



*Donald Trump, with Governor Mike Pence, makes an address, at around 3 A.M. on November 9th, at the New York Hilton Midtown, after becoming the President-elect.*

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## A DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION

By **George Packer**

Four decades ago, Watergate revealed the potential of the modern Presidency for abuse of power on a vast scale. It also showed that a strong democracy can overcome even the worst illness ravaging its body. When Richard Nixon used the instruments of government to destroy political opponents, hide financial misdoings, and deceive the public about the Vietnam War, he very nearly got away with it. What stopped his crime spree was democratic institutions: the press, which pursued the story from the original break-in all the way to the Oval Office; the courts, which exposed the extent of criminality and later ruled impartially against Nixon's claims of executive privilege; and Congress, which held revelatory hearings, and whose House Judiciary Committee voted on a bipartisan basis to impeach the President. In crucial agencies of Nixon's own Administration, including the F.B.I. (whose deputy director, Mark Felt, turned out to be Deep Throat, the *Washington Post's* key source), officials fought the infection from inside. None of these institutions could have functioned without the vitalizing power of public opinion. Within months of reëlecting Nixon by the largest margin in history, Americans began to gather around the consensus that their President was a crook who had to go.

President Donald Trump should be given every chance to break his campaign promise to govern as an autocrat. But, until now, no one had ever won the office by pledging to ignore the rule of law and to jail his opponent. Trump has the temperament of a leader who doesn't distinguish between his private desires and demons and the public interest. If he's true to his word, he'll ignore the Constitution, by imposing a religious test on immigrants and citizens alike. He'll go after his critics in the press, with or without the benefit of libel law. He'll force those below him in the chain of command to violate the code of military justice, by torturing terrorist suspects and killing their next of kin. He'll turn federal prosecutors, agents, even judges if he can, into personal tools of grievance and revenge.

All the pieces are in place for the abuse of power, and it could happen quickly. There will be precious few checks on President Trump. His party, unlike Nixon's, will control the legislative as well as the executive branch, along with two-thirds of

governorships and statehouses. Trump's advisers, such as Newt Gingrich, are already vowing to go after the federal employees' union, and breaking it would give the President sweeping power to bend the bureaucracy to his will and whim. The Supreme Court will soon have a conservative majority. Although some federal courts will block flagrant violations of constitutional rights, Congress could try to impeach the most independent-minded judges, and Trump could replace them with loyalists.

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But, beyond these partisan advantages, something deeper is working in Trump's favor, something that he shrewdly read and exploited during the campaign. The democratic institutions that held Nixon to account have lost their strength since the nineteen-seventies—eroded from within by poor leaders and loss of nerve, undermined from without by popular distrust. Bipartisan congressional action on behalf of the public good sounds as quaint as antenna TV. The press is reviled, financially desperate, and undergoing a crisis of faith about the very efficacy of gathering facts. And public opinion? Strictly speaking, it no longer exists. “All right we are two nations,” John Dos Passos wrote, in his “U.S.A.” trilogy.

Among the institutions in decline are the political parties. This, too, was both intuited and accelerated by Trump. In succession, he crushed two party establishments and ended two dynasties. The Democratic Party claims half the country, but it's hollowed out at the core. Hillary Clinton became the sixth Democratic Presidential candidate in the past seven elections to win the popular vote; yet during Barack Obama's Presidency the Party lost both houses of Congress, fourteen governorships, and thirty state legislatures, comprising more than nine hundred seats. The Party's leaders are all past the official retirement age, other than Obama, who has governed as the charismatic and enlightened head of an atrophying body. Did Democrats even notice? More than Republicans, they tend to turn out only when they're inspired. The Party has allowed personality and demography to take the place of political organizing.

The immediate obstacle in Trump's way will be New York's Charles Schumer and his minority caucus of forty-eight senators. During Obama's Presidency, Republican senators exploited ancient rules in order to put up massive resistance. Filibusters and holds became routine ways of taking budgets hostage and blocking appointments. Democratic senators can slow, though not stop, pieces of the Republican agenda if they find the nerve to behave like their nihilistic opponents, further damaging the institution for short-term gain. It would be ugly, but the alternative seems like a sucker's game.

In the long run, the Democratic Party faces two choices. It can continue to collapse until it's transformed into something new, like the nineteenth-century Whigs, forerunners of the Republican Party. Or it can rebuild itself from the ground up. Not every four years but continuously; not with celebrity endorsements but on school boards and town councils; not by creating more virtual echo chambers but by learning again how to talk and listen to other Americans, especially those who elected Trump because they felt ignored and left behind. President Trump is almost certain to betray them. The country will need an opposition capable of pointing that out.

## HEALTH OF THE NATION

By Atul Gawande

How dependent are our fundamental values—values such as decency, reason, and compassion—on the fellow we’ve elected President? Maybe less than we imagine. To be sure, the country voted for a leader who lives by the opposite code—it will be a long and dark winter—but the signs are that voters were not rejecting these values. They were rejecting élites, out of fear and fury that, when it came to them, these values had been abandoned.

Nearly seventy per cent of working-age Americans lack a bachelor’s degree. Many of them saw an establishment of politicians, professors, and corporations that has failed to offer, or even to seem very interested in, a vision of the modern world that provides them with a meaningful place of respect and worth.

I grew up in Ohio, in a small town in the poorest county in the state, and talked after the election to Jim Young, a longtime family friend there. He’d spent thirty-five years at a local animal-feed manufacturer, working his way up from a feed bagger to a truck driver and, in his fifties, a manager, making thirteen dollars an hour. Along the way, the company was sold to ever-larger corporations, until an executive told him that the company was letting the older staff go (along with their health-care and pension costs). Jim found odd jobs to keep him going until he could claim his Social Security benefits.

In the end, Jim said, he didn’t vote. Last year, his son, who was born with spina

bifida, died, at the age of thirty-three, after his case was mismanaged in the local emergency room. Jim has a daughter in her forties, who works at Walmart and still lives at home, and another daughter trying to raise three kids on her husband's income as a maintenance man at a local foundry and her work at an insurance company. Jim lives in a world that doesn't seem to care whether he and his family make it or not. And he couldn't see what Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, or any other politician had to offer that would change that.

But he still believes in our American ideals, and his worry, like mine, is that those now in national power will further betray them. Repealing Obamacare, which has provided coverage to twenty-two million people, including Jim's family members; cutting safety-net programs; downgrading hard-won advances in civil liberties and civil rights—these things will make the lives of those left out only meaner and harder.

To a large extent, though, institutions closer to home are what secure and sustain our values. This is the time to strengthen those institutions, to better include the seventy per cent who have been forsaken. Our institutions of fair-minded journalism, of science and scholarship, and of the arts matter more now than ever. In municipalities and state governments, people are eager to work on the hard problems—whether it's making sure that people don't lose their home if they get sick, or that wages are lifted, or that the reality of climate change is addressed. Years before Obamacare, Massachusetts passed a health-reform law that covers ninety-seven per cent of its residents, and leaders of both parties have affirmed that they will work to maintain those policies regardless of what a Trump Administration does. Other states will follow this kind of example.

Then, there are the institutions even closer to our daily lives. Our hospitals and schools didn't suddenly have Reaganite values in the eighties, or Clintonian ones in the nineties. They have evolved their own ethics, in keeping with American ideals. That's why we physicians have resisted suggestions that we refuse to treat undocumented immigrants who come into the E.R., say, or that we not talk to

parents about the safety of guns in the home. The helping professions will stand by their norms. The same goes for the typical workplace. Lord knows, there are disastrous, exploitative employers, but Trump, with his behavior toward women and others, would be an H.R. nightmare; in most offices, he wouldn't last a month as an employee. For many Americans, the workplace has helped narrow the gap between our professed values and our everyday actions. "Stronger together" could probably have been the slogan of your last work retreat. It's how we succeed.

As the new Administration turns to governing, the mismatch between its proffered solutions and our aspirations and ideals must be made apparent. Take health care. Eliminating Obamacare isn't going to stop the unnerving rise in families' health-care costs; it will worsen it. There are only two ways to assure people that if they get cancer or diabetes (or pregnant) they can afford the care they need: a single-payer system or a heavily regulated private one, with the kind of mandates, exchanges, and subsidies that Obama signed into law. The governor of Kentucky, Matt Bevin, was elected last year on a promise to dismantle Obamacare—only to stall when he found out that doing so would harm many of those who elected him. Republicans have talked of creating high-risk insurance pools and loosening state regulations, but neither tactic would do much to help the people who have been left out, like Jim Young's family. If the G.O.P. sticks to its "repeal and replace" pledge, it will probably end Obama's exchanges and subsidies, and embrace large Medicaid grants to the states—laying the groundwork, ironically, for single-payer government coverage.

Yes, those with bad or erratic judgment will make bad or erratic choices. But it's through the smaller-scale institutions of our daily lives that we can most effectively check the consequences of such choices. The test is whether the gap between what we preach and what we practice shrinks or expands for the nation as a whole. Our job will be to hold those in power to account for that result, including the future of the seventy per cent—the left out and the left behind. Decency, reason, and compassion require no less.

## BRYANT PARK: A MEMOIR

By Hilary Mantel

The day before Election Day, the weather in New York was more like May than November. In hot sun, gloved ice-skaters, obedient to the calendar, meandered across the rink in Bryant Park, which showed itself ready for winter with displays of snowflakes and stars. It was a great afternoon to be an alien, ticket in your pocket, checked in already at J.F.K., and leaving the country before it could elect Donald Trump. Breakfast television had begged viewers to call the number onscreen to vote on whether Mrs. Clinton should be prosecuted as a criminal. Press 1 for yes, 2 for no. “Should Hillary get special treatment?” the voice-over asked. There was no option for jailing Trump.

