

NEW YEAR'S REVOLUTIONS

A book of poetry by
Max Kenkel

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FOREWARD

What's the point?

I'm young for now, but old for back then.

It's difficult to wrap my head around how much better we have it as a species now than even fifty years ago.

Advances in nearly everything have made living now the best time to ever be alive in human history.

Despite this, I wake up nearly every day with a sense of dread.

I know it's because Bad Things have better PR. I know this. I know it I know it I know it. But I still wake up waiting for the other shoe to drop. And when I have awesome things happen, I still need to do the dishes later. Then everything I see out in the real world leans in close to tell me it's all going to shit. That everything is behind a paywall. That we somehow screwed up and even though we might live on the only planet in the entire universe that has sentient life, we've managed to monetize war and suffering into our two biggest money makers, in a system that relies upon exploitation and endless human suffering to thrive.

I probably do too much self-reflection these days. I'm under no delusion that only about 100 of you (if I'm lucky) will ever read this book. I used to think if I was clever enough, I would hit it rich. Now, I just keep writing because it beats the alternative of giving in to my worst versions.

So I ask again: What's the point?

MORE FOREWARD

That's the point.

I AM young for now. I HAVE things to say.

We DO have it better than any other humans in human history and it's worth getting up each day to make it even better. To not rest on the laurels of our greatest generations, but to persevere, to become stronger, better, kinder, more compassionate and empathetic versions of ourselves.

Despite waking up every day with a sense of dread, I also have a sense of hope.

I am optimistic that we can find solutions to our biggest problems. I am hopeful that we'll somehow take a magnificent leap forward in our understanding of the human condition. I am resilient in practicing each day to be kinder, more forgiving, more helpful, more lenient, more accommodating, and more supportive of the people I love.

I know I dwell on things that won't come true. I don't let them stop me. I'm under no delusion that only about 100 of you (if I'm lucky) will ever read this book. I don't care. If my words inspire one of you to be a little kinder or to stand up in the face of adversity for something you love, then I helped push it forward.

I know this sounds like platitudes and those are big words to say for someone that no one has ever heard of. Who never gets mistaken for or compared to the greats.

That's the fucking point.

I came here to write stupid poems and call out bullshit. Here's 160-plus pages of both.

HOW TO READ

New Year's Revolutions is a project over five years in the making. When I was doing the @yesterdayinpoetry project every day on Instagram, I started in July doing a daily poem about whatever topic I came up with. But towards October I was getting bored that first year so I started a few themed months. I did scary poems for two weeks each October. I did some thankful poems sometimes during November. I did some Christmas poems around the holidays.

But the best two months were January and February because I created my *New Year's Revolutions (NYR)* and *Massacre of Love* series.

NYR started as a way for me to stop mailing it in and quickly became something I looked forward to all year. The first year, I started with a list of prompt words that were part of the "revolution" family. You'll see a lot of those words used shortly. The goal was to still write my poem each day but use my prompt word as inspiration.

It seemed to resonate – my biggest count of likes was in January (almost 30 once!)

I didn't really know what I would do with them and was content to let them live on the Insta account. But when I was languishing on *The Sweet Nothings* I started to pull all the NYRs into a single document and quickly realized I had enough for a book if I wanted to publish it. So, I started to cull the herd and pick just the best ones, and that's what you get here. You'll see several with the same title and (x) number after. That's their proper name. E.g.: if you see *Defiance(3)* the title is *Defiance Three*. That would also be a chronological key.

Anyway, now you know what you are reading. I hope it inspires you to fuck shit up and make a better world for you and everyone you love. Don't settle.

DRAGON

What if I buy up all the shit
Monetize the free things in life that make it worth living it
I can put you to death via subscription
Paywall the pyramids and gatekeep nutrition
Constantly try to evolve the grains and the anti-pains
Unaffected by the effects of my profiteering
I do not care about the planet if the checks keep clearing
Stacking my coins, my dollars, my options of stock
Attacking restrictive laws so I clean up 'round the clock
I've got Senators in my pocket, the president on speed dial
If people die from my products we'll just add them to the pile
I'm going to rob from the government via subsidy
Fatten my pockets handsomely
Then fatten my stocks with information, insider
And fatten my bonds but make yours a bit lighter
Fatten my accounts, fatten my wallet
Give me the duckets, every single one - all of it!!!
I WILL sit in my tower behind my gates
Turning screws while my wealth accumulates
I can breathe fire and that isn't braggin'
I am the richest - a modern-day dragon

DEFIANCE

Everyone take note!

You now have my permission

When I cash in my chips and am out of commission

Crack jokes!

Make light!

Get in a fight!

Cuss and yell and tell the stories I would want you to tell

My last act of Defiance:

Not going quietly on account of my friends

Everyone! Simply hold up your end!

When I'm reduced to a pile of ashes

I expect all of you to get off your asses,

Whoever is left anyway, and let whiskey flow

Ace can even snort some of me in lieu of blow

Hook up some games out in the lawn

Then crack wise about everything from dusk until dawn

Iz has the blueprint so it'll all come together

If it's bitterly cold, just wait for warm weather

Do all the things, just please don't be sad!

Take solace in the jokes, even if they are bad (especially)

Get blind drunk on vice and defiant team spirit

Then sleep well knowing I'm not going to hear it!

REBEL

I let lapse intentionally
My daily devotion to words placed horizontally
Due in part to my own sick bloodlust
For the mangling of my own head and guts
Surely this is some manner of rebellion
Against my own desire to be a hellion
My burning need to be heard
Only to be filled with self-deprecating words
But it is not this day! That I go into the night!
It is not this day that I romanticize my plight!
My plight is null, no longer worth counting
Compared to other ills continuously amounting
A growing pile of said ills disparate yet interconnected
We should have seen them coming, had we reflected
But we're here today, and it's our turn to fight
We must unify if we are to beat back the darkness
Of the coming night
One filled with hatred, mourning and spite
It's our ability to organize that trumps all other cards
While fools "at the top" are looking to the stars
We have real mouths to feed
The impracticality of just meeting basic needs
Will no longer be acceptable
If we can't align, it's time to rebel

SPIRIT

Spirits from long dead idealists

Roam around with postmortem knowledge

Haunting them as much as...

Repeating the same mistakes

Haunts us

DISRUPTORS

It's probably hard for people to bend their views
I imagine it's like old, worn wagon trails
Viewpoints cut into mud and dirt by the wheels of tradition
So furrowed the bottom of the wagon scrapes
On the mound between each cut
Imagine, then, the anxiety of changing course
When straits are dire
The truths you've held so close under fire
For many there is no escape to behold
No way to break free of the one-way road

I don't want to be that way
I want my thoughts to be like leaves
Able to change direction with the breeze
Of better information
It's a way of living to which I've become accustomed
It helps that my resolve is stout like a windy gust
For pushing others to think differently I have a lust
Partly to get what I know is right
Partly to help them prepare for future fights

MEDIC

The medic did their job
The capitalistic system marched on
The power wanted them to play
It didn't matter if the patient was gone
But the medic did their job
The man will live to play
To experience life for another day
Despite capitalism's unfettered march
Towards its logical end
The medic did their job
And now Hamlin can play again

BEST SERVED COLD

Oh comeuppance!

My favorite flavor

So sweet, so savory, nature's perfect umami

Oh wondrous universe!

How you work to turn the tables

The stuff of lore and fables

Can it be schadenfreude if the comeuppee

Had it coming in spades?

Heels like Tate, Musk, Cruz, Kirk, Abbott

Fools like Ye, Jones, Lake, Boebert, Greene

Their greatest foibles yet unpunished - how obscene!

Have a rest, sweetheart, let go of cares

There is much time remaining for damages to be repaired

Comeuppance is both a gentleman who wears many caps

And a fiery maiden in pump heels with an apron on her lap

Bringing orders to the diners at the greasy spoon of life

If she hasn't placed a dish best served cold by this evening

There is always another night for work like reaping

INDOCTRINATION

I went to mass and I recited my prayers
I kneeled and stood and shook hands and said sayers
Then I stepped back and I looked around
And all the same things kept happening in our town
And in every town across every land
I thought, "that's not the work of an all-powerful hand"
That's just what you get when you turn off the lights
And walk out without closing up shop at night
Repeated tragedies gave me a clenched fist
Soon I started to feel like an accomplice
How are we holding ourselves to a standard, higher
When the wheel man obviously isn't even trying
Either he's all powerful and could stop some of this
Or he is a twisted sicko who gets off on the mess
Regardless, I'm no longer partaking
Nor am I any longer interested in faking
Some indoctrinated belief in an all-powerful lord
Who either has no absolute power or has gotten bored
Managing the minutiae of the minute to minute
Instead, just try to be more kind and listen to your intuition
I don't need an incentive program to do the right thing
I refuse to be gaslit by a powerless king

PROTEST

Look kid

At some point you can't let them push you around

I'm sorry we let it get so out of hand

Our generation was indoctrinated

We preferred to have a rest

Upon our fathers' laurels Instead of organizing protest

Now you get to be the bag man

One filled with poisonous snakes

Bad deals and corruption from fakes

Your generation is going to have to get their hands dirty

If we want anything left by 2130

The work needed is the work we detest

We all have faith in you, hashtag bless

HIT PIECE

Telling the truth is not a hit piece
Saying it is might be a fun way to attempt to police
Whatever narrative suits your issue's side
There are some sins you can't hide
Especially when televised live
But that's not what is overly concerning
This would be our manipulation and churning
Every single "big story" to hit the cycle
Everyone's ability to have a hot take is just a vehicle
Driving us further away from what really took place
Mowing over facts in lieu of our personal tastes
Note: believing falsehoods and fact-denying
Makes you wrong no matter how loud you're crying
It's not an opinion to willingly believe a lie
Bragging about ignorance is a preventable sword
On which to die

CONTRARIAN

I'm not a contrarian
You're just wrong
Why would I willingly go along
Singing the wrong words to the song
Just to pacify?
Not tonight, no
No gleefully conforming to under-performance
Absolutely not with that mountain of horse shit
Being older doesn't grant you immunity
Absolved from any consequences, punitive
Respect is earned regardless of age
Dumbasses will not be respected regardless of their rage
At my unwillingness to parlay
Doubling down on an argument that fell apart?
(with condescension) Do better, sweetheart

SYSTEMIC

69,000 years.

