

## **Love as a Series of Warnings; A Prayer for What Our Love Will Look Like**

This writing is inspired by a text message that I sent to a friend of mine in November who is gender nonconforming after they told me that they were worried about their safety in public.

What if all of our expressions of love become warnings? What if the kindest gesture possible is harm reduction? This is not an expression of defeat, but a beginning of a collective plan for survival.

[PAUSE]

What if the sweetest thing you could say to a loved one becomes directions for how to survive?

What if a lovenote becomes directions to a trapdoor?

What if a gentle touch becomes an arm across the chest to prevent a fist fight?

What if a slow dance becomes dressing a full-body-wound?

What if a kiss becomes an overly bitten tongue?

What if holding hands becomes a way for us not to collapse?

What if a whisper in the middle of the night becomes a quiet promise of solidarity?

What if an embrace becomes a way to shield each others bodies from harm?

What if a lovenote becomes directions to a trapdoor?

What if a gift becomes a key to that trap door?

What if sex ceases to be respected and becomes only a weapon?

What if laughing together becomes howling together in madness?

What if a caress becomes the calculated space between us?

What if being held becomes being put back together over and over again?

What if that glue becomes the glue to mend our overly bitten tongues?

What if believing becomes all of science ?

What if nourishment becomes taking inventory of the daily practice of avoiding harm?

The directions to a trapdoor

An arm across the chest before a fight

A full-body-wound

A bitten tongue

way for us not to collapse

Solidarity

Away

To shield each others bodies from harm

For us not to collapse

In solidarity

From howling madness

To be anything but a weapon

Together

Away

The calculated space between us

Our overly bitten tongues

To practice, to strategize

Together

Away

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What if believing becomes all of science ?

What if nourishment becomes eating the daily practice of avoidance of harm?

What if the sweetest thing you could say to a loved one becomes a warning?

What if a silhouette becomes a the closest we get to recognizing each other?

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