will never listen to, let alone follow the ideas of a weak model because they have all their life for "the built-in automatic survival instincts of the established power complex."

So I don't wish you a Happy New Year, but a year filled with developing language, progress, and anything else we can cajole, capture or wield in our advantage.

2017 our task is to illustrate this point forcefully to the masses of poor and oppressed people.

Letter excerpt from a prisoner in Illinois

We all need strength. So I send you mine. I got your letter it definitely came like a light in the abyss; that no matter how dark this shit may get at least I can see myself. Sometimes that's all we need, to see ourselves to remember who we are and that no matter how immersed we become in the thick of things, it is not a part of us. The pain does not define who we are, rather, refines us like fire does gold, or pressure does to coal, it is in us to become diamonds. I understand that sometimes it feels like we are trapped in the extremes, I believe that this is because we are in an unnatural state of existences thereby forcing us to react in ways unnatural "the norm." This is not abnormal but actually the sanest things we can do. It's like when a foreign agent is introduced to an organism; it either rejects it or gets sick and dies. So in your extremities you are fighting this diseased society and for this you are strong. Like Nietzsche stated, "You must have chaos within you to give birth to the dancing star."

Letter excerpt from a prisoner in Illinois

I am honored that we will be in warrior-mode together applying critical consciousness toward finding new targets of attack against this white Supremacist, woman-hating, police state. I see that you are a conscious sister of the revolutionary struggle. I noticed that you're aware that any attack against prisons is an attack against the state. Prisons are an essential and indispensable component of the state. Without prisons how will the White Supremacist State continue its historical subjugation of the Black man and the Black Woman---how will the social death, as well as biological death, continue to be carried out without prisons? Without prisons, how will the state continue the destruction of, and the repression of my beautiful people---anarchist? So, therefore, the destruction of prison is inextricably linked to the revolutionary concept of the destruction of the State. It's the only way that our lives will matter. And I love it that we are united in the struggle.

I hate how humanity done allowed a few coward the

Continued on page 9

REBELLION AT VAUGHN

ass punks down press us and rob us of our sacred humanity. These punks done spread their criminal culture of destruction and alienation throughout the world, passing themselves off as the epitome of what the human family should be, all the while the beauty in our multiplicity is ignored and forgotten. But we coming back around again---the people will realize that power is truly with them. With the likes of the Hillary and Trump the democratic project is revealing itself more and more to be nothing, more than an illusion---a farce. Insurrection is a possibility that we must be prepared for---we must be ready to break these chains that are destroying us.

Stay connected to that which radiates within. The struggle continues in deep love, rage, and solidarity.



On February 1st, 2017, scores of men in Delaware's largest prison, the Vaughn Correctional Center, took over one of the buildings in their facility. The prison, built in 1971 and known for its serious overuse of solitary confinement, is one of the state's most severely overcrowded and punitive facilities.

Hoping to push the state to improve living conditions at Vaughn, the prisoners didn't just take control of building C — they also took guards hostage. And to make the public aware of why they were protesting, they called the media:

We're trying to explain the reasons for doing what we're doing. Donald Trump. Everything that he did. All the things that he's doing now. We know that the institution is going to change for the worse. We know the institution is going to change for the worse. We got demands that you need to pay attention to, that you need to listen to and you need to let them know. Education, we want education first and foremost. We want a rehabilitation program that works for everybody. We want the money to be allocated so we can know exactly what is going on in the prison, the budget.

Over the next few hours, the men in Vaughn released all but two of the hostages and let nineteen prisoners who wanted to, leave the building as well. Meanwhile, law enforcement had begun amassing outside of the prison.