Sounds nice.

This isn't about some lip to tip or lip

At \$7.25, this is how long you'd have to be alive

Toiling every day to make a billion dollars

Never spending, no complaints, no hollers

Just work for less than a peasant was bestowed

I don't know about you, but this is getting fucking old

Looking around to see the hurting that won't stop

Then know there are about 3,300 hoarders at the top

Who could, together, solve hunger and climate change

But they don't do it because they are literally deranged

Systemically stealing their wealth from the labor of others

Who only now are starting to gain their druthers

Organizing to get a little bigger sliver

Clawed back from mentally ill people who make me shiver

Not because they are indeed impaired

Rather, they could solve much with plenty to spare

Instead, they avoid taxes and squeeze the stone for blood

Yet I wonder what would happen if we ate just one?

RECALCITRANT

Don't let media or government
Make you take a side
The war isn't about a race or gender or something fun
The only war that matters is a class one
I have an answer to that
Be recalcitrant!
Become ungovernable!
In whatever ways you are capable!
Oligarchs are hoarders not to be trusted!
Unions aren't lazy nor should they be busted!
Your life is more than 40 hours and consumption!
It's okay to rest, that doesn't mean you lack gumption!
Stop glorifying the grind like some act of bravery!
It's called wage theft and indentured slavery!
Band together and take back some control!
Labor creates wealth, don't you know?
The rich man at the top doesn't work 10x harder!
Nor is he quantifiably smarter!
He just suckered people to work for pennies on the dollar!
Does this spark joy, or do you finally want to holler?

GENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Today we spoke for nearly sixty minutes
A record of sorts for us, isn't it?
For once I didn't feel you dominated the conversation
There was even a little curiosity from you
And less complaining
A welcome change

As we were wrapping up the call
Something gave you pause
So I sat there on my end patiently waiting

For once, instead of pointing fingers
Before you pulled the trigger
You asked a difficult question without berating
I didn't pull any of my punches when I told you it was true
I said those things you heard I said about you

Instead of getting all defensive, you waited silently, pensive
As I explained the things my brother said about me
Yes, it all is true
I'm not hiding it from you

We could collectively benefit from extra training
I'm not reluctant out of pain
I'm just not playing anymore games
Your acceptance of these words left me astounded

It'll be imperative
That we work to control the narrative
If we want to enjoy each other's company without drama
What remains I guess we'll see
But this seems like an 'okay' first step to me
If we're ever going to heal generational trauma

SNAKE OIL

We're all aware of their track record
Propagandized words from the lectern
We've watched them dance and swerve
Under the guise of a desire to serve
My friend, that should be capped and ended
Not a career path monetarily defended
We the masses continue to toil
Roiling around in a pit of snake oil
Bills of goods transacted about how they will and would
But once elected never doing what they should (or could!)
Each side proclaims the other side is to blame
But both sides are the same!
Are we the stupid fucks?
Are they the cuckers and we're the cucks?
We're just sitting in the spare chair
While they slap democracy's ass and pull its hair?
Man, we suck. This isn't cool.
We've all been taken for fools!
Nationally divided but on the same team
I don't even know what any of this means

OLIGARCH

Murky messiah messages manipulated
By oligarchs who amass wealth the same way
Someone with a mental disorder
Can be a magazine or plastic bottle hoarder
In my opinion the hoarding of funds isn't the issue
It's that the things they hoard offer control
So the guy with a million plastic bottles in his garage
Might create a fire hazard or a nightmare for heirs
But the oligarchs create problems for everyone else

...Including for the least of us, whom we are urged to lift up

REVOLUTION

Conceptually, revolution and revolt make lots of sense
Though I'm not so sure it will make much difference
I am aghast at how people I historically viewed favorably
Have kowtowed to misinformation enabling
All manner of dildo-brained chicanery

While one game plays out via stocks and laws
A much grander game is just getting underway
Nature's great revolution, the sixth mass extinction
Certainly, Wall Street Losers see no distinction
None of this knowledge provides absolution

Staring down this many barrels is exhausting
It's not the speed or amount of change that vexes
Instead, the volume of sand-buried heads that perplexes
Drawing such defined lines is the greatest crime of our time
While so much gray exists, and persists

Exciting! This intersection of change, of rebellion
How much more can we get in just one sun's revolution
Our little machinations adding up to what?
But certainly, resentful times call for drastic measures
Recall actions speak louder to ears filled with sand

If they won't listen to reason, offer the back of your hand

FIRE

When I was younger and life became heavy
Beyond the help of shoulder shrugs and levity
Tendency lent itself to setting fires
In the form of throwing everything from toilet paper to pliers
Age has not been lenient toward these tendencies
Which has been a very good thing for me
Better control helps to wrangle loose flames
I may still want to burst forth, I just don't want the blame
Inside is a war being waged all hours of the day
Anger versus apathy, a well-worn path and I know the way
But unlike Thanos it is not in search of perfect balance
More a series of tricks to hide my most egregious talents

No one can say fuck it with such a convincing decree
No one can burn down their life like me on a spree

I used to think it was the only way I could survive
But lately I wonder if it's the only time I feel alive
Blanking something from my heart is when I feel strongest
It is when I feel most in control and it's really no contest
This conflagration seething just under my skin
I hold all the cards when I let darkness set in
Oppositional forces trading market shares
A tightrope battle between too much and too little cares

LEAD

To be strong

To lead

To be shot

To catch lead

Abraham, Johnathon, Ronald and Garf

Willy, Frankie, Teddy, too; but not Arth

Andy and Harry

Almost caught a ride on the ferry

One would think with all the racists

They'd have come after Barry

Every tough talking gun boy who says they hate pedophiles

None of them took a crack shot to send Don down the Nile

A thankless exchange they never know when it's over

If it isn't a bullet, it's a heart attack like Grover

Nobody thinks any of these men are quitters

Even Zach, who died on the shitter

Brave men who lead, strong nicknames dubbed

Save for Thiccc Billy Taft who got stuck in a tub

DEPLOY

Do you think 9/11 was an inside job?
Or maybe JFK was killed by the mob?
Perhaps you believe the moon landing was fake,
And that Nessie is alive and well in her lake?
It's a god damn shame you believe made-up news
The stuff out of Fox is borderline abuse
Old boy Q sure played you like a fiddle
The very person you champion just as likely to diddle
...And then there's the masks
.....And now there's the WHO
.....And now JFK Jr. in a big old to-do

What will be next? What fresh batch of shite?
What new conspiracies will you deploy?
In your mom's basement this night?

Oh, deceived old chap! Lament for gullible gal!

Take it from me, your skeptical pal!
The demons you think are barely at bay,
Are long gone by now, no reason to stay.
The way you turned your own back on the weak and sick,
I guess believe what you want but stop being a dick

DEFIANCE(2)

Pieces of memory get stuck in a brain
Like how cockleburs catch in soft cloth...
How bananas once sliced bond to the floor if dropped...
Reflecting, I am stuck on a thought:
How much of who I am today was taught?
Secretly though, unlike conventional education
Hard lessons watching people on decision-making vacations
What good are hard lessons if we refuse to learn?
Although in my case I'm more than a little concerned...
Not all my memory pieces fit with the ideal narrative
Probably why I'm less reserved and more declarative
I want to believe the reason I embody defiance
Is not nature vs. nurture, instead true self-reliance
But remembering situations from my formative years...
Those situations are probably the motors turning these gears
A lot of core memories formed under duress
Probably why thinking about it gives me so much stress
Which leads me to believe I'm a product of my experience
Those experiences are numerous which makes me furious!
Maybe I could have been more with less undue influence
But the tune has been called and so I guess we will dance

PROTEST(2)

Might get arrest
Okay if strong enough detest

Might be locked in cell
What of it if it's already hell

When important stay firm
Though you may want to squirm

Bravery isn't the absence of fear
It's continuing when scary things are near

Try quite hard to do your best
When that fails you must protest!

STRATEGY

I could be worse...

Not unlikable, not morose, nor divisively terse,
Not obviously bad, malcontent or otherwise cursed.

I could be worse...

I could manipulate as easy as writing a verse.
Suckle the gullible as a charlatan wet nurse.
Wakes of collateral damage impossible to unravel.
New hordes of misguided disciples wherever I traveled.

I could be worse...

Plant false seeds that produce barren fruit.
Ponzi schemes of hope nurtured in those I dupe.
Conservatives with a target on their back,
Prime candidates for snake oil and biblical hack.

I could be worse...

