

## FS Interlude: A Memorial Moment

### HYMN FOR THE HURTING

by Amanda Gorman

Everything hurts,  
Our hearts shadowed and strange,  
Minds made muddied and mute.  
We carry tragedy, terrifying and true.  
And yet none of it is new;  
We knew it as home,  
As horror,  
As heritage.  
Even our children  
Cannot be children,  
Cannot be.

Everything hurts.  
It's a hard time to be alive,  
And even harder to stay that way.  
We're burdened to live out these days,  
While at the same time, blessed to outlive them.

This alarm is how we know  
We must be altered —  
That we must differ or die,  
That we must triumph or try.  
Thus while hate cannot be terminated,  
It can be transformed  
Into a love that lets us live.

May we not just grieve, but give:  
May we not just ache, but act;  
May our signed right to bear arms  
Never blind our sight from shared harm;  
May we choose our children over chaos.  
May another innocent never be lost.

Maybe everything hurts,  
Our hearts shadowed & strange.  
But only when everything hurts  
May everything change.

Ms. Gorman is the author of "The Hill We Climb."  
I copied her poem from the 5.27.22 NY Times.

I hope you will pause with me for a moment. For reflection. For your own, unique way of looking at things. Your gifts. Your contribution to our future. It is valuable. There is no one else like you. You are important.

I feel lucky and grateful that we can meet here - in this strange messaging service - together. We may not get to look in one another's eyes, or see each other's smiles, but I can feel the care here. It is real, and it is really important. It's important to recharge our positive connections whenever and wherever we can.

Memorial Day was created to set aside a moment to reflect on those who have died while defending their freedom, and the freedom of the people they care about. Sacrifices such as this are worthy of our deep reflection. Many lives were cut short. Those who were brave, those who were terrified, those who were being defended and those who were not involved...but were killed just the same.

Perhaps there was a time when weapons and killing were important and made sense. I cannot judge the past; I only want to question the use of guns in our world today.

According to Amnesty International "More than 500 people die every day because of violence committed with firearms, an estimated 2,000 people are injured by gunshots every single day and at least 2 million people are living with firearm injuries around the globe." I wonder if they are including 'war'?

There are many inspirational voices to listen to during difficult times. Gil Scott Heron is one of my many guides. These lyrics are from his 1981 song "Gun":

"Brother man says he's 'fraid of gangsters,  
Messing with people just for fun  
He said, he don't want to be next,  
He's got a family to protect  
So just last week he bought himself a gun

Everybody got a pistol,  
Everybody got a .45  
And the philosophy seem to be,  
At least as near as I can see  
When other folks give up theirs, I'll give up mine

This is a violent civilization,  
If civilization's where I am  
'Cause every channel that I stop on,  
Got a different kind of cop on  
Killing them by the million for Uncle Sam

But Saturday night just ain't that special,  
Yeah, I got the constitution on the run  
Yeah, 'cause even though we've got the right,  
To defend our home, to defend our life  
You got to understand to get it in hand about the guns"

I found a "Simple Deep Breathing" exercise for grief and stress:

\* Sit in a comfortable position with your hands relaxed in your lap or resting on your legs.

\* Relax your shoulders. Pull them up toward your ears, and then roll them back and down, creating space between your shoulders and your ears. Allow your shoulders to relax.

\* Breathe normally in and out for a few breaths. Notice how your stomach rises and falls easily as you breathe naturally. Your chest should not expand a great deal as you breathe in and out. If you like, you can place a hand on your abdomen to help notice the movement as you breathe in and out.

\* When you are ready, breathe in—and on the next exhalation, breathe out slowly from your nose, counting to five. During this exhalation, tighten your abdominal muscles, and pull your diaphragm inward, toward your spine, squeezing all the excess air out of your body. When all the air is squeezed out, pause for two counts, and inhale slowly again, to the count of five, allowing your stomach to expand as you breathe in.

\* If you are comfortable doing so, close your eyes and continue to repeat this easy deep stomach breath for 5 to 10 times.

There is nothing we can do to escape the stress and strains from grief and sadness...but deep breathing can help you focus, and take control of your life, at a time when it feels out of control.

A friend of mine and I talked about what helps us through tough times such as these:

\* Taking a moment to just feel - to allow it to flow through you and not run away from it.

\* Taking time to be by yourself...to walk, or read, or sing, or stretch...by yourself.

\* Not being afraid of having nothing to say; being okay with being silent.

\* Remembering that there are a lot of people who care.

I'm sorry that I could not muster an up-beat, fundraising, 'look on the bright-side' newsletter today. I will send one that is more my usual style in a week or two.

To be clear, I am not "pro-gun" and I am not "anti-gun". I just think we resort to violence when we have better tools to solve problems.

Let us not forget the valuable perspectives and contributions that we are missing from those who sacrificed, and those we lost through violence.

With gratitude and ubuntu, ~ sue

Thank you, donors, for making sure Fair Shake 'keeps going on'. I'll talk about all of the great things we have to celebrate because of our efforts TOGETHER in the news coming up soon.