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For Friendship to Be Revolutionary

Sever

Summer 2013

I hate you all. I hate your broken friendship. I hate your pretensions of being revolutionary. Your complacency. I hate how you've been defeated. I hate how you've lost that string of possibility we used to follow through the streets and across our miserable lives, how you've forgotten, how you've made the easier choice, and how this is starting to feel like high school all over again.

I hate how you talk about community when there could be nothing further from the truth. I hate how you don't talk about community when it's imminent, when all you have to do is reach out and grab it. And if you seized it, I'd still be on the outside, peering in, and hating, but how much more beautiful would that be than my present tableau.

I hate how theories become sand castles in your clever hands, or team colors you wear proudly on your head. I hate how you forget the prisoners unless they wear the same colors, unless they are pennants in your sand castle, forgetting—even when you remember them—how you share their imprisonment.

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I hate how you forget the crazy ones, how you spurn us because we're no fun, how you suddenly celebrate us when we're back in vogue, when our craziness becomes revolutionary with a capital R. I hate how you forget the friends who took care of you when life kicked you in the teeth, who are always there, who ask you how you feel and want to know the terrible truth, who remember that in the thick of it even warriors still need to eat. They are the ones who keep this struggle going.

I hate how you go rigid and let your possible self die. It was that possibility I fell in love with. The way friendship meant more to you than a congruous misery. The way you held me after I cut myself open to let out all that burning blood. The way you strode forward, tiny you, and bashed those two riot cops on the head with a wooden pole because they were coming up on our flank and you wanted to protect all of us. The way you tell me about plants and their uses, and send me tinctures for what ails me.

I love the way how when I write something, you adorn it as though the words were your own. The way you always keep in touch with people who think differently, not like a politician, but because you would bend your long body to the earth and become a bridge for us to attack and retreat over.

The way you ask me what I think and challenge me, the way the books you read become books I have read, and the thoughts I string together come back to me from your own mind.

The way we can always decide who will take the spraypaint and who will take the hammer. The way you kiss me. The way you touch my body as though it weren't this broken thing. The way you teach me to suck out the poison so I can love those I love and hate those I hate and not get it mixed up.

I fell in love with the way you'll always be my look-out when I got the rage. The way you play with fire. The way you're braver than me. The way you carry a new world in your heart, as much as you deny believing in anything as fanciful as a new world. I love how friendship is revolutionary to you.

But we can't let that become a dictum. We're joyous in the riot and all the other days we drift apart. That's not enough. Every fucking day has to be our commune, whether it can yield a riot or only offer us a quiet moment together.

So let's throw down for friendship. Throw down for strangers. Throw down for the lost commune. Let's throw down for memory, throw down for craziness, throw down for theory, for beauty, for healing, for sexiness, for survival.

Let's throw down for dead pigs. Let's throw down for the lost skills of sabotage and the lost art of living well.

Let's throw down for stories, throw down for imagination. Let's throw down for the riot, and especially for the day after.

Let's throw down for life, for all of us, and for every moment in this wilderness of misery, this labyrinth of estrangement, in order to become, and truly be, friends.