*“I’m sorry, sir, but you needed to order the kosher meal when you were abducted.”*

During his campaign, Trump threatened unspecified punishments for women who tried to abort a child. We watched him, in the second debate, prowling behind his opponent, back and forth with lowered head, belligerent and looming, while she moved within her legitimate space, returning to her lectern after each response: tightly smiling, trying to be reasonable, trying to be impervious. It was an indecent mimicry of what has happened at some point to almost every woman. She becomes aware of something brutal hovering, on the periphery of her vision: if she is alone in the street, what should she do? I willed Mrs. Clinton to turn and give a name to what we could all see. I willed Mrs. Clinton to raise an arm like a goddess, and point to the place her rival came from, and send him back there, into his own space, like a whimpering dog.

Not everything, of course, is apparent to the eye. The psyche has its hidden life and

so do the streets. Midtown, the subway gratings puff out their hot breath, testament to a busy subterranean life; but you could not guess that millions of books are housed under Bryant Park, and that beneath the ground runs a system of train tracks, like toys for a studious giant. Activated by a scholar's desire or whim, the volumes career on rails, in red wagons, toward the readers of the New York Public Library. Ignorant pedestrians jink and swerve, while below them the earth stirs. We are oblivious of information until we are ready for it. One day, we feel a resonance, from the soles of the feet to the cranium. Without mediation, without apology, we read ourselves, and know what we know.

There are some women who, the moment they have conceived a child, are aware of it—just as you sense if you're being watched or followed. I have never had a child, but once in my life, a long time back and for a single day, I thought I was pregnant. I was twenty-three years old, three years a wife. I had no plans at that stage for a child. But my predictable cycle had gone askew, and one morning I felt as if some activity had commenced behind my ribs. It wasn't breathing, or digestion, or the thudding of my heart.

I lived in the North of England then. My husband was a teacher, and it must have been half-term holiday, because we went into the city to meet a friend and spend the afternoon with his parents, who were visiting from rural Cornwall. They wondered why so many grand buildings were painted black, why even gravestones appeared to be streaked and smeared. That, we explained, was not paint—it was two centuries of working grime. They were startled, mortified by their ignorance. To them, heavy industry was something archaic, which you saw in a book. They didn't know that its residue fluffed the lungs like Satan's pillows, that it thickened walls and souped the air.

At lunchtime with my party of friends, I could not eat, or stay still, or find any way to be comfortable. I felt weak and light-headed. Heat swept over me, then chill. On our way home in early evening, we called on my mother-in-law, who was a nurse. I wonder if you might be expecting? she said. In the kitchen, my husband put his arms

around me. We didn't officially want a baby, but I saw that, at least for this moment, we did. None of us knew the next step. Were the drugstore tests reliable? Would it be better to go straight to the doctor? My mother-in-law said, I don't know what the right way is, but I'll find out first thing, as soon as I get into work.

But by the time I left her house the space of possibility that had opened inside me was filling with pain. Soon I was shaking. As the evening wore on, the pain expanded to fill every cavity in my body. Even my bones felt hollow, as if something were growing inside and pushing them out. In the small hours, I began to bleed. The episode was over. No test would ever be needed. I never had that particular set of feelings again, that distinctive physiological derangement. But women are full of potential. Thwart them one way and they will find another. What never left me was the feeling that something was knocking inside my chest, asking to be let out. A sensory error, I presumed. Only recently did I have the thought that it might have been a real pregnancy—an unviable, ectopic conception. Such a mistake of nature can result in a surgical emergency, even sudden death. It is possible I had a lucky escape, from a peril that was barely there.

A few days after this thought occurred, I had, not a dream, but a shadowy waking vision. It seemed to me that a bubble floated some three feet from my body, attached to me by an almost invisible thread. In the bubble was a tiny child, which asked my forgiveness. In its semi-life, lived for a single day, it had caused nothing, known nothing, created nothing other than pain; so it wanted me to pardon it, before it could drift away.

I do not cede the child any reality. Nor do I think it was an illusion. I recognize it as some species of truth, light as metaphor. It had not occurred to me that there was anything to forgive—that anything was ensouled that could grieve, that could endure through the years. But there was a hairline connection to that day in my early life, and at last I could cut the tie and it could sail free.

It was imagination, no doubt. Imagination is not to be scorned. Fragile, fallible, it goes on working in the world. Since I cut that thread, I have been more sure than ever that it is wrong to come between a woman and a child that may or may not elect to be born. Campaigners talk about “a woman’s right to choose,” as if she were picking a sweet from a box or a plum from a tree. It’s not that sort of choice. It’s often made for us. Something unrealized gives the slip to existence, before time can take a grip on it. Something we hoped for everts itself, turns back into the body, or disperses into the air. But, whatever happens, it happens in a private space. Let the woman choose, if the choice is hers. The state should not stalk her. The priest should seal his lips. The law should not interfere.

That whole week leading up to the election, it was warm enough to bask on garden chairs. The market at Grand Central displayed American plenitude: transparent caskets of juicy berries, plump with a dusky purple bloom; pyramids of sushi; sheets of aged steak, lolling in its blood. By the flitting light of the concourse, I checked out the destination boards of another life I could have lived. Twenty years ago, my husband worked for I.B.M. It was projected that we would move to its offices in White Plains. For a week or two, we imagined it, and then the plan disintegrated. In that life, I would have taken the train and arrived amid Grand Central’s sedate splendors, and walked about in my Manhattan shoes. Did the book stacks exist then? Surely I would have had foreknowledge, and felt the books stirring beneath Forty-second Street, down where the worms turn.

As the polls were closing, I was somewhere over the Atlantic. As we flew into the light, one of the air crew came with coffee and a bulletin, with a fallen face and news that shocked the rows around. They don’t think, she said, that Hillary can catch him now. I took off my watch to adjust it, unsure how many centuries to set it back. What would Donald Trump offer now? Salem witch trials? Public hangings? The lass who had prepared us for the news was gathering the blankets from the night’s vigil. Crinkling her brow, she said, “What I don’t comprehend is, who voted for him?”

No one we know—that's the trouble. For decades, the nice and the good have been talking to each other, chitchat in every forum going, ignoring what stews beneath: envy, anger, lust. On both sides of the ocean, the *bien-pensants* put their fingers in their ears and smiled and bowed at one another, like nodding dogs or painted puppets. They thought we had outgrown the deadly sins. They thought we were rational sophisticates who could defer gratification. They thought they had a majority, and they screened out the roaring from the cages outside their gates, or, if they heard it, they thought they could silence it with, as it may be, a little quantitative easing, a package of special measures. Primal dreads have gone unacknowledged. It is not only the crude blustering of the Trump campaign that has poisoned public discourse but the liberals' indulgence of the marginal and the whimsical, the habit of letting lies pass, of ignoring the living truth in favor of grovelling and meaningless apologies to the dead. So much has become unsayable, as if by not speaking of our grosser aspects we abolish them. It is a failure of the imagination. In this election as in any other, no candidate was shining white; politics is not a pursuit for angels. Yet it doesn't seem much to ask—a world where a woman can live without jumping at shadows, without the crawling apprehension of something nasty constellating over her shoulder. Mr. Trump has promised a world where white men and rich men run the world their way, greed fuelled by undaunted ignorance. He must make good on his promises, for his supporters will soon be hungry. He, the ambulant id, must nurse his own offspring, and feel their teeth.

At Dublin airport by breakfast time, the sour jokes were flying over the plastic chairs: there'll be plenty of work for Irishmen now—if you want a wall built, the Paddies have not lost the skills. I wanted to see a woman lead the great nation, so my own spine could be straighter this blustery sunny morning. I fear the ship of state is sinking, and we are thrashing in saltwater, snared in our own ropes and nets. Someone must strike out for the surface and clear air. It is possible to cut free from some entanglements, some error and painful beginnings, whether you are a soul or a whole nation.

The weekend before the election, we were in rural Ohio. The moon was a tender

crescent, the nights frosty, and the dawns glowed with the crimson and violet of the fall. On Sunday morning, in a cloudless sky, a bird was drifting on the currents, circling. My husband said, “You know they have eagles in this part of the country?” We watched in silence as it cruised high above. “I don’t know if it is an eagle,” he said at last. “But I know that bird is bigger than you think.”

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## FOUR-CORNERED FLYOVER

**By Peter Hessler**

**T**he day after Donald Trump’s victory, Susan Watson and Gail Jossi celebrated with glasses of red wine at the True Grit Café, in Ridgway, Colorado. Watson, the chair of the Ouray County Republican Central Committee, is a self-described “child of the sixties,” a retired travel agent, and a former supporter of the Democratic Party. Forty years ago, she voted for Jimmy Carter. Jossi also had a previous incarnation as a Democrat. In 1960, she volunteered for John F. Kennedy’s Presidential campaign. “I walked for Kennedy,” she said. “And then I walked for Goldwater.” These days, she’s a retired rancher, and until recently she was a prominent official of the Republican Party in Ouray County. “This is the first time in forty years that I haven’t been a precinct captain,” she said. “I’m fed up with the Republican Party.”

Initially, neither of the women had backed Trump. “I just didn’t care for him,” Jossi said. “I loved Dr. Carson.”

