

Nightmare

Decrepit Dreams by Qui-Shawn Tien Tran

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I had a nightmare last night
body spasms
straight jacket
straps tight

I couldn't avert my eyes from the horror
The torture of seeing a coroner
bringing body bags out of a
local kumon on my corner

And on the news, supremacists shouted about who culled the
most kids or women or members of my coalition,
every body in the bag was Asian . . . American

It's crazy we make a difference between
Americans and Immigrants
We all came in search of tolerance,
of honoring our traditions,
From Puritan to Cambodian to Chinese, any ethnicity
but discrimination subverts aspiration so we make it about politics

And
we seem to all be about equality
But
equality is sometimes more for people
who have a degree
who have currency

who have a political system backing up their beliefs

The NRA benefits from white supremacy
and if that wasn't the end of it
they make money selling killing equipment

The people in power will never know my nightmares

yet they profit from the pain of my community

Japanese Internment
Chinese Exclusion
Asians on railroads
Sacrificed like pawns on a chessboard

Back then, money was the only language for change.
Before we had black mirrors and bright screens
Nowadays social media is the social change
that can lead us to equality

Even if just incrementally

In every increment of energy you put towards being an ally, we
make progress

Sometimes we want to do more
but diminishing hatred requires us to do less
but to know why we are doing it for

Start small, one real conversation with
your friends or spouse or parents
Have an intention to build compassion
Give empathy and give voice even if you don't feel the time is right

Because the perfect time is *right now*

So *write now*, write down your thoughts, write your aspirations for a battle that is not lost, write your beliefs for a better world whatever the cost, write down the hurt you will heal and you'll live a righteous life because you will nurture the love you feel

If we wait for a spotlight,
we'll never be the change we wanna see
Being the right person requires us to look at injustice
To acknowledge our own ironies

If you care so much about equality, don't turn a blind eye

Take action every day and you
will be the hero we all need

Even if just incrementally

Be an incremental ally

Right now is a damn good time to try.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Qui-Shawn Jerns". The signature is written in a cursive style with large, sweeping loops and a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.