Using top strategies to make my marks yearn for hearse.
Direct payment into my account to avoid fates adverse.
Play the game the way a concert pianist tickles the ivory,
Unsavory trophies earned through conniving.
Let my black soul matriculate me in the hearts of the weak.
Loyalty delivered through the sale of outcomes, bleak.
Marionettes controlled with the strings of agitation.
Suckers always ginned up drinking my dishonest libations.

I could be worse...

Be thankful I'm better...

That I have modicums of a conscious in my human endeavors

PUNK

Define "Punk".

Is it cloth? That would be bunk.

Is it mantra? Is it hair like a skunk?

Perhaps it's a predilection to middle fingers?

Innate desires for saying "Fuck You" that lingers?

First of all, that's not punk. Second of all, Get Fucked.

Punk is not about fitting into someone else's ideal.

That's the reason for the appeal.

It's not fingers and boots for old times sake.

It's being true to yourself, to the life you want to make.

Plenty of people buy accessories deemed genre.

On plenty of those people? The concept is lost on them.

Live with belligerent abandon according to your own code,
Which goes against almost everything taught and told.

Once defined accidentally by a man thusly stoned:

"You are the kind of person who doesn't give a fuck,
but gives a lot of fucks...

...You know?"

To have these words bestowed on me was to know home.

REFUSE

The greatest game in football history
How it unfolded still a mystery
The fortunes of a team left up to chance
Mahomes vs. Allen - what a hell of a match!
If young Harrison hit his marks
The spread may have been too far apart
Without Davis's grip on four scoring passes
Bills may have been whipped on the scoreboard (and asses)
But what's the secret? To avoid defeat?
Catch catchable balls, and of foot, be fleet
Something more though in a game this hard fought
Wills tough and unbreakable, iron wrought
Fire once lit, a resolve to not lose
Even more than resolve, it's to utterly refuse
Refuse to give up, refuse to give in
Refuse to stop fighting, refuse to let the other team win
Such a result will ring through the ages
Every new playoff vignette, and on record book pages
13 seconds and three timeouts
All Patrick needed to win an epic bout

DEFEAT

boys, i think we earned it
we earned it fair and square
it came in like it meant it
rather roughly pulling hair
it punched us in the stomach
then asked us if we came
but not before it told us
we could stand to lose some weight
it said no one will love us
then called us a bitch
then begged us not to leave
then beat us with a switch
boys this game of turnabout
is only fairest plays
a defeat earned on our merits
for making light of women, nerds and gays
to those enlightened gentlemen
already in Saint Mary's graces
disregard this message
it's for the assholes who see weakness
when they look at women's faces
instead of seeing steel
the shit sandwiches i hope those douchebags eat
is more than ten and forty meals

ADVANCE

Tonight I advance slowly
Through fresh powder snow so dry
I worry it may catch fire with the slightest spark
Hoping the coals inside us
Heat up like this promised small weather change
Modestly creeping from frigid arctic belligerence
Towards only just below freezing
Which given the time and place is
Sea changes from where we were
Rekindling the good emotions
How a small flame brings hope
To the coldest weary traveler
Or how the slightest caress of your skin
Feels like home

EVICTION

I have these 'noble' dreams
Daytime visions really
And I make up ideas, rather silly
One most recent I felt with conviction
I dreamt of a way to end senseless evictions
In this visioning session I chanced to buy a property
Four apartments, separated equally
Instead of raising rent I worked with the tenants
Not out of need for some feeling of penance
Rather, to help them prosper and grow
No need to be a boor with a boot on their throat
They 'paid' me a normal monthly rent
Then we took that money and invested it
At the end of the year, we shared in the gains
The following year we did the same thing
Together we shared risk and reward
None of it felt untoward
If they did well, then I did too
And after three or four years look what they accrued!
Enough to plant the seed of their own noble dreams
Because we said no to greed and worked as a team

PROTECT

Mommas, don't let your babies grow up to be assholes
Who swear an oath to serve and protect
While they stand on some poor person's neck
And unironically get Punisher tattoos
Not the real one, the one with a stripe of blue

Mommas, don't let your babies grow up to be assholes
Who take office oaths
While they insider trade for rapid growth
Colluding behind the scenes
Against decent people like you and me

Mommas, don't let your babies grow up to be assholes
Who hoard all the gains
While they say they want to help with the world's pains
And instead of helping the maligned human race
They build dick-shaped machines to take them to space

NIGHTMARE

The parts where you can't wake up
Trapped in a moment that's totally fucked up
What are we on now, season three?
I don't feel like the lead in a show about zombies
But I feel like a zombie
Or some poor son of a bitch stuck in a groundhog day
An endless loop of the same old shit
Which is the rub, because every day is different

There it is!
There's my nightmare
One which delivers quite a scare
Has this time in limbo stolen my soul?
Is that the event that has punched a hole?
A hole which allows my motivation to drain
Making every different day feel exactly. The. Same.
If that's the case, it's a goddamn shame
Even worse? There's no one to accept the blame
We're just supposed to survive or exist, traumatized, maimed.
You think these devolving dreams are somehow my fault?
Perhaps a manner of comeuppance? Will it ever halt?
When will we all get jostled awake?
Or the worst nightmare of all - what if our reality is fake?

DREAM

Last night I was the recipient of a dream
The vividness of which I was ill prepared to experience
Surrounded by the livestock buildings of a fairground
I wandered on a bright, carefree day to the sounds of the fair
Until repeated sonic booms called our attention to the sky
Looking up in time to witness alien ships breach our atmosphere
Awe and panic marry and give birth to chaos
As fair goers bifurcate into two parties, watch or flee
Steam and smoke block sun as smaller ships depart their mothers
Bringing our worst fears down to face us
Unexpectedly, these unlikely visitors stand on two legs
Legs which meet at the bottom of a mirror
Roughly six inches wide and eighteen inches tall
Sentient by unknown means, these alien mirrors flood the fair
Brazen attendees begin smashing with abandon
Broken glass strewn across the grounds the only gore
Boldly I step out from behind a building holding a shovel
Facing my first extraterrestrial visitor with conviction
These beings mean us no malice
Simply showing us ourselves in various states of rage or panic
How many planets visited where the native population
Ripped through their numbers without remorse
I set my shovel against the building and gaze around me
People running from reflections of themselves
Or smashing their likeness into a million shards
Upon waking up I felt a sense of regret
Recalling how we failed to be gentle hosts
Was it human nature or impulse that led us to be the heels
I wonder why we were threatened by what we saw

ATTACK

Your labor isn't unskilled regardless of station
You've simply been a victim, Equity must be on vacation
In a finite system, capitalism's attempt to infinitely grow
Exploitation is required, and you are exploitable, you know?

It's an attempt to try to trick us
Do not be led astray
Wanting us to do all the labor
While someone else hoards the pay
Perceiver! Time will grant you favor!
It's not time to sit back
Be firm, turned tables will be something to savor
It's time for you to attack
Withhold the one thing they need
Your and your coworkers' hours
Unending production demands feed
Never forget that you hold all of the power

ESCAPE

This is the only guarantee
The same fate for you is the fate for me
We cannot escape its powerful clutch
Take that trip! Get that lunch!
Have that drink with long lost friends
You never know when this ride will end

DESTROY

I've heard it said
I've seen it read
To become the man you must destroy the little boy
I don't subscribe
I feel less like an adult the more I'm alive
Embracing childhood fancies
Like video games, coloring, games of skill and chancies
Misguided is the idea you must become so serious
Believing anything is important is dangerous; delirious
Why would you let go of your dreams?
Dreams are the richness, dreams are the cream
Pairing with the berries of life's unending chaos
Your nifty little plans are no more valid than my coin toss

I invite you; beg you, to destroy!

...but not the little girl or little boy
Not the curious child within who yet may believe
Anything is possible, whatever your imagination conceives

PARLAY

Fintech bros
They gotta go
They gotta try to save their precious apes
But now...
Now...
...Now apes run amok
Screen shots reducing value to a buck
Or a useless coin
Spend time getting some loin
In lieu of parlance with cryptos going boing
Up and down, then down and up
At best a pyramid scheme
At worst soap in a cup
Laundries and larceny, if you know what I mean

VOTE

I could hardly believe it, when I heard the news today
I had to come and get it straight from you
They said you were thinking about giving some rights to gays
From the look upon your face I see it's true

So tell me all about it, tell me 'bout the plans you're makin'
Oh, then tell me one thing more before I go (to jail)

Tell me, how am I supposed to vote without you?
Now that I've been an awful bigot so long
How am I supposed to vote without you
And how am I supposed to conceal and carry on?
When all that hate that I've been voting for is gone

I'm too proud to use the vaccine, I just love conspiring
It's just a dream of mine, that drinking horse piss cures Covid
And how can I blame you when I built my world on lies
The hope that you could carry off this coup, I guess you tried

I don't wanna know the price I'm gonna pay for helping plan it,
Such a ballsy move for someone who's never found the clit

Tell me, how am I supposed to vote without you?
Now that I've been a lousy asshole for so long
How am I supposed to vote without you
And how am I supposed to conceal and carry on?
When all that hate I've been voting for is gone

Now I don't wanna know the price we're gonna pay for scheming
Oh, now that your scheme has come true

<<POET'S NOTE: Except the scheme didn't come true because they
couldn't even figure out how to coup>>

Baby
Tell me, how am I supposed to vote without you?
Now that I've been believing your stupid lies so long
How am I supposed to vote without you
And how am I supposed to conceal and carry on?
Is Melania satisfied with your micro dong?