“I was a Scott Walker,” Watson said. “I thought a ticket with Walker and Fiorina

would have been great.” Of Trump, she said, “He grew on me. He seemed to be getting more in tune with the people. The more these thousands and thousands of people showed up, the more he realized that this is real. This is not reality TV.”

Jossi didn’t begin to support Trump until September. “I couldn’t listen to his speeches,” she said. “His repetition. He’s not a politician. My mother and my husband have been big Trump supporters from the beginning, but I wasn’t.” Over time, though, the candidate’s rawness appealed to her, because she believed that he could shake up Washington. “After they’ve been in office, they become too slick,” she said. “I liked that unscripted aspect.”

Ouray is a rural county in southwestern Colorado, a state whose politics have become increasingly complex. On election maps, Colorado looks simple—a four-cornered flyover, perfectly squared off. But the state is composed of many elements: a long history of ranching and mining; a sudden influx of young, outdoors-oriented residents; a total population that is more than a fifth Hispanic. On Tuesday, Coloradans favored Hillary Clinton by a narrow majority, and they endorsed an amendment that will raise the minimum wage by more than forty per cent. They also chose to reject an amendment, promoted by Democratic legislators, that would have removed a provision in the state constitution that allows for slavery and the involuntary servitude of prisoners. If this seems contradictory—raising the minimum wage while protecting the possibility of slavery—it should be noted that the vote was even closer than Clinton versus Trump. In an exceedingly tight race, slavery won 50.6 per cent of the popular vote.

“The slavery thing was ridiculous,” Watson said.

“If it changes the constitution, then I vote no,” Jossi said.

“This is something that they do to get people to go out and vote,” Watson said.

“That’s what they did with marijuana.”

“I voted for medical,” Jossi said. “Not recreational.”

“Not recreational,” Watson agreed.

*“This is probably how they keep getting in.”*

Full disclosure: recreational. But during this election, while standing in a voting booth in the Ouray County Courthouse, at an elevation of seven thousand seven hundred and ninety-two feet, I experienced a sensation of vertigo that may have been shared by 50.6 per cent of my fellow-Coloradans. On a ballot full of odd and confusing measures, I couldn't untangle the language of Amendment T: “Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado constitution concerning the removal of the exception to the prohibition of slavery and involuntary servitude when used as punishment for persons duly convicted of a crime?” Does yes mean yes, or does yes mean no? The election of 2016 disturbs me in many ways, and one of them is that I honestly cannot remember whether I voted for or against slavery.

This election has given me a renewed appreciation for chaos, confusion, and the limitlessly internal world of the individual. Most analysis will shuffle voters into neat demographic groups, each of them with four corners, perfectly squared off. But there's something static about these categories—female, rural, white—whereas a conversation with people like Watson and Jossi reveals just how much a person's ideas can change during the course of decades or even weeks. For an unstable electorate, Trump was the perfect candidate, because he was also a moving target. It was possible for supporters to fixate on any specific message or characteristic while ignoring everything else. At rallies, when people chanted, “Build a wall!” and “Lock her up!,” these statements impressed me as real, tangible courses of action, endorsed by a faceless mob. But when I spoke with individual supporters the dynamic changed: the person had a face, while the proposed action seemed vague and symbolic.

“I think that was a metaphor,” Jossi said, when I asked about the border wall.

“It’s a metaphor for immigration laws being enforced,” Watson said.

Neither of the women, like most other Trump supporters I met, had any interest in the construction of an actual wall. I asked them about Clinton’s e-mail scandal. “I think she’ll be pardoned,” Watson said.

“I’m done with hearing about it,” Jossi said with a shrug. “I just want her gone.”

Trump’s descriptions and treatment of women didn’t seem to bother them. “I’m a strong enough woman,” Watson said. I often heard similar comments from female Trump supporters—in their eyes, it was a show of strength to ignore the candidate’s crudeness and transgressions, because only the weak would react with outrage.

It was hard to imagine a President entering office with less accountability. For supporters, this was central to his appeal—he owed nothing to the establishment. But he also owed nothing to the people who had voted for him. Supporters cherry-picked specific statements or qualities that appealed to them, but they didn’t attempt an assessment of the whole, because, given Trump’s lack of discipline, this was impossible. Does yes mean yes, or does yes mean no?

“Was Donald the right guy?” Watson asked. “I don’t know. But he was the alpha male on the stage with all the other candidates. He was not afraid to say the things that we were thinking.” She laughed and said, “I fought for the Equal Rights Amendment in the seventies. You have to evolve as a human being.”

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# MOURNING FOR WHITENESS

By Toni Morrison

This is a serious project. All immigrants to the United States know (and knew) that if they want to become real, authentic Americans they must reduce their fealty to their native country and regard it as secondary, subordinate, in order to emphasize their whiteness. Unlike any nation in Europe, the United States holds whiteness as the unifying force. Here, for many people, the definition of “Americanness” is color.

Under slave laws, the necessity for color rankings was obvious, but in America today, post-civil-rights legislation, white people’s conviction of their natural superiority is being lost. Rapidly lost. There are “people of color” everywhere, threatening to erase this long-understood definition of America. And what then? Another black President? A predominantly black Senate? Three black Supreme Court Justices? The threat is frightening.

In order to limit the possibility of this untenable change, and restore whiteness to its former status as a marker of national identity, a number of white Americans are sacrificing themselves. They have begun *to do things they clearly don’t really want to be doing*, and, to do so, they are (1) abandoning their sense of human dignity and (2) risking the appearance of cowardice. Much as they may hate their behavior, and know full well how craven it is, they are willing to kill small children attending Sunday school and slaughter churchgoers who invite a white boy to pray. Embarrassing as the obvious display of cowardice must be, they are willing to set fire to churches, and to start firing in them while the members are at prayer. And, shameful as such demonstrations of weakness are, they are willing to shoot black children in the street.

To keep alive the perception of white superiority, these white Americans tuck their heads under cone-shaped hats and American flags and deny themselves the dignity of face-to-face confrontation, training their guns on the unarmed, the innocent, the

scared, on subjects who are running away, exposing their unthreatening backs to bullets. Surely, shooting a fleeing man in the back hurts the presumption of white strength? The sad plight of grown white men, crouching beneath their (better) selves, to slaughter the innocent during traffic stops, to push black women's faces into the dirt, to handcuff black children. Only the frightened would do that. Right?

These sacrifices, made by supposedly tough white men, who are prepared to abandon their humanity out of fear of black men and women, suggest the true horror of lost status.

It may be hard to feel pity for the men who are making these bizarre sacrifices in the name of white power and supremacy. Personal debasement is not easy for white people (especially for white men), but to retain the conviction of their superiority to others—especially to black people—they are willing to risk contempt, and to be reviled by the mature, the sophisticated, and the strong. If it weren't so ignorant and pitiful, one could mourn this collapse of dignity in service to an evil cause.

The comfort of being “naturally better than,” of not having to struggle or demand civil treatment, is hard to give up. The confidence that you will not be watched in a department store, that you are the preferred customer in high-end restaurants—these social inflections, belonging to whiteness, are greedily relished.

So scary are the consequences of a collapse of white privilege that many Americans have flocked to a political platform that supports and translates violence against the defenseless as strength. These people are not so much angry as terrified, with the kind of terror that makes knees tremble.

On Election Day, how eagerly so many white voters—both the poorly educated and the well educated—embraced the shame and fear sowed by Donald Trump. The candidate whose company has been sued by the Justice Department for not renting apartments to black people. The candidate who questioned whether Barack Obama

was born in the United States, and who seemed to condone the beating of a Black Lives Matter protester at a campaign rally. The candidate who kept black workers off the floors of his casinos. The candidate who is beloved by David Duke and endorsed by the Ku Klux Klan.

William Faulkner understood this better than almost any other American writer. In “Absalom, Absalom,” incest is less of a taboo for an upper-class Southern family than acknowledging the one drop of black blood that would clearly soil the family line. Rather than lose its “whiteness” (once again), the family chooses murder.

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*Hillary Clinton speaking at a campaign rally at the Sunrise Theatre, in Fort Pierce, Florida, on September 30th.*

## THE DARK-MONEY CABINET

**By Jane Mayer**

**D**uring the Presidential primaries, Donald Trump mocked his Republican rivals as “puppets” for flocking to a secretive fund-raising session sponsored by Charles and David Koch, the billionaire co-owners of the energy conglomerate Koch Industries. Affronted, the Koch brothers, whose political spending has made their name a shorthand for special-interest clout, withheld their financial support from Trump. But on Tuesday night David Koch was reportedly among the revellers at Trump’s victory party in a Hilton Hotel in New York.

Trump campaigned by attacking the big donors, corporate lobbyists, and political-action committees as “very corrupt.” In a tweet on October 18th, he promised, “I will Make Our Government Honest Again—believe me. But first I’m going to have to #DrainTheSwamp.” His DrainTheSwamp hashtag became a rallying cry for supporters intent on ridding Washington of corruption. But Ann Ravel, a Democratic member of the Federal Elections Commission who has championed reform of political money, says that “the alligators are multiplying.”

Many of Trump’s transition-team members are the corporate insiders he vowed to disempower. On Friday, Vice-President-elect Mike Pence, the new transition-team chair, announced that Marc Short, who until recently ran Freedom Partners, the Kochs’ political-donors group, would serve as a “senior adviser.” The influence of the Kochs and their allies is particularly clear in the areas of energy and the environment. The few remarks Trump made on these issues during the campaign reflected the fondest hopes of the oil, gas, and coal producers. He vowed to withdraw from the international climate treaty negotiated last year in Paris, remove regulations that curb carbon emissions, legalize oil drilling and mining on federal lands and in seas, approve the Keystone XL pipeline, and weaken the Environmental Protection Agency.

