

A Thousand No's

"We are the ones we have been waiting for."

- June Jordan

We are the architects of our victories, the historians
Of our losses. We sing the hymns of days past.
Paint the walls of the present with our evidence.
Our daily, practiced refusals. We refuse to douse our dreams.
A thousand *no's*, but every *no* is always a *yes*.
A *yes* to something else.
A *yes* to the possibilities held in each borrowed breath.
A *yes* to who we could be and not what we have been reduced to.

To survive is an art form. Life makes artists of us all.
We invent a language from longing, turn whispers into chants.
Our heartbreaks will no longer be open secrets.
We announce them from rooftops.

Our pain is an invitation. Step over its threshold of thorns.
Solidarity is a lingering scent of interlocked fingers.
We invite our extended family of the banned, the barred, the banished.
Bronx b-boys scrawling truths on dirty subway carriages,
Brixton prophets reciting breakbeat mythologies, 140 heartbeats per minute,
West bank wonderkids defacing barriers with cartoon eyes.

The People Want the Fall of the Regime. We hear own echoes everywhere.
No need for translation.
We stand in the heart of the square, at the corner of a dream,
Edging the lip of promised horizons.

We do not know where we are going, but we will make it better
Than where we have come from. Hope needs no atlas.
A revolution is not an event. It is a birthing.
A dance of contradictions, the gushing river of tomorrows.
The bridge between the world we deserve and the one we have inherited.
It is an unetched future, our country of water,
as wide and open as the sea, the sea, the sea.