SIEGE

Who's siege-ing who?
Is it the soldiers holding me and you?
No, maybe it's the lawmakers
Claiming to be Quakers
Maybe it's the banks
With their hooks in our wanks
No, no, I don't think so
People want to blame the media, the news
Fakes they call them, dropping false clues
Corporations, man, they want control
But they are just like you and me, working a pole
Working for bucks and playing the "game"
And let me tell you, it's a goddamn shame
The real siege-ists are more like saboteurs
It's ourselves, using ourselves as lures
When we catch ourselves, it's ourselves on the skewers
We need to work together, we need to fight
But not now. There's a program on that I like!

THIEF

She has morals, but the baby likes those morsels
She works 45 hours cleaning just to pay for rent
Before phone, groceries, utilities and car money gets spent
Before a single coffee or avocado toast
Before a single social media post

Then another 35 hours doing freelance work
When she can get it, if the contractors aren't jerks
Thank Christ for momma, she helps with the baby
And if momma didn't help out things might get crazy
Trying to make ends meet; finding ways to feed the kid
One missed paycheck from hitting the skids

If you find yourself at the grocery store
In a time when meat milk and eggs cost more than before
And you see her putting baby formula in her coat
Simply look the other way and keep walking
She did everything America asked and more
It's not her fault there's nothing left for the store
Baby's mouth is still hungry; stop giving her grief
She's a modern-day Robin Hood, not a thief

CHARGE

When it says insert
Just stick it in
Beep boop beep bop
Enter a pin
Good transacted, sacked and bagged
Whoops-a-daisy
Account's been flagged
No banana, not today
No Swiss chard
No mayonnaise
Empty shelves till debt paid down
Sad and helpless starving clown
Work 40 plus for Carver's crop
And 25 more at a gas station stop
All that labor traded for naught
Ending up in grocery line distraught
No checks to clear
No card to charge
Living small
Despite working large

HOSTILE

She came for Doug, a doomsday thug
Out for blood, covered in snot and mud
He aimed a scoop, she dropped her head
Airborne Doug, thought he was dead
Now she's spinning, ahead full steam
Doug delirious, seeing moonbeams
Onto the scene, King Kong in overalls
A showdown, one of the all-time brawls
Here comes a hostile: anger, hoof and hide
Now Goliath arms himself, scoop at his side

KABLAMO! ERUPTION!

Scoop now in twain
Maniac heifer, twirls and charges again
Man without weapons, no defense for attack
Bovine terrorist kicks out

CRACK!

Hoof meets head, now dad is dead!
Impressionable boy, overcome with dread
Hark, behemoth alive! Weary, yet rising
Cow a killer once more, role worth reprising
Gallop forward, towards murderous tryst
Human rears back, unleashes Glorious Demon Godfist
Guttural moo, collapse in a heap
Then gingerly to all fours and prance to the keep
Tail between legs while little boy weeps
Father ultimately okay, not even concussed
But hoof print on head most worthy of being discussed

ANARCHY

Holy shit!
All gloves, abated
Animals, both distraught/elated
Yelling and danger
Run amok
Screams and shitted pants
What the fuck?
Glues that bind
Coming loose
No more track
Just engine and caboose
Human train wrecks
That's how she goes
Will it ever end?
Only J Helen knows
Incorrigible monsters
Feeding unending needs
Chaos abounds
Total anarchy

INSURRECTION

Did you ever hear?
Hear the tale?
The one about
Turtle and the Babbitt?
I have not forgotten it
A collection of so many
So many who can't find the clit
All dressed in make believe
That's the spirit!
A comedy of errors
If it wasn't so serious
Fan base incapable
Yet still wildly delirious
We've now arrived
Arrived one year later
No better, we scoff
Congress and house full
Full of masturbaters
Jerking us off wildly
With careful word selection
Truly unbelievable
The world's worst insurrection

TRAITOR

Gentle rubes
Mostly decent
Bill of goods
Sold by a heathen
Capitol stormed
Offices sacked
Live on TV
Can you imagine that?!
Televised coup
Socially shared to the masses
Yet, despite concrete evidence
They kiss these traitors' asses
Empty Green
Wheelchair charlatan
Gleeman's spin
Tomorrow's the sixth
Will they try it again?

REBEL(2)

If you can't beat them
Perhaps time to join
But not glad hands or jovials
Neither kicks to the groin
There's a middling way
In which to rebel
Just track Nancy's stock
Sell when she sells
And buy when she buys
If the crook won't be found out
You can still get yours over time
If rigged is the system
Neither join them nor miss
Simply copy their approach
Take a piss when they piss!

FREEDOM

The right wants freedom but in truth they jest
For they get all squirrely around feeding breasts
It's just a titty, and a babe quaffing milk
It's not a public strip tease in assless chaps of silk
Who cares if it is? After all, aren't we free?
Sucking the big ol' titties of democracy?
M'yes, quite, yet here comes Texas, full of swagger
Killing healthcare for women with the tiniest of daggers
Texas: big of boast, yet slight of peen
The snowiest of all flakes if you know what I mean
On the off chance you don't I'll stop my meander
What's imposed on goose should be imposed on gander
If you legislate away her freedom to choose
Coitus and privilege is what you should lose
No more damp knickers, no more heaving chest
Though most assuredly she was faking if I had to guess
Stop with the talk of freedom, inalienable
Until it's truly offered to all, wholesale buyable

RESIST

Hang on just seconds more
That's a good way to trick fate
Second by second, just wait
Before doing something rash
Instead of going, gun drawn, down a path
Give me just a few more moments
Wandering through these memories with fondness
Longing for scenarios I've written in my mind
Just give me time
Before you leave, resist
Just long enough for me to rewrite my script

FIGHT

It could be so easy
For all of us to resign
Sit in the dark, killed lights
Killed morale
Killed hope
Head to the barn with a rope
But wait a moment and have a care
Someone, somewhere wants another moment
Someone, somewhere is excited to see
You again
Hang on for yourself
Hang on for them
Fight for more moments
Through the terrors and let-downs of the mundane
Atrocities await, but also an equal amount of great
Fight for more moments, damn you!
Fight!

LEVERAGE

There is a way to keep your soul
While staying in bounds
Around this current state corporate America
You can easily make the rounds
Find little rebellions to keep you honest
Small games you can play, simple and modest
Ones to remind you that plans fall through
Ones that keep reminding you that you're you
That you-ness might not be vastly different than others
It keeps your soul intact, if you have your druthers
Tow some lines when lines need towed
But never trade in a piece of your code

STOP

Occasionally the best change isn't something you do
But something you refuse
In scenarios where you feel like life has piled on process
Might I suggest calling for a recess?

Stop.

Stop doing the duplicative and mundane
You'd be shocked at how many things
We incorporate into our lives at others' behest
Little cuts that bleed away our best
Let them fall off and see if anyone cares
Maybe some of those little cuts can be repaired

WORTHLESS

Freedom is knowing
How stupid you are
How little people think about you
How all the fears you voice internally are made up
How little everything means in the grand scheme
How few people are on your team
How also almost no one is against you
Once you realize this you realize you can rent your soul
But no one can have it all because now you know
The only important thing to learn
Is very little is important at all
Most of life is worthless bullshit
Made up by a man you've never met
He wants you to believe all of it matters
He'll have your soul served on a platter
He'll want you to pick his interests vs. those you hold dear
Make him understand that only happens if the checks clear
In fact, make him understand that even if the check clears
You aren't going to give up a birthday or New Year's
Stop sacrificing time with those you love the most
Take that trip to the mountains or coast
Death will come knocking and he won't care at all
Whether you joined that meeting or took that call
In truth he probably won't care that you had adventure
Reapers don't delineate between fun or indenture
Decide before the clock's last tick
Will you be capital's slave or try to rise above it?

REVOLUTION(2)

DO BETTER. DO BETTER. DO BETTER. DO BETTER.
DO BETTER. DO BETTER. DO BETTER. DO BETTER.
DO BETTER. DO BETTER. DO BETTER. DO BETTER.

Every day I reach for the noose
Kill yesterday's me with a violent revolution
Perpetually executing previous selves

Daily effort to immolate myself
That from my ashes I am renewed, not dead
Each day this prayer on repeat in my head:

**“Do better. Do better.
Do better. Do better.”**

**Like spilled marbles on a concrete floor
These words never stop**

I can't shut them off
I can't shut them off
I can't shut them off
I can't shut them off
I can't shut them off
I can't shut them off

FREEDOM(2)

True freedom's cost is everything
You gotta turn your back on family
Kill your friendships
Quit your job
Burn every bridge and raze your collections
Turn the radio off and sledge your TV into sections
Walk away
Attachment is slavery
You gotta 86 all your things
If you ever want to truly be free

...that's why true freedom isn't for me

TRAITOR(2)

We put him on a pedestal, he sold a bill of goods
Zealots treat him like a god
Infallible through daily instances of idiocy
Axe among the trees, wolf among the sheep
Traitor to the lower classes
Dream sold easily to people asleep
At the wheel or at the voting booth
Equally dangerous to be caught napping
What even is happening?
Systemic racism and middle class displacism
Emoluments are now perfectly cromulent?
Quid pro quo is the seed he sows
Self-interest above the needs of the masses
BuT IET's TRy tO keEP hALF FULL GLasSEs

PROTEST(3)