For policy and personnel advice regarding the Department of Energy, Trump is relying on Michael McKenna, the president of the lobbying firm MWR Strategies. McKenna’s clients include Koch Companies Public Sector, a division of Koch Industries. According to Politico, McKenna also has ties to the American Energy Alliance and its affiliate, the Institute for Energy Research. These nonprofit groups purport to be grassroots organizations, but they run ads advocating corporate-friendly energy policies, without disclosing their financial backers. In 2012, Freedom Partners gave \$1.5 million to the American Energy Alliance.

Michael Catanzaro, a partner at the lobbying firm CGCN Group, is the head of Trump’s energy transition team, and has been mentioned as a possible energy czar. Among his clients are Koch Industries and Devon Energy Corporation, a gas-and-

oil company that has made a fortune from vertical drilling and hydraulic fracturing. Another widely discussed candidate is Harold Hamm, the billionaire founder of the shale-oil company Continental Resources, who is a major contributor to the Kochs' fund-raising network. Wenona Hauter, of Food and Water Watch, says that Hamm has "done all he can to subvert the existing rules and regulations."

Myron Ebell, an outspoken climate-change skeptic, heads Trump's transition team for the E.P.A. Ebell runs the energy-and-environmental program at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, an anti-regulatory Washington think tank that hides its sources of financial support but has been funded by fossil-fuel companies, including Exxon-Mobil and Koch Industries. David Schnare, a self-described "free-market environmentalist" who has accused the E.P.A. of having "blood on its hands," is a member of the E.P.A. working group. Schnare is the director of the Center for Energy and the Environment at the Thomas Jefferson Institute, part of a nationwide consortium of anti-government, pro-industry think tanks. He is also the general counsel at the Energy and Environment Legal Institute, which has received funding from coal companies. In 2011, Schnare started hounding the climate scientist Michael Mann, who had been a professor at the University of Virginia, by filing public-records requests demanding to see his unpublished research and his private e-mails. The legal wrangling tied up Mann's work until 2014, when the Virginia Supreme Court ordered Schnare to desist. The Union of Concerned Scientists has described these actions against climate scientists as "harassment."

Norman Eisen, who devised strict conflict-of-interest rules while acting as Obama's ethics czar, says, "If you have people on the transition team with deep financial ties to the industries to be regulated, it raises questions about whether they are serving the public interest or their own interests." He ruled out Obama transition-team members who would have had a conflict of interest in their assigned areas, or even the appearance of one. "We weren't perfect," he said. "But we tried to level the playing field because, let's face it, in the Beltway nexus of corporations and dark money, lobbyists are the delivery mechanism for special-interest influence."

Questions to Trump's transition team about its conflict-of-interest rules went unanswered, as did questions to the lobbyists and industry heads involved. But the composition of the group runs counter to a set of anti-lobbyist proposals that Trump released in October, to be enacted in his first hundred days. It called for a five-year ban on White House and congressional officials becoming lobbyists after they leave public office, and a lifetime ban on White House officials lobbying for a foreign government.

The tenth item on the list of proposals is the Clean Up Corruption in Washington Act, which would implement “new ethics reforms to Drain the Swamp and reduce the corrupting influence of special interests on our politics.” Trevor Potter, who served as the commissioner of the F.E.C. under George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, and is now the president of the Campaign Legal Center, described Trump's ethics proposals as “quite interesting, and quite helpful.” He was puzzled, though, by the vagueness of the “Drain the Swamp” act. “It's a complete black box so far,” Potter said.

Potter wondered if Trump's lack of specificity reflected internal divisions. He noted that Don McGahn, who served as the Trump campaign's attorney, is an opponent of almost all campaign-finance restrictions. “Many on the transition team are registered lobbyists who are deeply invested in the system Trump says he wants to change,” Potter said. “It looks like the lobbyists and special interests are already taking over.”

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**I**f the leader of a government issues an order that men and women below him cannot, in good conscience, enact, what are they to do?

In July, 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, of California, who had stunned the political establishment by leveraging his celebrity and outsider status to reach disaffected voters, was in an embarrassing political predicament. The Governor had brandished a broom at rallies, promising to “sweep out the bureaucracy” and defeat “girlie men” lawmakers who stood in his way. Now the Democratic-led legislature was unable to agree on a budget. So Schwarzenegger adopted a radical tactic: he ordered the state to reduce the pay of nearly two hundred thousand state employees to the federal minimum wage, of \$6.55 an hour, until the legislature met his demands.

The order reached the desk of a bureaucrat named John Chiang, a former tax-law specialist who was the state controller. In that job, Chiang, a forty-six-year-old Democrat, was responsible for issuing paychecks and monitoring cash flow. Born in New York, to immigrants from Taiwan, he had grown up in the Chicago suburbs, in one of the first Asian families in the neighborhood. It was an uneasy mix. On the Chiangs’ garage, people spray-painted “Go home, gook,” “Go home, Jap,” and “Go home, Chink.”

After studying finance, and earning a law degree from Georgetown, Chiang started his career at the Internal Revenue Service in Los Angeles. In 1999, his younger sister, Joyce, a lawyer for the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Washington, went missing. Three months later, her remains were found on the banks of the Potomac. The death was ruled a homicide, but no one was charged. It altered her brother’s life. “I will return to dust,” he said later. “You just want to use this life to do some good.” In 2006, Chiang ran for controller, upset a Democratic favorite in the primary, and won.

When he received Schwarzenegger's order to reduce the pay of state workers, Chiang was surprised. Under Schwarzenegger's plan, the workers would receive their full salaries once a budget was approved. But California had enough cash in its accounts, and, in Chiang's view, the Governor's move could violate the Fair Labor Standards Act. Moreover, he thought, it was cruel. It was the height of the financial crisis, and mortgage defaults were up more than a hundred per cent over the previous year.

"I wanted Governor Schwarzenegger to help lead California through this fiscal crisis," Chiang told me last week. "Here's a man who worked hard, he's been blessed, but, more important, he's been entrusted by the voters of California to lead in good and bad times. And to think that you take action that would endanger thousands of public servants just struck me as beyond the pale."

Chiang refused to implement the Governor's executive order. In a statement at the time, he said that the order was "nothing more than a poorly devised strategy to put pressure on the Legislature." At a rally of state workers, Chiang called them "innocent victims of a political struggle."

Schwarzenegger sued Chiang's office. In court papers, Chiang replied that, even if he wanted to comply, he would need ten months to reconfigure the state's computer system. As the case wound through the judicial system, Chiang became, to some, an unlikely hero. The Sacramento *Bee*, adapting the iconic image of a protester at Tiananmen Square, published a cartoon that depicted Chiang as a lone resister before a line of Hummers, with "Arnold" stencilled on the bumper of the lead vehicle. The Liberal O.C., a progressive blog, nicknamed him "the Controllernator." Chiang's resistance became a case study in how a bureaucracy stymies the requests of an executive who offends its professionalism and sense of mission. When General Dwight D. Eisenhower was preparing to take office, Harry Truman predicted, "Poor Ike—it won't be a bit like the Army. He'll find it very frustrating."

Professor Eric Posner, of the University of Chicago Law School, is the co-author of “The Executive Unbound,” a chronicle of the expanding power of the U.S. Presidency. Last week, after Donald Trump won the election, Posner told me that, with both houses of Congress in Republican control, the greatest obstacle to the President’s use of power would be not the separation of powers but, more likely, the isolated actions of individuals in government. “Sometimes they won’t actually do what the President tells them to do, or they drag their feet, or they’ll leak to the press to try to embarrass him,” Posner told me. “That’s pretty unusual, because when that happens the employees risk losing their job, or even going to jail if they leak confidential information.”

Because Chiang held an independently elected office, his latitude to resist was far greater than it is for most government employees. The consequences of resistance can be dire. In 1981, nearly thirteen thousand air-traffic controllers challenged the new President, Ronald Reagan, by staging an illegal strike. Reagan fired them and broke their union.

Schwarzenegger’s attempts to impose his will eventually foundered. As a candidate, he reached beyond usual Republicans by vowing to create “fantastic” jobs and by thrilling audiences, at his rallies, with a soundtrack that featured Twisted Sister’s “We’re Not Gonna Take It” (a song that Trump used at his rallies). But Schwarzenegger, who had never held public office, proved incapable of reorganizing government, defeating labor unions, capping state spending, or weakening teacher tenure. His relationship with the G.O.P. soured. In 2011, he left office with his public approval rating at near-historic lows. The lawsuit against Chiang remained officially unresolved until Schwarzenegger’s successor, Jerry Brown, dropped the suit. (Chiang permitted himself a modest celebration: “I am pleased and thankful that Governor Brown saw this litigation as a frivolous waste of hard-earned tax dollars.”)

In 2015, Chiang became California’s Treasurer, and he will be a candidate for governor in 2018. When I asked him what lesson he takes from his refusal to obey the orders of the executive, he said, “I think, always, you look deep into your

conscience and then you move from there. People have a sense of why they serve.” He added, “At times, we will prevail; at times, we will fail. But to stand and watch idly and do nothing—I think people will regret if things go along and they didn’t offer up their very best.”

