

Now is the Time

by alejandro rodriguez

Now is the time.

Now is the time
for the baptism.

Now is the time to rehearse your resurrection.

Now is the time to take a deep breath.
Tilt your head back and take a shot of oxygen
like you just might need it for this one.

Now is the time to play Adam.
To look at things for the first time and to name them.

The first thing you see when you walk outside:
hold it in your attention.
Wrap it in your wonder.
Call it moon, or rock, or elbow
and talk to it like you just minted its name.

Now is the time to taste your life like a ripe fruit
and let its juices spill from your mouth.

Now is the time to blow it all open.
To bare your chest to the wind and feel its million tiny kisses.

To run
like the hills are your inheritance.

To throw your beautiful body around
like you won't have it forever
and you're running out of time to see what it can do.

Now is the time to kiss.

Kiss like you've always wondered what pressing your two lips
against another two lips might feel like.

Kiss like the first contact might kill you.

Kiss like you have no idea what to do with you knees.

Now is the time to hug

like you're pressing the universe to your center.

To touch like you're sweeping your finger across the cheek of the earth.

Now is the time to fuck.

Fuck like you're saving the species by fucking.

Fuck like heroes on top of mountains.

Now is the time to smile like your smile is a can-opener
that pops *people* open.

I want to see bones and feathers on the sidewalks!

Now is the time to laugh

with your toes and your forehead.

To cry with your calves and your wrists.

To let your fists finally unfurl
and your spirit roll out like a flag of light.

Now is the time to talk to trees.

To listen for the stories in the dirt.

To grow silence in our gardens.

To sit beside it for long stretches
like falling asleep by the ocean
or in your car beside a cornfield
and then waking up
to the dawn

and to the roaring quiet

and to a sudden liberating sense of your smallness.

You have been alive longer than your memories suggest.

You wander the same air as Socrates
and the Nazarene
and others who made themselves into monuments.
The same sun sat on their shoulders.
You, too, can hold the sea in the palm of your mind.
You are what happens when stars explode.

So now is the time to **dance.**

Like the thunder.
Like the edges of cliffs.
Like branches swaying in a storm
and water running over pebbles
running over pebbles
running over –

Dancers!
Now is the time to dance like you are the savage prophets of joy!

Poets!
Now is the time for your poems to go singing across the country like trucks on the
highways of night!

Musicians!
Now is the time for your songs to bust through the doors of the bars
and go tumbling down the streets
naked and proud!

Now is the time to love
athletically

uncomprimisingly
unapologetically
like its the last night of the earth.

Or you can wait.

Until tomorrow.

You can play it cool for one more day.
Behave appropriately.
Carry on unnoticed and so uncriticized.
But remember

there also comes a time for an ending
and your ending is always arriving.

Maybe suddenly.
Wildly like bullets racing down an elementary school hallway in December.

Maybe slowly.
Softly like the last few seconds of a dance
performed carefully to give us one final thing to hold
in our common attention.

So that for now
for us
there is only this gesture
in this room
discovered at this moment
as if for the first and last time.

And then maybe
just maybe a tiny smile blooms on the face of a dancer
just as the lights are fading.

Like she just knows the applause of angels

is waiting for her
on the other side.

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