You don't have to go along with it
You can be peaceful yet protest
It's how you voice concerns
Puerto Rico showed us
It can still be done
Hong Kong is trying
If you truly believe
Never give up
And if that doesn't work
Try throwing a bathtub
Try painting the town brown
Try fighting back with force
Try burning it down
Try guillotines
Try strikes
Try dragging the oligarchs out into the streets at night
Try beating them in front of their family
Try eating a few with fava beans and a nice chianti
Try fire with fire
Try conquest
Try war
Try whatever it takes to stop them from getting more

ACCORD

Through the breaches, trenches, ramparts
Young men perform acts of valor and desperation
In a complex world, dodging projectiles is priority
Sacrifice is the hardest part of valor

Back home, politicians jockey for their position
Both financial and power plays motivate
They dodge laws and justice for profit
War is business and business can be good

Meanwhile, families sit with no news
Hopelessly optimistic for a safe return
Wondering when the countries in conflict
Will lay down arms and reach an accord

ANARCHY(2)

Don't know much about anarchy
Don't know much about Noam Chomsky
Don't know much about anti-hierarchies
Don't know much about stateless societies
But I do know that I love shoes
And I know that if I get a bruise
I can go to a doctor and be seen

Don't know much about pentagrams
Don't know much about anarcho-punks
Don't know much about cooking lunch
Don't know how to kick or punch
But I do know that I love this coat
And if this car breaks I can call a man
Set up an appointment and be seen

DEFIANCE(3)

Refuse to be silent
Refuse the alliance
Stand here proudly
Bask in your defiance
Unwavering with spite
Be prepared to go all night

Refuse to go gently
Refuse to be quiet
Stand here proudly
Relish in your defiance
Unending conviction
Be prepared to win with attrition

CAPTURE

Sitting here is such sweet rapture
Totally bored since I've been captured
All I do is sit in squalor
My hosts don't care if I yell and holler
It doesn't look like I'll break free soon
My only meal comes at noon
What was my crime? Not even sure....
The prosecution's argument was intentionally obscure
Now I dwindle serving time
Making license plates from 7 to 5
My captors profit from my labor
The system is stacked in their favor
More nonviolent criminals in lock up than the Gulag
For-profit prisons are a hungry, hungry hog

SIEGE(2)

A rectangle of land
1,014 miles away
Our own people under siege
For 37 times that many days
The reflection of embargo
Instead of US, everyone else
Means someone on the mainland
Has to stock the shelf
Money grab for shippers
The only ones Jones helps
Ensuring during tragedy
Locals can't help themselves
Now there is a template
Go take the power back
Peaceful protest in the streets
Rectifying this and other nefarious acts

ESCAPE(2)

We can make a run for it
You just say the word
I will take your hand
You already have my heart
We will build our life together
Somewhere far away
Our only friend will be the wind
Slowly moving through your hair
Whispering sweet nothings
I will take you there

DREAM(2)

Look, I am a white kid from Iowa.

That's like winning the fucking capitalist lottery, so I'm not really the right person to write a poem called Dream with a clear reference to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

But I love punk rock, and he is a punk rock hero. Fighting for change. Sacrificing his own happiness for something he believed.

The lesson is, it's not just treating others with kindness. It's treating others with equity. We must fight together to make shit happen.

Don't give up the dream.

DEFEAT(2)

I revel in defeat
I get beat
So often
Sometimes when I win I feel bad
The old me did, anyhow
Now, I gloat
Even if I go ought for 100
If one time I win
I will recklessly broadcast to the nations
I will celebrate endlessly without hesitation
I revel in my defeats
And if I chance to beat?
It's sportsmanship I yeet
Sprint headfirst
Into my next whooping,
Assuredly worse

DEFEAT(2.5)

I revel in defeat
I can take my yeets
I know every loss
Is one math closer to a win
And when I want the win?
I'm in TKO mode
I'm in go hard in the MF paint mode
Reckless in my victory
I'll gladly swallow Ls
Relentless in my incivility
I sport the smack talk belt
Because I know every bad beat
Puts me one step closer to you kissing my feet
I know every time I lose the crown
It's one time closer to you going down
I know how to win a war of attrition
All it takes to keep dying is a little ambition
I revel in my defeats

ATTACK(2)

Life is not a thing where you sit back

It is a battle - you need to attack

If life is a bull

Grab it by the horns and fuck it

If life is a beer

Chug it

If life is a lover

Cuck it

If life is a dominatrix

Never submit

If life is a toilet

Take a shit

INSURRECTION(2)

This pizza is unacceptable
This cheese isn't even on half of it
I called to get a new one
You hung up the phone
You hung up the phone and thought
I'd leave it alone
Insurrection! Insurrection!
This crime against my pizza will not stand
Insurrection! Insurrection!
You're going to get a taste of my personal pan
You're going to taste the back of my hand

REBEL(3)

This corner we're backed into was sold to us as a blessing from you. But this deal sours more by the hour and now it's time to take back the power. It's time to fight.

Independence is not a luxury. It's a right that's afforded to us on the backs of the kids who have died for us. We've been complacent and deserved what befell, but you pushed too hard now it's time to rebel.

PARLAY(2)

I came to your parlay
I heard your words

Your words are shit
There is no accord

FIRE(2)

Burn 'em or boot 'em
Rob 'em and loot 'em
Kick 'em or stick 'em
Punch 'em and hit 'em

But do you recaaaaaalllllllllll
The one thing you shouldn't do in a movie theater

Atttttttt alllll?

Well...

...three things...

1. Don't yell fire
2. Don't beat off
3. Don't shoot up the joint

In that order

...we're trying to have a society here, man.

HOSTILE(2)

Am I hostile?

Usually, I aggressively disagree
With nearly everything around me.

Sometimes it's because I'm better
But often enough it could just be the weather
Or the current mood I'm in.

I admire those who've found a cause.
They have my respect and deserve our applause.
Me? I roam from event to event.

It's never enough to be content.
I never let things go.
Every action and sound I make serves to let you know.

I'm hostile.

CHARGE(2)

Maybe it's Han running towards the garrison
Or maybe it's Indy, also played by Harrison
Tearing after the Nazis
One against all for the good of the cause
Or maybe it's the fellowship
Led by Aragorn
"For Frodo," he'll say as he turns and storms
Or maybe it's Daenerys shouting Dracarys
As Drogon cooks somebody's first born
Whatever mustard you put on the bun
Recall Tom Cruise in Last Samurai
Using swords to fight guns
Denzel made a rush in Glory
And Mel in Braveheart
And Gandalf the White came from the east
When man was playing their final card
If the chips are down and all hope is lost
Don't be afraid to charge

REVOLT

Fuck this place
Fuck this shit
Fuck this treatment
All of it
This will not stand
We've had enough
It's time for rage
Time to be rough
All this anger, all this spite
All these feelings, tonight, incite
Through with caution, through with pain
We've had enough and you're to blame
Take to the streets
Take to the air
Get in my car
I'll take you there
Together, we can flush them out
Together, we can scream and shout
It's over, and you better bolt
The time is now!
REVOLT, REVOLT!

STAND

It does not need to be grand
You don't need to be superhuman
With powers; invincible
It only needs a seed; a belief
A principle
Nothing special is needed
Simply stick to what's right
Don't cave, don't concede
Don't back down
No matter how dark the night
In the face of what's wrong
Be a beacon of light
No need for a plan
If you believe in it, stand

DESTROY(2)

Disguised as an envoy
Breaching the fence
I am the night
I am the tide

I am here to destroy
I am a pestilence
Host of your fears
Flooding your piers

I am the hurricane
I am the drought
I am the horseman
Snuffing you out
I am the sword
I am the flame
I am the danger

The last thing you see
Cutting a swath
I am the rot
I am the knock

I am the curse
I am the wraith
Cower before me
A doomsday clock

PROTECT(2)

I know how to swing for the fence
I got weapons for self defense
I look both ways
I check the list twice
If you enter uninvited
I will not be nice

I know how to shoot from the hip
I got skills to give you the slip
I watch my tail
I cover my six
If you don't think I can protect
You'll end up in a ditch

REFUSE(2)

You owe nothing
You can choose to make someone's day
But you aren't beholden to their happiness

You aren't to be used
Don't allow them to churn you out
You have one life, don't burn it out

You aren't free
No one's paying you to kill yourself
Above and beyond is not an expectation

You can say no
You owe nothing and you aren't to be used
If you don't like the direction, refuse

ADVANCE(2)

Prepare

Test

Think through your opponent's best

Assemble

Arm

Think how to win with the least harm

Decide

Act

Think about your counter when attacked

Advance

Guard

Think through how you'll protect the yard

Protect

Save

Think through more than just today

LEAD(2)

Take action
Help others see the plan
Show them you are willing to stand
Be decisive, weigh the facts
Ensure whoever follows you
Knows you have their back
Be supportive
Dirty those hands
But know when to give up the reins
Everyone will be more likely to endure
A little pain
If they know you too
Will swim the manure canal
That's the way to lead
That's how you gotta throw down

DEPLOY(2)

Have you tried?

Have you deployed any percents?

Or was there something left in the hopper?

Do you conduct like purest copper?

Or are you a quitter, and a stopper?