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## THE HIGHEST COURT

**By Jeffrey Toobin**

**T**he Supreme Court operates in counterpoint to the rest of the government. The Justices do not initiate; they respond. Every major political issue of the day eventually winds up in their courtroom, and they either embrace or resist what’s happening in the rest of the world. When Franklin D. Roosevelt pushed the New Deal through Congress, the conservatives on the Court, for a time, fought him to a standstill. When the civil-rights movement gathered steam, the Justices gave first a hesitant and then a fuller endorsement of the cause. But resistance from the Justices never lasts too long. The truism that the Supreme Court follows the election returns happens to be true. Elections have consequences.

For the past eight years, the Court has been called upon to respond to President Obama’s agenda. In certain crucial ways, a majority of the Justices have upheld the work of the Administration, most notably in two cases that posed existential threats to the Affordable Care Act. In other cases, the Court has rebuked the President. In *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, the Court rejected the Administration’s view that the A.C.A. required closely held corporations to subsidize forms of birth control that the owners opposed on religious grounds. Over all, the Court has reflected the fierce

partisan divisions in the country. Conservatives won many cases (striking down campaign-finance regulations and gutting the core of the Voting Rights Act), while liberals won others (expanding gay rights and reaffirming abortion rights). The Trump Presidency will shape the Justices' work even before they decide a case. If Trump succeeds in overturning the Affordable Care Act, the Court's two landmark endorsements of that law, in 2012 and 2015, will become nullities, like rave reviews of a closed restaurant.

George W. Bush, the previous Republican President, had to wait until his second term to make his first appointment to the Supreme Court. Trump will have a vacancy to fill as soon as he takes the oath of office. Antonin Scalia died in February, but Mitch McConnell, the Senate Majority Leader, decreed that the seat would be held open, to be filled by the next President. The voters mostly ignored this brazen defiance of institutional norms, but its consequences, as McConnell intended, have been enormous. In an unusual move for a Presidential candidate, Trump released a list of twenty-one people whom he might consider as nominees. The list includes some curiosities, such as Mike Lee, the senator from Utah (who revealed, the morning after the election, that he had voted for the Independent Evan McMullin), and Margaret Ryan, who serves on the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces. But most are Republican appointees to the federal courts of appeal or state supreme courts, and all appear to be strongly conservative in outlook. If one is nominated and confirmed, the new Justice will probably vote much as Scalia did. McConnell's blockade prevented the creation of the first liberal majority since the Nixon Administration. Instead, there will be a conservative majority of five Justices, with Anthony Kennedy occasionally and John Roberts rarely voting with the liberals.

Confirmation of any Trump nominee should be a mere formality. When Hillary Clinton appeared to be the likely winner, several Republican senators suggested that they would keep Scalia's seat open throughout her term; eight Justices were enough for them. Democrats take a more genteel approach to judicial confirmations of nominees from the opposition party. At confirmation hearings, the senators from the

Democratic minority will doubtless ask the nominee a series of questions about such issues as gay rights, *Roe v. Wade*, and the *Citizens United* case, regarding campaign finance. The nominee will answer with generalities and evasions. Trump's party narrowly controls the Senate, but any Republican defections on a matter of this magnitude are unlikely. Democrats have never mounted a successful filibuster against a Republican Supreme Court nominee, and McConnell would probably abolish the practice if they even tried. So Trump will have his Justice in short order.

The new Court will then begin confronting the Trump agenda. Two issues are likely to stand out. In the period leading up to the 2016 election, Republican-dominated state legislatures passed a series of voter-suppression initiatives, including photo-identification requirements and limitations on early voting and absentee voting. (These efforts may have limited Democratic turnout in several battleground states, including Wisconsin, Ohio, and North Carolina.) Some lower federal courts, especially those with judges appointed by President Obama, began interpreting what was left of the Voting Rights Act as justification for curtailing these practices. A conservative majority on the Court would likely give the states a free hand, which would allow them to enact even greater restrictions.

The other area is immigration. Trump made the building of a wall along the Mexican border and the eviction of roughly eleven million undocumented immigrants the centerpiece of his campaign. He has not detailed how he plans to round up so many people, but he will surely tighten immigration enforcement; just as surely, the targets will turn to the courts for relief. Undocumented immigrants by definition enjoy fewer rights than citizens, and their fate is likely to become a defining issue for the new Court.

Looking farther ahead involves playing a high-stakes game of actuarial roulette. The Court's senior liberals, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer, are eighty-three and seventy-eight, respectively; Kennedy is eighty. The chances for dramatic change on such issues as abortion rights and affirmative action hinge on their continued service. The one certainty about the Court is that it never stands in the way for long.

In broad terms, it reflects the political tenor of its era. If Trump and the ideological tendency he represents remain ascendant, the Court will mirror those views, too, and probably sooner rather than later. Presidents shape Supreme Courts, not the other way around, and it is Donald Trump's turn now.

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## DONALD TRUMP, POET

**By Mary Karr**

**A**t the risk of sounding like a total candy-ass, I swear I have developed P.T.S.D. from the venom of this election. O.K., even before voting season began, I was wobbly enough to be seeing a shrink. But when I confessed to her, a month ago, that I was sleeping less and checking news outlets compulsively, like a rat pushing a bar down for a pellet, she said, “So are a hundred per cent of my patients.” Then she added, “So am I.” A friend’s cardiologist told her that patients had been flooding into his office or calling from emergency rooms with false reports of tachycardia.

Those of us who experienced trauma as children, often at the hands of bullies, felt old wounds open up just hearing Trump’s fierce idiom of outrage. All of us used to be kids. All of us were, at some point, silenced by someone bigger and louder saying, “Wrong, wrong,” but meaning “It’s not what you’re doing that’s wrong—it’s who you *are* that’s wrong.”

Language is key. Trump’s taunting “nyah-nyah”s are the idiom of threat and vengeance. For him, it’s not enough to ban abortion; women who have abortions should be punished. It’s not enough to defeat Hillary Clinton; we have to hate, jail,

and possibly even kill her. Eric Trump responded to David Duke's endorsement not by saying, "We don't want his vote," but with the line "The guy does deserve a bullet."

This violent poetry has been gathering force on our airwaves for decades. It started with shock-jock radio and moved to Fox News. Then, there's the ubiquitous browbeating by social media, which, I suspect, has contributed to the tripling of the suicide rate for adolescent girls in the past fifteen years.

*"I'm doing some reorganizing—are there any of your possessions that you want to keep?"*

It was only a matter of time before a hair-triggered guy took this vernacular to the national political stage. Nasty talk didn't start with Trump, but it was the province of people we all viewed as idiots—schoolyard mobs, certain drunks in bars, guys hollering out of moving cars.

When a Presidential candidate mocks a disabled man or a Muslim family that has sacrificed a son for our country, the behavior is stamped with a big "O.K." Some Trump supporters felt O.K. shoving and hitting protesters. At a Wisconsin football game, a fan wore an Obama mask and a noose.

If you ever doubted the power of poetry, ask yourself why, in any revolution, poets are often the first to be hauled out and shot—whether it's Spanish Fascists murdering García Lorca or Stalin killing Mandelstam. We poets may be crybabies and sissies, but our pens can become nuclear weapons.

Like Trump, I trained early for the gutter brawl. I grew up in a huge state with an "X" in its middle, marking the place where the mouthy and the well-armed crisscross the boundaries of propriety like cattle rustlers. Littler than my cohort, I learned that a verbal bashing had a lingering power that a bloody nose could never compete with. When a boy named Bubba said, "Your mama's a whore," I shot back, "So what? Your nose is flat."

The vicious language of this election has infected the whole country with enough anxiety and vitriol to launch a war. American lawn signs used to be low-key. You might see venomous slogans on bumper stickers, but not where anybody actually lived. In Florida this Halloween, one yard featured black effigies hanging in the trees above a Trump sign. Strange fruit indeed.

Whatever you think of Hillary Clinton, there's no question that she was the more circumspect candidate, and that's partly why her detractors hated her. She was "politically correct." By my yardstick, that means trying not to hurt people's feelings (whether Bubba said something mean about your mother or not). And yet, among a huge portion of our population, this registers not as civility but as insincerity.

We Democrats have mostly tried to follow Clinton's example, but I confess that, among friends, I've often enjoyed making ad-hominem attacks on Trump and his family in a way that—on reflection—shames me. And, certainly, the left has made use of that insidious "If/then" construction that Trump favors (i.e., "If I were President, you'd be in jail"). A putative friend once told me, "If you eat endangered fish, I won't be friends with you anymore." I replied, "If I cared more about a fish than a person, I'd examine my values."

Today, I'm examining my values. As a Buddhist pal said to me on Election Night, "America has spoken." Now it falls to us to listen with gracious and open hearts. This is not giving in or giving up. The hardest thing about democracy is the boring and irritating process of listening to people you don't agree with, which is tolerable only when each side strives not to hurt the other's feelings. To quote my colleague George Saunders, let today be National Attempt to Have an Affectionate / Tender Thought About Someone of the Opposing Political Persuasion Day. And (please, God) every day hereafter as well.

## WARS WITHIN

By Jill Lepore

The beginning of an end is hard to see: the moment when a marriage started to fall apart, the half-sentence of heartless scorn, an unmendable cut; the hour when the first symptoms of a fatal illness set in, dizziness, a subtle blurring of vision, a certain hoarseness; the season when a species of sparrow, trying to fly north, falls, weakened by the heat; and the day when the people of a nation began to lose faith in their form of government. The election of Donald Trump, like all elections, is an ending, the ending of one Presidency and the beginning of another. But, unlike most elections, Trump's election is something different: it ends an era of American idealism, a high-mindedness of rhetoric, if not always of action, which has characterized most twentieth- and twenty-first-century American Presidencies, from F.D.R. to Eisenhower, from Reagan to Obama, from the New Deal order to the long era of civil rights.