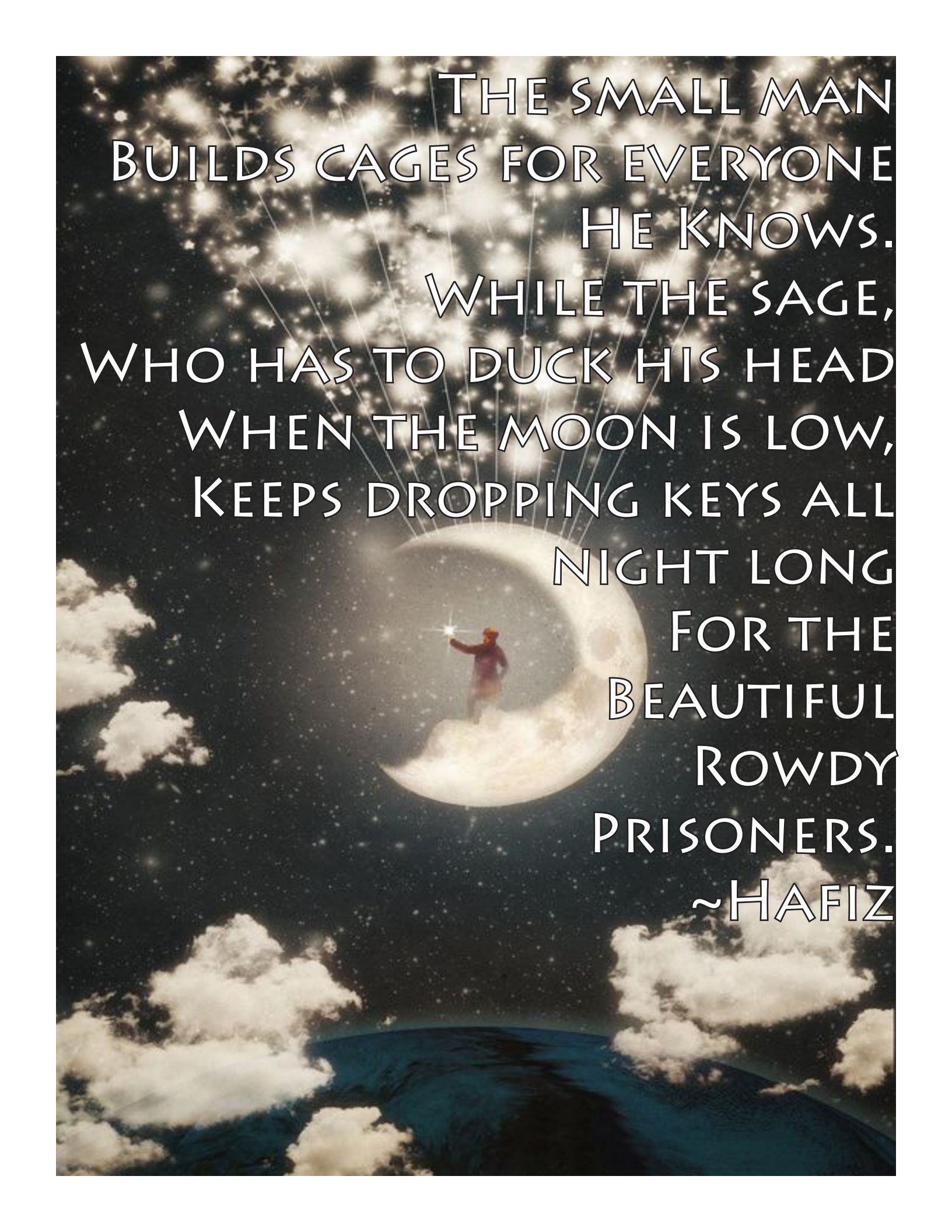
At dawn, the police stormed the facility.

By 7 AM, the ground outside the prison was littered with prisoners laying facedown on the concrete with their hands behind their back. One of the hostages was on her way to the hospital. Another was dead.

That's all we really know. Reliant on information funneled straight through the prison officials' PR machine, and with no access to the men inside, we have no idea what the fallout from this rebellion is or might be.

At Vaughn Correctional Center, inmates have complained for years about their prison environment.

"They just got to the point where they're fed up," a former inmate told the News Journal. "If [the Department of Correction] is worried about the officers and not their demands, if nothing changes, I guarantee there will be another hostage situation in a different building."



THE SMALL MAN
BUILDS CAGES FOR EVERYONE
HE KNOWS.
WHILE THE SAGE,
WHO HAS TO DUCK HIS HEAD
WHEN THE MOON IS LOW,
KEEPS DROPPING KEYS ALL
NIGHT LONG
FOR THE
BEAUTIFUL
ROWDY
PRISONERS.
~HAFIZ