DEPLOY(3)

Sun Tzu says all warfare is based on deception
But what if it's ourselves whom we deceive?
We wear our 72% on our sleeves
And brag about our "can't evens" and our strife
But none of us even knows what's 100%
I know I don't know how to deploy
I'm almost 40 and still act like a boy
Instead of solving World's problems
I waste my time playing with toys
It's hard for most to comprehend, to know
When the world is playing chess
Almost everyone is stuck on tic tac toe
Just showing up is 300% of the fight
Grinding it out day after day, night after night
If you want to enjoy the spoils; if you want the joy
Start showing up
Learn how to deploy

FIGHT(2)

Don't give up, kid
That future burns like the sun
The world can be whatever you want
I'm more convinced than ever
The tides can turn the same as a feather
Floating in the wind
As long as your blood pumps
You can always start again

Don't let go, kid
There's a bounty for the taking
And it can all be yours
If you don't mind a little raking
The world is yours to fashion
If you seek out your passions
So long as your heart thumps
You can still take bumps

Don't quit now, kid
It may seem like quite the skid
If you slow down it's easier to handle turns
And the things that make you Is
Are the very coals that fuel the burn
Harness it and there's nothing you can't smite
You can do and be almost anything
If you are willing to fight

RESIST(2)

Resistance cuts with dull blades
Performing elected surgery with a spade
Resistance cannot be sealed with a kiss
But it can be punctuated with a fist
Messy; resistance pens with broken wrist
Martyrdom, with a brave face
Attrition is how one wins this race
Buildings bricked with principles
One spark ignites multitudes of disciples
Reluctant heroes who throw gas on the pile
Not for fame; not for name in lights
But for righteousness, or sometimes spite
To stand firm for justice or morality
Weathering the storm because it is right
Rising despite fear - sometimes at personal cost
As long as brave people resist
Hope is never lost

PRIVILEGE

He never gives you more than you can handle!
Sage advice if you're dealing with a graffiti vandal
Nice words if your boss yelled at you for wearing sandals
Or granny's picture fell off the mantel
But it is a privileged phrase
For straight white middle Americans who get paid
Not so kind for people barely making minimum wage
Or wives forced to deal with a husband's rage
What about when it goes too far
Young kids who die in crashed up car
Athletic woman jogging who got a taste of crowbar
Black youth cut down by a man with star
Victims who got more than they deserved
I am sick of people using it as a swerve
If God only gives you what you can handle, he's a perv
If this thinking feels a little too ahead of the curve
Then maybe you need to get out more
Realize life is a boor
Wildly unfair and mean but for the upside we're all whores
While many people's best upgrade is sleeping on the floor

RENOUNCE

Renounce your Christianity!
If you don't want to build a society
Say "Fuck you!" To J Helen Christ!
If you can't tolerate different and just be nice
Recommend your God to please get fucked!
If you refuse to help out, telling the needy "Good luck!"
If you think hostile architecture belongs in your town
Kick your spiritual leader and burn your church down!
If you think extreme nationalism is all the rage
Kindly burn your Bible page by page by page!
If you think any type of LGBTQ is wrong
Turn in your hymns for some satanic metal songs!

And come in close to hear this last little bit
If hate fuels your engine, you are a piece of shit.

RESIST(3)

Do not let a false belief in American superiority
Cloud your judgment in matters of fidelity
This country was founded on taking a stand
Not on some grandstand, or pandering to the man
Or via flag on your truck or a gun in your waistband
It's always been a mentality
A real them or me
Or more rather a them and US
But we let it contaminate and pervert us internally
Remember, me and you aren't enemies
We play for the same team
Both sides keep trying to tell us it ain't this
But it's this.
We need to resist.

FIGHT(3)

Those feelings you feel now?
The ones where your government let you down?
The ones where you want to eat the rich?
The ones you want to beat that bitch Mitch?
Keep them close like a baby, tender and mild
When the time is right for fists, go wild!
If it gets bad enough, you'll even fight French-style
This idea our French friends lay down arms is a myth
They'll toss tubs through the president's window, and swift!
They'll repaint the parliament with liquid shit
One day it is all baguettes and oui, oui
The next day it's guillotines, you see?

DEPLOY(4)

Girls and boys: Deploy!

Slick Rick Rossello got the oust
From half a million people marching to his house

250,000,000 people went on strike
In India to help the farmers make it right

The tactic is organization, then volume
Endless boots and words, ad nauseum

Repudiate the rhetoric you're fed
Deploy in numbers instead

Until it's made right true change is worth the fight
Worth it to feel secure at night

ADVANCE(3)

Break down big insurmountable projects
Reduce to the ridiculous for ease
Understanding and comprehension grow
When clear building blocks can be felt and seen

Digestible chunks do not crush our souls
Rather, they give us something to believe
We know we will still have to pay the toll
Yet, seeing progress is to know relief

Giving up? Not an accepted reward
Each day will not bring us satisfaction
Continuously pushing us forward
Is where lies the fruit of all our actions

It's okay to move backwards while we dance
A winding road is how we will advance

LEAD(3)

Here's a secret for all the kids who want to grow up and do big things. There's three ways to lead:

The first is through fear. Is that leadership? Not really clear... More like ruling and that's no way to steer.

The second is through appeals to the base's basest fears. This just leads to tears from the masses and no real progress when everyone is kissing each other's asses. Not enough "nos", too many yasses.

The third though, is nice. It's the only way to truly create a zeitgeist. You gotta muck it up with the teams. Show that you'll get your hands roughed with dirt. You aren't above cleaning a shitter. If you get knocked down you'll get up because you aren't a quitter.

In summary, idiots follow rhetoric to an early, shallow grave. But a real leader inspires us all to be brave.

REFUSE(3)

Don't believe the hype
Don't let the president whisper his lies
Or shout them from a mic

He's gonna talk about explosive bullshit
But that's what comes from his mouth
That's what he's all about

They may storm the capital
The way they did today
This is not the way
This is not the way

Refuse to believe the hype
Refuse to listen to their lies
Whispered, or from a mic

Everywhere there is bullshit
It's what comes out of their mouths
That's the only thing they know about

They may storm the capital
The way they did today
This is not the way
This is not the way

DESTROY(3)

We don't need to tear it down
We don't need to smash the crown
We don't need to blow it up
We don't need to be radical
We don't need to burn it to the ground
We do need to change some things
We do need to limit terms
We do need to stop the money
We do need to stop the influence
We do need some type of berm

That's the part which needs destroyed
The underfunding from the ones who employ

STAND(2)

Tonight's a good example
Of when I don't want to write
Motivation drained onto the floor
Of this project? I am bored.
This is micro compared to other ills
I just want to show how you can build
You just gotta stand
Getting upright after being knocked out
That's what makes a woman or man
We might get knocked down again
Life is just a rotation of TKOs to chins
If we are willing to stand one more time
Well, then that's another chance to win

REVOLT(2)

We will not eat this shit no more
Take the beans and out the door
Lousy pizza crust of wilt
Lump ass gravy with grit like silt
Pumpkin pie made just of yams
A 'fancy feast' with canned hams
Only foul like something to feed a cat
Now slopped for humans - imagine that!
Loose bananas and tongue served full
A god damned travesty, I cry revolt!

CHARGE(3)

What do the heroes say? In the big budget blockbuster when help is on the way? "Locked and loaded," yes, that's the phrase. Everyone alert, tension like a haze. The crowd in the theater leans forward to see, the breath of them coming now more quickly. Anticipation high, drama at scale, exciting fist fights or bullets, hailed. The actor charges forward to music with a yell and the crowd watching doesn't exhale. Such excitement! Such machismo! The thrill of violence we all love and know. This is the turmoil I feel inside, at all times. This hype, this aggression. My unspoken confession. Well, know it now. The reason I like my music loud? The reason I always need some kind of sound? It affords me a way to drown out the pounding I hear in my head. It helps cloud the focus from turning everything red. Instead of stillness or rage it helps keep me scanning in the middle of the page instead of ripping it all asunder or arming the charge, a classic blunder. I know the anger never wins, but it feels so fucking good when I give in. For now, we can all just take a deep breath. Exhale slowly, cool our jets. But it's there, lurking, behind my eyes. A dangerous talent, this fire inside. Ill-gotten skill I'm compelled to hide.

FIRE(3)

We absolutely started the fire
Now we can watch it smolder on the pyre
Now we can watch as it gets more dire
We must sit close, it'll make us perspire
Love watching these idiots conspire
I can't wait for them to retire
We can be rid of these liars
But I guess just in lieu of new, other liars
I think we're all just tired
There's only so many ways we can stay wired
Before we get overstimulated and expire
A nice break from this is required

HOSTILE(3)

Armed with projectile
That's only one way to be hostile
I'm convinced most of us don't realize
How our behavior makes us weaponized

REBEL(4)

Can you feel it swell?
A need to rebel?
Against these forces
Against current courses
Can you hear the bell?
Signaling it's time to rebel?
Against these takes
Against narratives fake
Can you even tell?
It's time to rebel?
Against our lack of care
Against the elite's reluctance to share
Can you pick up the smell?
That something in the air telling you to rebel?
Against these false and true pretenses
Against whatever *this* is

INSURRECTION(3)

Well well well
Well well well well well
They
Agreed to
Force their way into the session
It was the world's dumbest insurrection
I love that yokel who tried to fly home
Just to find out he's in the no-fly zone
Or the gent now in coffin sporting blazer
Due to hitting his balls repeatedly with a taser
Earn stupid prizes playing stupid games
I hope you're ashamed
I hope you're ashamed

But they're not ashamed!
They're not ashamed!
Trump gave them a pardon
Took away the blame
Now they get to go home scot-free
Get back to being who they like to be
Run from the cops
Beat up a wife
Cause disturbances at the local bar
On a Tuesday night
I guess play stupid games and earn dumb rewards
Doesn't count anymore when you take actions, untoward

ATTACK(3)

Corn in the cob?
Attacking the knob?
What does it mean?
Commander unseen!
Where did we end up?
Drinking piss from a cup?
Dining in after takeout?
Look at the score; it's a rout!
I guess that's the end?
Got a headache, again...