The beginning of another, very different end lies quite far back in American history. "The fate of the greatest of all modern Republics trembles in the balance," Frederick Douglass said, in a speech he gave in Philadelphia, in 1862, titled "The Reasons for Our Troubles." Born into slavery, Douglass had escaped in 1838. What astonished him, as the Civil War raged, was how blind Americans were to its origins. "To what cause may we trace our present sad and deplorable condition?" he asked. Americans of Douglass's day blamed the election of Abraham Lincoln, abolitionists, and Southern politicians for the division of the nation. Douglass blamed slavery: "We have sought to bind the chains of slavery on the limbs of the black man, without thinking that at last we should find the other end of that hateful chain about our own necks."

The rupture in the American republic, the division of the American people whose outcome is the election of Donald Trump, cannot be attributed to Donald Trump. Nor can it be attributed to James Comey and the F.B.I. or to the white men who voted in very high numbers for Trump or to the majority of white women who did, too, unexpectedly, or to the African-American and Latino voters who did not give Hillary Clinton the edge they gave Barack Obama. It can't be attributed to the Republican Party's unwillingness to disavow Trump or to the Democratic Party's willingness to promote Clinton or to a media that has careened into a state of chaos. There are many reasons for our troubles. But the deepest reason is inequality: the forms of political, cultural, and economic polarization that have been widening, not narrowing, for decades. Inequality, like slavery, is a chain that binds at both ends.

Trump's election does not mark the end of an era of civil peace: no state has seceded, or will. But, if the nation is not at arms, it is at war with itself and with its ideals. In Douglass's day, the war that was fought over the meaning of the words "liberty" and "equality" claimed the lives of three-quarters of a million Americans. But it ended slavery. When Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, in January, 1863, Douglass was in Boston with "an immense assembly," largely of black abolitionists. "We were waiting and listening as for a bolt from the sky, which should rend the fetters of four millions of slaves," Douglass recalled. The crowd sang the hymn "Blow Ye the Trumpet, Blow": "Ye mournful souls, be glad."

Many Americans, having lost faith in a government that has failed to address widening inequality, and in the policymakers and academics and journalists who have barely noticed it, see Trump as their deliverer. They cast their votes with purpose. A lot of Trump voters I met during this election season compared Trump to Lincoln: an emancipator. What Trump can and cannot deliver, by way of policy, remains to be seen; my own doubts are grave. Meanwhile, though, he has added weight to the burden that we, each of us, carry on our backs, the burden of old hatreds. Frederick Douglass, a man of Lincoln's time and, decidedly, not of our own, tried to lift those burdens with the strength of his ideals.

Douglass had been fighting for women's rights since Seneca Falls, in 1848, and he fought for female suffrage. He expected women to lead the nation by speaking for themselves, declaring, "I believe no man, however gifted with thought and speech, can voice the wrongs and present the demands of women with the skill and effect, with the power and authority of woman herself." Many Americans of Douglass's day believed that they saw, in equal rights for black men and even for women, the beginning of the end of the American experiment. "It is thought by many, and said by some, that this Republic has already seen its best days; that the historian may now write the story of its decline and fall," Douglass said, in a speech called "Composite Nation," in 1869. To those who predicted doom, Douglass repeated what he had said when the war was just beginning: "The real trouble with us was never our system or form of Government, or the principles underlying it; but the peculiar composition of our people, the relations existing between them and the compromising spirit which controlled the ruling power of the country." For Douglass, the aftermath of the fight to end slavery was a lesson about the persistence of inequality: it had already begun to take a new form, in proposals to deny constitutional protections to Chinese immigrants. Hatred of the Chinese, especially by those who wanted to exploit their labor, was, Douglass argued, new wine in old bottles, slavery by another name. And he condemned it: "I want a home here not only for the negro, the mulatto and the Latin races; but I want the Asiatic to find a home here in the United States, and feel at home here, both for his sake and for ours. Right wrongs no man."

Douglass had his blind spots. Everyone does. Mine drive me crazy—just knowing they're there does. Trump was elected because he got something right, about the suffering of Americans, and about the arrogance of politicians, of academics, and of the press. What he got wrong can be proved only by the forces of humility, of clarity, and of honesty.

When does an ending begin? Douglass saw that the end of a republic begins on the day when the heroism of the struggle for equality yields to the cowardice of resentment. That day has not come. It is thought by many, lately, and said by some,

that the republic has seen its best days, and that it remains for the historian to chronicle the history of its decline and fall. I disagree. Sparrows may yet cross the sky.

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## DYSTOPIA

**By Gary Shteyngart**

**W**hen my parents lived in the Soviet Union, having a Jewish-looking “physiognomy,” as it was called, proved a daily liability. Standing in line for eggs or milk or ham, one could feel the gaze of the shopkeeper running down one’s nose, along with the implied suggestion “Why don’t you move to Israel already?”

Social media in the era of Trump is essentially Leningrad, 1979. Trump supporters on Twitter have often pointed out my Jewishness. “You look ethnic” was one of the kinder remarks, along with the usual litany of lampshade drawings, oven photos, the “Arbeit Macht Frei” gate at Auschwitz, and other stock Holocaust tropes. It is impossible to know if the person pointing out your ethnicity and telling you to jump into an oven is an amateur troll in St. Petersburg, Florida, or a professional troll in St. Petersburg, Russia. What this election has proved is just how intertwined those two trolls may be.

“Russia will rise from her knees!” Those were the lyrics I heard outside a suburban train station in St. Petersburg half a decade ago. The song was coming out of an ancient tape player next to a bedraggled old woman selling sunflower\* seeds out of a cup. She examined my physiognomy with a sneer. At the time, this seemed like just a

typical Russian scene, the nation's poorest citizens bristling at their humiliation after losing the Cold War, their ire concentrated on a familiar target, the country's dwindling population of Jews. The surprise of 2016—post-Brexit, post-Trump—is just how ably the Russians weaponize those lyrics, tweak them to “Whites will rise from their knees!” and megaphone them into so many ready ears in Eastern and Western Europe and, eventually, onto our own shores. The graffito “Russia is for the Russians,” scribbled next to a synagogue, and the words “Vote Trump,” written on a torched black church in Mississippi, are separated by the cold waters of the Atlantic but united by an imaginary grievance—a vigil for better times that may never have existed.

I can understand these people. Growing up in nineteen-eighties Queens, my friends and I, as young Russian immigrants, unfamiliar with the language, our parents working menial jobs, looked down on blacks and Latinos, who were portrayed as threats by the Reagan Administration and its local proxies. The first politicized term I learned in America was “welfare queen,” even as my own grandmother collected food stamps and received regular shipments of orange government cheese. We hated minorities, even though the neighborhoods many of us lived in were devoid of them. I didn't attend public school, because my parents had seen one black kid on the playground of the excellent school I was zoned for, and so sent me to a wretched parochial school instead. There was an apocryphal story going around our community about a poor Russian boy beaten so badly by a black public-school kid that his mother killed herself.

If Ronald Reagan was the distant protector of us endangered white kids, then Donald Trump was a local pasha. My buddies and I walked past his family's becolumned mansion, in Jamaica Estates, with a sense of awe. Donald was a straight shooter, a magnate, a playboy, a marrier of Eastern European blondes, a conqueror of distant Manhattan. He was everything a teen-ager in Queens could dream of being. If we were ever blessed to meet him, we knew he would understand the racism in our hearts, and we his. Successful people like him made us secure in our own sense of whiteness.

Thirty years later, every Jew on Twitter who has received a Photoshopped version of herself or himself in a concentration-camp outfit followed by “#MAGA” knows how fleeting that sense of security can be. The idea that Jews should move to their “own” country, Israel, brings together racial purists from Nashville to Novosibirsk. The jump from Twitter racism to a black church set aflame on a warm Southern night is steady and predictable. Putin’s team has discovered that racism, misogyny, and anti-Semitism bind people closer than any other experiences. These carefully calibrated messages travel from Cyrillic and English keyboards to Breitbart ears and Trump’s mouth, sometimes in the space of hours. The message is clear. People want to rise from their knees. Even those who weren’t kneeling in the first place.

My parents and grandparents never fully recovered from the strains of having lived in an authoritarian society. Daily compromise ground them down, even after they came to America. They left Russia, but Russia never left them. How do you read through a newspaper composed solely of lies? How do you walk into a store while being Jewish? How do you tell the truth to your children? How do you even know what the truth is? A few days ago, I visited a local public school. On a second-grade civics bulletin board I saw written in large letters: “Citizens have RIGHTS—things that you deserve; RESPONSIBILITIES—things you are expected to do; RULES—things you have to follow.” The message seemed to have come from a different era. What did those words have to do with America in 2016? I reflexively checked FiveThirtyEight on my phone. I thought, I grew up in a dystopia—will I have to die in one, too?

\*An earlier version of this article misstated what kind of seeds the woman was selling.

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## DAYS OF RAGE

By **Nicholas Lemann**

Less than a month after Barack Obama took office, Rick Santelli, of CNBC, announced from the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, “We’re thinking of having a Chicago tea party.” Santelli, a conservative showman, was complaining that day about the new Administration’s modest proposal to help struggling homeowners, whom predatory lenders had persuaded to take on unaffordable mortgages. Santelli is not a critic of Wall Street, but his rant reflected the wave of populist rage that began with the financial crisis of 2008. It set off revolutions within both parties, targeting just about anybody who seemed rich and powerful. In 2016, two utterly different and equally unlikely politicians ran for President, and succeeded beyond anyone’s expectations: first Bernie Sanders, then Donald Trump.

The economic crisis became obvious in September, 2008, when Lehman Brothers failed. Within days, it was evident that all the major American financial companies, and, by extension, all the major financial companies in the world, were faltering. To help avert the most devastating economic depression in history, the political system took a temporary break from its hyper-partisanship and paralysis. Barack Obama and John McCain interrupted their Presidential campaigns to fly to Washington for an emergency meeting with President George W. Bush. Congress authorized the government to spend as much as seven hundred billion dollars to stabilize the big banks. After Obama won the election, he made it clear that he would continue with this approach. Altogether, these fiscal interventions were more aggressive than any ever taken by the federal government, surpassing even those taken by Franklin D. Roosevelt during his Hundred Days.

The two parties shared the blame for the catastrophe. For decades after the New

Deal, the government supervised the economic system, placing on it various restraints and controls. That role eroded in the nineteen-eighties and nineties, when Republicans and Democrats reduced the constraints, allowing junk mortgages and the exotic financial products based on them to proliferate. By the start of the twenty-first century, Wall Street was donating heavily to Democrats, too. In 2008, Obama received more contributions from the financial sector than McCain, and the trend was resumed and magnified this year, with Hillary Clinton's campaign. Democrats happened to be in power when the economy bottomed out, in June, 2009; by then, millions of Americans had seen their life savings vanish. The system had failed, and when people think of the system they think of the party in charge.

In the end, financial institutions got trillions of dollars' worth of help to stay afloat, far more than the government spent on economic stimulus, unemployment benefits, or mortgage relief. The cities where finance is headquartered, especially New York and San Francisco, recovered quickly, while the suffering in great swaths of the rest of the country continued. Bankers got bonuses; their neighborhood theatres and restaurants were full. The size and influence of the half-dozen or so largest financial institutions grew substantially, and almost no one who led them was visibly punished. This past March, the National Archives released documents that had been under seal, in which the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission made a series of "referrals" of cases to the Justice Department for possible criminal prosecution. The most famous name on the list was Robert Rubin, the former Treasury Secretary and Citigroup executive.

The main government body responsible for dealing with the crisis, the Federal Reserve Board—removed from direct democracy and run rather mysteriously by academic economists—made an ideal target for populist rage. Fed policies benefitted the rich more than others: low interest rates were paired with "quantitative easing," in which the Fed purchased the kinds of financial instruments that most people don't have, like mortgage-backed securities and long-term bonds. Hedge-fund managers who played the rising markets with borrowed funds did well; people on salaries who saved a little money every month and put it in interest-bearing accounts

did poorly. By 2010, the Tea Party had become a national movement, and dozens of its adherents were elected to Congress. The left generated a protest movement, too, with Occupy Wall Street, which revolted against the mainstream of the Democratic Party and led to the emergence of Sanders and Elizabeth Warren as major Party figures.

Astonishingly, the main political beneficiary of all this energy was Donald Trump, a plutocrat with a long history of taking on too much debt, stiffing his business partners, and not paying taxes. But, while most of his primary opponents ran on more familiar limited-government themes, and Hillary Clinton was fending off the attack from Sanders, Trump figured out that a Republican could run against Wall Street. He made unsubstantiated, sweeping, and brutally effective attacks on Clinton for having “done nothing” for thirty years about the economic troubles of middle-class and poor Americans.

Trump is almost certain to enact policies that will exacerbate those difficulties. He will undo as much as he can of efforts like the 2010 Dodd-Frank law, which returned some regulation to the financial system. He will cut taxes in ways that will increase inequality, and restrict trade in ways that will decrease prosperity. He will not reappoint Janet Yellen, the most unemployment-obsessed Federal Reserve chair in American history—after having subjected her to a barely veiled anti-Semitic attack, in a campaign ad that called her a tool of “global special interests.” It is yet another tragic consequence of the financial crisis that it has brought to power the politician most likely to create the next one.

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# THE BIRTHEER OF A NATION

By Larry Wilmore

“We are about to begin our descent into Los Angeles” is the opening line of “The Graduate.” It is heard in the background, as the camera lingers on the face of Benjamin Braddock (Dustin Hoffman), lost in uncomfortable reflection. The line sets the tone for the lurid tale that is about to unspool. I thought of this foreshadowing sixteen months ago, on the day that Donald J. Trump announced his bid for the Presidency. The sight of him riding a gold escalator down into the belly of Trump Tower to announce his good news made one thing clear to me: he was ready to begin his descent to the Presidency.

For a long time, it seemed like a joke. How could this six-time-bankrupt billionaire-slash-reality-TV star expect to be taken seriously? His opening move—labelling Mexican immigrants rapists—immediately lost the left, and his demotion of John McCain, a former P.O.W., from hero to loser looked as if it would cost him the establishment right. But, after tussling with Megyn Kelly at the first G.O.P. debate, and suggesting that she had blood coming out of her “wherever,” he accomplished the unthinkable: he lost Fox News. How did this mango Mussolini expect to win the White House? Who was left to vote for him? Apparently, half the country.

Shortly after that first debate, I joked in the writers’ room of my now defunct television program, “The Nightly Show,” that Trump could win. I was immediately shouted down and told, in very funny terms, that I was out of my mind. But I was half serious when I made that prediction: a part of me was deeply uneasy with the type of energy that surrounded the Trump insurgency. It was the same energy I’d felt around the “birther” movement a few years earlier—a concerted attempt to delegitimize the first black President. It was then that my colleagues and I decided to title our coverage of the election “Blacklash 2016, the Unblackening.”

A little more than a hundred years ago, D. W. Griffith’s “The Birth of a Nation” was screened at Woodrow Wilson’s White House. The film gave a distorted but

sensational view of the Reconstruction South, where white heroes, in the form of the Ku Klux Klan, put uppity black villains back in their places. It was the Klan's job to rescue white women from the black devils who were trying to rape them and create a mongrel race. The reality, of course, is that mixed-race Americans were largely the result of the cream being poured into the coffee, as it were, and not the other way around. But this lie—the myth of the black sexual predator—was powerful, both onscreen and off. It provoked a resurgence of the K.K.K., and reportedly led President Wilson to say that Griffith's film was “like writing history with lightning, and my only regret is that it is all so terribly true.” For African-Americans, Wilson's comment was not only an official delegitimization but, arguably, the worst movie review ever.

When Donald Trump expended so much effort not only criticizing President Obama but attempting to un-Americanize him, he was drawing a direct line from that horrible legacy to himself. During the election, I'd hear the campaigners chanting, “Take our country back,” or “Make America great again,” and I wondered who they thought had stolen their country. Well, the chief suspect lives at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. It appears that Obama's biggest mistake was P.W.B., Presidenting While Black.

I'm shocked by what happened last week, but not surprised. I don't mean to suggest that every person who voted for Trump is a racist. But there's no denying that his message appealed to the lesser angels of the American psyche. Questioning Obama's birthright, threatening to ban Muslims, painting entire immigrant groups as felons to be feared—these are not policy positions. They are incendiary words and images meant to ignite a movement. My hope is that, right now, our country is more ready to come together than to be driven farther apart. But if making America great again means restoring a history that's been written with lightning, buckle up—because we're going to be on a collision course with very loud thunder.

# ON THE STREETS

By Jia Tolentino

I'm twenty-seven, and in some ways my life has been consonant with the experience of women throughout history. The first time someone tried to grab me by the pussy, I was in middle school, and the next half-dozen times it likewise wasn't by choice. But in most respects I have luxuriated in unprecedented choice and freedom. I was the child of immigrants in a conservative Southern state, yet I had birth control and a credit card and an uncontested right to education. Ambition and carelessness both came naturally to me. Even as a girl, I knew that I was uncommonly lucky, which is what encouraged me, when I was eleven, to write off pussy-grabbing as a pathetic, confusing cultural vestige. It would die out eventually, I thought, because women would be recognized as equals. Men who groped you—particularly the ones who did it on a whim, out of aggressive boredom—would be shamed into the mausoleum, shoved into a corner next to coat hangers and coverture.

Then, on Tuesday, nearly fifty per cent of the American electorate voted Donald Trump into the Oval Office. We picked a President whose ex-wife once testified that he ripped out her hair and raped her, a man who's been accused of sexual assault and misconduct by almost two dozen women, a man whose own words corroborate his accusers' claims. Trump bragged, on the "Access Hollywood" videotape, about committing sexual assault—one of many hideous offenses that he instinctively believed would make him appear powerful. And, for millions of Americans, it seems, they did.

The night after the election, my girlfriends and I joined a protest that had been

announced, earlier that day, on Facebook, and which brought thousands of people to Union Square, in Manhattan. The crowd was young and colorful, restless and expectant. A gentle rain wilted signs that said “Not the End” and “We Will Look Out for Each Other”; two men in front of me waved a rainbow banner and a blacked-out American flag. An organizer with a bullhorn rebuked the Democratic Party, prompting wolf whistles and applause. My girlfriends and I hugged one another, our eyes smeared and swollen. We hadn’t thought that Hillary Clinton’s campaign was specifically focussed on women, but we experienced her loss as a woman-specific disaster. The men in our lives seemed to feel the stab of it somewhat less.