DEFEAT(3)

What a Parler trick!

Everyone thought they were so slick

It weren't no vaccine that brought Hoover's men

Instead, the chips of their cell phones, within

Shooting a video, a video tagged

Now the FBI showing up, captured and bagged

Play stupid games, win stupid prizes

Make stupid decisions, with stupid disguises

Bricks through glass, airborne fist

A great way to end up on the no-fly list

These events recently, no need to repeat

It's what happens when you can't admit defeat

STRATEGY(3)

Can you think of a plan?

By weighing the data?

All you need to do is advance.

The better the plan, the more likely a victory dance!

Can you connect dots?

In a meaningful way?

All you need to do is check boxes.

The more checked, the more likely it outfoxes!

Can you make a decision?

Showing you have a vision?

All you need to do is show a map.

Paths toward achievable metrics get a tip of the cap!

DREAM(3)

I find this poem incredibly difficult to write, in part because I've been a heel my whole life, coupled by the reality of the last ~~four~~ eight years. The idea of New Year's Revolutions is to write about things worth fighting for, but I can't presume to understand what a ~~day like today~~ decade like this decade means to ~~the black community~~ anyone who isn't a straight, white, neurotypical; given how much our society has regressed recently. So, rather than try to be incredibly insightful or witty, I'll just keep it simple today. Tomorrow is a new day.

Hope, it's a thing that springs eternal
Don't let go, don't let them tell you no
Fight like the lives of your children's children
Depend on the walls we tear down today
You have allies all over the place
So today let's make a plea to their senses
Unity is a better catalyst than fences
If you have any privilege, put it to use
Stand tall for your neighbor in the face of abuse
Reject language you know has no place
Rebuke hatred with confidence directly to its face
Sever the past and build anew
Those who have more must help those with few

Note: I updated this from when I originally wrote it.

SIEGE(3)

This pandemic is like a self-imposed siege
Good thing these walls aren't beige
Can't wait to turn the page
And move on with my life
I'd like to punch the mouth
Of every mother fucker who kept going out
Instead of quelling the effects during spikes
I would like to grind their face into the ground tonight
Callous rationale for killing people through this plight
That economy is bangin', y'all
Unless you're essential, then stand poor and tall
Whilst we wait for the subsidies and rations
When there's mouths to feed, no high fashion
This pandemic is like a siege
We'd love a splash of color to break up the beige

ESCAPE(3)

Be vigilant to make sure we didn't trade bads
We can be hopeful yet still watchful
All the old ills remain still
This isn't some form of escape
A hiatus from the harsh realities we've all seen
It's just the opening scene of the new regime
So be vigilant to ensure we didn't simply trade bads
We can be hopeful yet still watchful

TRAITOR(3)

Robin Hood

The hero in fairy tales

In real life?

Turned Maid Marian into the Sheriff

MASK

I know we're in a global pandemic
And I know our division is systemic
I wish you'd think about other people
Stop believing we're treading on your steeple
It's really not that big of a task
We just want you to wear a mask

I don't care about the disease
I don't care if you sneeze
It's not your breath that concerns me
It's that you're so appallingly ugly
It's really not that big of a task
We just want you to wear a mask

Please think of all the children
Afraid of monsters and worse
Please think of the parents
Who won't have recourse
When their stupid kids can't sleep at night
Because they caught your face in their sights
If I had to choose between coronavirus
Or seeing your ugly face
I'd start open-mouth kissing strangers
Of every creed and race
If my only choice is eating manure
Or putting eyes on you today
I know I won't go hungry
Sign me up for the buffet

VOTE(2)

I got a voice
I got a way
I facilitate change
I have a say
I make decisions
I base them on facts
I cast my vision
I move forward not back
I make it happen
I actively choose hope
I do it with duty
I make my vote

FORMATION

It brings me great elation
Watching you in your formations
Toss swords and muskets plenty
Navigate rings and ladders deftly
Take a lap in the wet with care
Fondly reflect on the time we share

CAPTURE(2)

Why did Journey kick the man
Out of the band?
Was it because
He was a Giants fan?
I hope this was the case
I'd like to punch him in his stupid face
As well as Madison Baumgartner

That said
Nothing will ever beat the vid
For Separate Ways
When the man
Shaves his face
Or the other man
Plays the keys
Up on the wall
No cords plugged in at all

DEFIANCE(4)

A familiar face in a familiar place
A place I don't call home
But one that still feels like home
It feels smaller now
Maybe I'm walking taller now somehow
When I go it, it's easier to go it alone
Then I don't have to stay in any one place long
If it's a bad track I can skip the song
Like the flitting bee I can be choosy
Take just enough pollen for the honey I need
Leave the rest untouched, unseen
I can make my escape at any point
My discretion to leave is whatever hour I anoint
A hasty return to my favorite eyes
The ones I don't feel a need to constantly defy
Ones giving me hope that everything will be alright

PUNK(2)

Man, I just wanted to write a banger about punk
Good thing tonight my words got skunked
I recognize that I can't win them all
Time boxed, I daily force myself to rise or fall
Rise with vaulted words that inspire
Fall with a frustration and burn on the pyre
I desired these words to really hit
Simultaneously over care and not give a shit
Justify my daily dichotomy
Between constant rebellion and kowtowing
Is this what happens to all great punks?
You play the game just enough
Dance in the fringes of indoctrination
When the time is right you can be a change agent
But then when the time is right
All I want to be is home at night

ANARCHY(3)

Broken people can still do great things
Great people can help broken things feel whole
Understandable, this finger to authority
Know this: order is still a necessity

...I'll tell you why...

There's already a million ways to die
Agreeable, this desire to hoe one's own row
Consider crops still grow best in that row
Easier to navigate, easier to harvest
Then you can start to care more, not care less
If you can hoe the row on terms of your own
You can start to do other things, too
You can help others grow and that will help you
Even broken, that can be a great thing
Modicums of order stave off those million ways
It's not lame to work towards better days
Helping others is a gateway to feeling whole
That's why real anarchy must go

ACCORD(2)

Dickering on everything
Dickering on nothing
These mother fuckers in the senate and house
All acting quiet as a church mouse
Too quiet not to be complicit
Too staged not to be illicit
No such thing as letting bygones be bygones
That's not why we crossed the pond
Loud and clear deliver a message
Stop with the opinions and essays
Vote them all out
And then vote them all out
And then vote them all out
And then vote them all out
Until we reach an accord
WE are the shareholders, they are just the board
Their uselessness isn't something we can afford

REVOLUTION(3)

It wasn't that they didn't know how
It just hadn't come to mind
The idea they would sink to your level
This generation that knows how to grind
Grinding out war games and first-person shooters
Exploring online worlds and exposing secrets
Secret caches, loopholes, final bosses
Complicated team games in order to win
Learning how to overcome repeat losses
You were just lucky they hadn't thought of you yet
Your rules, easy to crack
Your targets, now their targets
Your greed became the final gaming
Momentum flipped so fast you had to cheat to live
Now is not a new awakening
Now is a new game, with a new type of player
Different prizes motivate these slayers
That's how they will win this revolution
Because you can't understand it
You won't rise to their level to see the solution

FREEDOM(3)

Hold em girls
Resolute in the face of a changing game
Hold em boys
We'll never be the same
Hold em girls
Reserve your seat to Mars
Hold em boys
We'll all drive Tesla cars
Hold em girls
Don't settle for lazy trade
Hold em boys
We must go hard in the paint
Hold em gang
The moon is within reach
Hold em friends
Together we can't be beat

FIST

This year used a fist
But next year might go all the way up to the elbow
Enough to make us all say "oh hell no!"
Gotta be careful what you ask for
When it goes from 31 to first
Things can always be dumber
It can always get worse
So Aldi's Log Singe or whatever they say
Persona non grata or Feliz new year's day
A big hot mess might be your reward
That's just life staying interesting
To keep you from being bored

ABATE

Man, I need to figure out how to relax!
I need something that will force my joints to
Release and force my muscles to unclench.
Like some manner of muscle wrench.
Lefty loosey all day long.
Till I can sleep a straight eight
Till I can let go of some of this hate
Till the tension in my neck abates
I want to feel like there is a tiny fishing weight
Attached to every cell of my body
Pulling me downwards in unison
Deeper and deeper into that pillow top
And then I don't want it to stop

MYTHOS

There are myths we all believe in
We create to help us through the day
Myths that only live in our minds
Largely unspoken
Future stories that give us hope
Even when reality is a heavy weight

CONFLAGRATION

Little tendrils of smoke and
Coals, always smoldering
Simmering under ash just between my arms
My pulsing anger factory
All my atoms working in tandem
Our daily effort to forgo a meltdown
But sometimes the plant manager
Can be a real heel
He can intentionally fall asleep at the wheel
Let the tractor trailer of rage
Careen towards the pylons
Hitting them at top speed
Catastrophically releasing boiled blood's seed
I become a catastrophe
Dangerous of action and tongue
Intentions ill to strike out at those I love
Wars of attrition to spread my condition
Wildfire without discrimination
An uncontrollable conflagration

REBEL(5)

"Too independent!"

She yelled at me, I'm guessing because I would not be controlled. Not even particularly rebellious, I probably just questioned a dumb rule.