The rain intensified as we marched from Union Square to Trump Tower. We high-fived cabdrivers and whooped at the office workers who opened their windows to cheer. “Our body, our choice!” the women around us chanted, and men echoed, “Her body, her choice!” We traded flowers and cigarettes, yelled “Pussy grabs back.” But fifty-three per cent of white women voted for a white-supremacist sexual predator; selfishness, in so many circumstances, begets the same consequences as hate. A sign floated above the crowd, flashing red, white, and blue in the reflection of police lights: “Why Don’t Sexual Assault Victims Come Forward? Because Sometimes We Make Their Attackers the Leader of the Free World.”

I had been foolishly sure that the “Access Hollywood” tape would sink Trump’s chances. After its release, I asked my friends how many times someone had forcibly grabbed them. “Twenty,” a woman who grew up taking the subway in New York City said. “Five to ten?” another friend replied, adding, earnestly, “So not that much.” We were fortunate, I thought; we could talk about assault clearly and casually. We could trust that these men were losers. We were wrong.

I’m part of the generation that has forced a mainstream reckoning with the misuse of other people’s bodies; we are the victims and the dissidents of police brutality and sexual assault. During the Obama Administration, in no small part because of the respect that the First Couple instilled for women and people of color, I had begun to

feel, thrillingly, like a person. My freedom no longer seemed a miraculous historical accident; it was my birthright.

But my freedom was always conditional, and perhaps never very important to anyone but me. I'm afraid that the empathy and respect that I have always had to display to survive as a woman of color will never be required from men or from whites. I understand, now, that I mistook a decrease in active interference for progress toward a world in which my personhood was seen as inextricable from everyone else's.

On the march from Union Square, a woman with corn-silk hair under a baseball cap told me that she felt abandoned by the men in her family, who had voted for Trump, and had teased her for having what they saw as special interests. "I'm afraid that a man will hurt me in public, and everyone around will think it's O.K.," she said. I heard a friend shouting my name and I turned in her direction. "I'm here," I said. "I can't lose you," she said, pulling me into the group. We were farther from being the equals of men, or even of one another, than we had imagined. But we'd been shown the distance. We kept walking uptown.

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## IN CHARACTER

**By Mark Singer**

**I**n the campaign's final days, even as members of Donald Trump's inner circle had begun to acknowledge privately that he faced almost certain defeat, one of his advisers had the good sense to deprive him of his cell phone. The first, fatefully ill-advised letter from F.B.I. Director James Comey had dropped a week earlier,

palpably complicating Hillary Clinton's otherwise inevitable-seeming triumph. If, for once, Trump could be restrained from further Twitter self-immolation, who knew?

The day after Clinton's concession speech, the President-elect had his phone back. Thursday morning, he met with President Obama at the White House and afterward described the experience in language that, uncharacteristically, approached humility. It didn't last. Around dinnertime, he tweeted a familiar whine: "Just had a very open and successful presidential election. Now professional protesters, incited by the media, are protesting. Very unfair!"

A shock but not a surprise; no previous evidence suggested that Trump was familiar with the phrase "right of the people peaceably to assemble." (Nine hours later, when a more conciliatory tweet issued forth—"Love the fact that the small groups of protesters last night have passion for our great country"—one sensed that the phone had been repossessed.)

After my first face-to-face encounter with Trump—twenty years ago, in his Trump Tower office—I returned to my own and told a colleague, "This guy's a performance artist." At the time, I innocently assumed that I would eventually glimpse a human self inclined to the occasional genuine emotion. Trump was then fifty. It had been two decades since he shifted the focus of the family real-estate business from middle-class housing in Queens to "classy" luxury Manhattan high-rises. His persona—inseparable from all that he intended the "TRUMP" brand to signify—was fully, immutably intact.

To one degree or another, in our encounters with others we all inhabit a persona that masks our most intimate reflections, doubts, and feelings. Beyond Trump's extraordinary talent as a salesman, his singular dubious achievement has been to remain fully in character at all times. He has deliberately chosen to exist only as a persona, never as a person.

The essential Trumpian conundrum: he seems the most legible of men, yet, for all the fine work of his many biographers, none has figured out what truly goes on inside his head. When Trump tells a lie—to paraphrase William Maxwell, he tends to “lie with every breath he draws”—it never feels premeditated. The lie is a reflex. And no persona, no matter how artfully devised, can stifle a reflex.

Among the grave uncertainties our country now faces, we can only wonder what becomes of “Donald Trump” once President Trump takes the oath of office. I asked a number of highly regarded actors and acting teachers what to expect from a leader with such a thoroughly calculated persona.

Richard Feldman (Juilliard): “My hunch—and it can only be a hunch—is that the persona is a complete creation, complete unto itself and almost without volition. What makes Trump so powerful is that he believes his own story. When he says that those women made up those stories of sexual assault, what makes him feel authentic is that some part of him believes that.

“My dismay is that millions of people don’t get that, no matter how deep their dissatisfactions, they were still willing to vote for someone who’s clearly a hollow person. Can you be deeply hollow? I don’t know what’s there. I wonder if ever, at three o’clock in the morning, he faces himself or is afraid. I don’t know how deeply he believes in what he’s created.”

Mark Wing-Davey (New York University): “The persona he’s chosen is a megalomaniacal persona with soft edges, because he wants to inspire confidence in the person with whom he’s doing the deal. Unfortunately, there’s a massive credibility gap between someone who believes himself to be this magnificent negotiator and someone who is carrying the hopes and dreams of the whole country. Empathy is a crucial ingredient to being an actor. Trump lacks the ability to produce empathy in the audience.”

Austin Pendleton (HB Studio): “With a really great actor, it always comes down to a feeling of spontaneity, that what they’re giving out is what happens to them *in the moment*. Trump has that—the freshness of a really fine actor-artist. The reason his positions are all over the map is because he lives in the moment. That’s electric to people, far more important than whatever it is he actually says. Because if people were really paying attention to what he says he would never, ever have been elected.”

Mercedes Ruehl (HB Studio): “ ‘Persona’ comes from Latin, and it means mask. When one acts, one tries to access the real self within the character. Trump is remaining at the level of persona. In the footage of that meeting with Obama, I saw what I felt was humility. Can he drop the persona and act out of his self? I hope he can; his self is the only thing that can save his Presidency. But he would have to be like St. Paul, cut down on the road to Damascus—the greedy tax collector, and God says ‘Follow me,’ and he does.”

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## RADICAL HOPE

**By Junot Díaz**

Querida Q.:

I hope that you are feeling, if not precisely better, then at least not so demoralized. On Wednesday, after he won, you reached out to me, seeking advice, solidarity. You wrote, *My two little sisters called me weeping this morning. I had nothing to give them. I felt bereft. What now? Keep telling the truth from an ever-shrinking corner? Give up?*

I answered immediately, because you are my hermana, because it hurt me to hear you in such distress. I offered some consoling words, but the truth was I didn't know what to say. To you, to my godchildren, who all year had been having nightmares that their parents would be deported, to myself.

I thought about your e-mail all day, Q., and I thought about you during my evening class. My students looked rocked. A few spoke about how frightened and betrayed they felt. Two of them wept. No easy task to take in the fact that half the voters—neighbors, friends, family—were willing to elect, to the nation's highest office, a toxic misogynist, a racial demagogue who wants to make America great by destroying the civil-rights gains of the past fifty years.

*What now?* you asked. And that was my students' question, too. *What now?* I answered them as poorly as I answered you, I fear. And so I sit here now in the middle of the night, in an attempt to try again.

So what now? Well, first and foremost, we need to feel. We need to connect courageously with the rejection, the fear, the vulnerability that Trump's victory has inflicted on us, without turning away or numbing ourselves or lapsing into cynicism. We need to bear witness to what we have lost: our safety, our sense of belonging, our vision of our country. We need to mourn all these injuries fully, so that they do not drag us into despair, so repair will be possible.

And while we're doing the hard, necessary work of mourning, we should avail ourselves of the old formations that have seen us through darkness. We organize. We form solidarities. And, yes: we fight. To be heard. To be safe. To be free.

For those of us who have been in the fight, the prospect of more fighting, after so cruel a setback, will seem impossible. At moments like these, it is easy for even a matatana to feel that she can't go on. But I believe that, once the shock settles, faith and energy will return. Because let's be real: we always knew this shit wasn't going to

be easy. Colonial power, patriarchal power, capitalist power must always and everywhere be battled, because they never, ever quit. We have to keep fighting, because otherwise there will be no future—all will be consumed. Those of us whose ancestors were owned and bred like animals know that future all too well, because it is, in part, our past. And we know that by fighting, against all odds, we who had nothing, not even our real names, transformed the universe. Our ancestors did this with very little, and we who have more must do the same. This is the joyous destiny of our people—to bury the arc of the moral universe so deep in justice that it will never be undone.

But all the fighting in the world will not help us if we do not also hope. What I'm trying to cultivate is not blind optimism but what the philosopher Jonathan Lear calls radical hope. "What makes this hope *radical*," Lear writes, "is that it is directed toward a future goodness that transcends the current ability to understand what it is." Radical hope is not so much something you have but something you practice; it demands flexibility, openness, and what Lear describes as "imaginative excellence." Radical hope is our best weapon against despair, even when despair seems justifiable; it makes the survival of the end of your world possible. Only radical hope could have imagined people like us into existence. And I believe that it will help us create a better, more loving future.

I could say more, but I've already imposed enough, Q.: Time to face this hard new world, to return to the great shining work of our people. Darkness, after all, is breaking, a new day has come.

Love, J ♦

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February 21, 1925.

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