Do you really believe some deity's will is that barely put together adults implement rules Willie Nilly to get kids to sit still?

Rules aren't meant to be followed. Some lady or gent who doesn't like being questioned dictating some sternly worded decree doesn't automatically make it hallowed.

"Too independent!"

She yelled at me, I'm guessing because I rebelled. It's one of the highest compliments I've ever been paid.

DEFIANCE(5)

If all of this is guided by God's hand
Do you think it feels like a thought-out plan?
It feels to me like nothing more than endless bullshit
I think he let go of the wheel
If he's even real
And I will stand here in an act of noncompliance
It's obvious to me that all the suffering you see
A human race that's pretty evenly divided
Our ending isn't written even though evangelicals are smitten
With the idea that this is all some master design
I don't believe in fate, all the wars fought up to date
Have been a product of religion's misguided hubris
Stagnant loyalty scheme, it has run its course it seems
And I will stand here in an act of defiance
I will not serve as an accomplice, nor will I abide in silence
Instead I'll try my hardest to share a little kindness
I won't do it in his name, but I will do it all the same
Small contributions meant to help us through another day

Hopefully one less person in this world causing pain

GUERRILLA

When people ask me "how are you today?"

I like to respond by saying "There's still plenty of time for things to go right."

It's a little guerrilla tactic I use on myself. I can disregard what's already come to pass while giving myself carte blanche to believe something brighter exists just up around the bend.

I don't dwell on how people will perceive my words.

I'm only optimistic that there's gotta be something more than whatever this is.

REVOLUTION(4)

In France the farmers said "no, monsignor"
Took spreaders to town to paint Macron with manure
Up and down the rue shit coats like paint
One side or the other will be a villain or a saint
Whatever the cause, tax on livestock or bean
Was enough to make the farmers roll out the guillotine
Peaceful protest might be a term to appease
Not practical, though, when you're down on your knees
Scale globally, we're headed towards fascist states
With leaders actually trying to pass laws to abate
Any act of protest to be met with terrible adjudication
A fine way to light the fires of revolution
When politicians and police try to snuff the spark
The most important time to face the dark
Be a bright light in a pit of despair
Standing up for what's right, good and fair
I applaud the French farmers repainting the town
I applaud the Minnesotans who burned the precinct down
Violence through legislation is equally worse
To Molotov cocktails and shitwagon bursts
Stick to principles and keep the resistance flag high
Show elected leaders they need to tow (and toe!) the line

COMBATANT

Give my depression a line of cocaine
By listening to Spanish Love Songs and Saves The Day
Give myself platitudes on this, another gray day without light
Common themes about staying alive out of spite
Give myself a reason to keep going by starting a row
Combating against myself and everyone I know
Give everyone I cared about and everyone I'll ever meet
Ample reason to beat a hasty retreat

Give my depression a barrel of accelerant
Disdain for everything turning me into a belligerent recalcitrant
Give indiscriminate opinions to people who didn't ask
Telling others how to live my self-appointed task
Give the worst insults to myself
Resentment for idleness and failing mental health
Give up like it's locked door's master key
Leaning into my devil Apathy

ACCORD(3)

America cannot be righted
It is not a ship, just sighted
Listing the wrong way for progress
So-called Christians upset, in a war with a phantom menace
Most of the evils they hate devils of their own imagination
Eyes that refuse to see past the end of their nose
Blinded to any rational thought or other views, opposed
Opting for fairy tales and last-minute reconciliation
In lieu of open-mindedness and better information

DERELICT

Sometimes

Sometimes I've been prone to choose asshole mode
For old times sake or because I wanted to hit dad with a rake
Reason being is irrelevant: I just wanted to be mean
Bring everyone around a level or two down
I was good at it; being a derelict
Poor, this skill I chose to perfect
Now? My biggest regret feeding anger instead of being kind
Combating for something I've only recently seemed to find
Boiled blood needs release; pent-up steam mitigates peace
When the top blows I feel invincible
A feeling fleeting when I realize I've been an imbecile
Now, a thoughtful pause and a moment of care
Clears out some of the steam for cooler air
The cost of kindness? Less than regret
Worth enough to make changes, I bet

HARANGUE

Thank you, Senators, for the audience today
I apologize in advance if it feels like your being harangued
You've allowed this to perpetuate, napping on your watch
Or maybe you're bought and paid with a donor's match
I'm here today to implore you
To command your eyes and ears
The state of our food supply has me near to tears
But not the kind you cry when sissy dies
The kind coming unexpectedly when hands are tied
I'm not peddling conspiracy, but don't you find it strange
The garbage we've been fed leads to disease and pain
Which benefits the drug lords moving "honest" pills
Medicine we wouldn't need if our food wasn't causing ills
The only first-world country legally poisoning the supply
Every single year we trend earlier to die
I beg of you Senators, if you pen another bill
Look past abortion and the benefactors for whom you shill
Pass meaningful legislation to try to right this wrong
So we can have clean, nutritious food
And I can stop yelling at you through song

ANNIHILATION

Clock ticking
Plot thickening
My imagination runs wild
Pondering the fate
Imaginary species or race
Six hundred and forty-two point five light years away
Do they coordinate? A community?
Do some rebel? A mutiny?
Will their leaders fold under scrutiny?
Could they all leave? Is their lifeboat viable?
To traverse epic miles? Is the trip survivable?
How many will choose to go down with the ship?
How many will be forced to try to give guards the slip?
Desperate attempts to avoid "getting died"
Steal aboard aircraft as it rises in the sky
Do they have another planet in mind?
Do they possess the technology to make it in time?
Their sun, imminent conflagration
Will they be able to avoid annihilation?

REVOLUTION(5)

Way up my own ass this month
Trying to write revolution bangers
Iz says I should just say words
Instead of spitting out these turds
Because realistically nothing I wrote will change anything
No one will suddenly say "holy shit you cracked the case!"
"Boy do we have egg on our face!"
I mean we all have egg on our face, egg on our person
We're all just brand-new clothes
And it's like God just put some shit up his nose
Then cranked his hog for all the world to see
Now is just gross and messy
He used us, the new Gucci, as cum rags
Welp fuck me I guess, I guess we're getting dragged
Every day the world does its best
Spinning away in its stupid little journey
Until one day, finally, the sun will get a little burny
I suppose we're cooked either way
Hip hip hurray!

DEAD

I owe you a banger
One that gins up the masses and rattles cages
Kills the patriarchy while the mother in you rages
I owe you a bop
One that doesn't slow down and can't be topped
Something so vicious your enemies' heads are lopped
I owe you a crucifixion
Words so filled with nails, and purpose and conviction
That the ones who stand against you stutter with the diction
I owe you a wordy double murder
Cleaving and rending the uncaring masses
Ripping asunder anyone who smarts back or sasses
I owe you a crucifixion
Killing any doubts you might have in your heart or head
You are enough and it needs to be said
I owe you a bop
Ear worm that never gives up, gives in, or stops
One that makes you feel strong, calm, powerful and on top
I owe you a banger
One that keeps you from bathtub toast or barnyard hanger
Words to help you vent and express your justified anger
I owe you a banger

REBEL(6)

A wind blows stiff through the night. It is the breeze of discontent and malfeasance. America has turned away from Jesus, if you believe in him. Regardless, senseless behavior is prominently on display from aggrandizing Christians who cry foul about free speech but clam up when asked what they can't say. I know what they want to say. I know the year and the day they want the clock and calendar to say. This isn't a lambaste of the willfully ignorant. It's more an effort to implore the class of workers to do more, and together. Rebel against the idea that the poors are your enemy. That the gays or the browns and blacks are somehow thieves in the night trying to steal your job behind your back. There is only one enemy: the one who hoards all the money. The one who tries to tell you what to think. The ones who paywall the kitchen sink. They're the ones who are the real rاتفinks. Unsavory and lacking morals, but quick as shit to blame the less fortunate. Fuck them and their unforgivable trespass. Listen, the only war that matters is class.

ALLOCATION

Save time every day to look at another's perspective
Flawed and misguided it might be
Save time every day for self-reflection
The allocation of which should be mandatory
Main character syndrome has gone bananas
Lack of self-awareness at highest point
Fallacies and biased arguments the norm
When own self-righteousness is used to anoint
The self, knighted by the self
Hubris ruling, humility shelved
Maybe it's not your beliefs opposed
You could just be an asshole, I mean, everyone knows
When you self-report intelligence lacking
And then I'm the one getting support and backing
Then you double and triple and septuple down
On rhetoric that just makes you look like a clown
Have the day you deserve I will not engage
Your own plan backfiring is why you're engaged

PROTEST(4)

My former colleague protested ICE today
Almost everyone was a warm ray
Sunshine on a cold and icy heart
But right-wing blonde housewives kept playing their part

These particular women made it their mission
The antithesis of what it means to be a Christian
Words so harsh it would make you wince and do a Kegel
Yelling at her "I hope you get raped by an illegal!"

What the fuck is their problem? Saying things so vile?
But maybe we're the ones who are in denial
Letting these mentally ill people run amok without care
Left untreated these "Christians" do damage beyond repair

All this to my colleague who is always so kind and caring
And resolute, brave, just, thoughtful, and daring!

RETALIATE

My silence is violence
Holstered
But please allow me to brag and
Bolster
What you mistake for weakness and something
Queer
Is actually me retaliating for those brave enough to
Hear
My silence is violence
Quelled
I assure you I can still ring that
Bell
This is different now I'm not trying to win some
Debate
I must teach you a lesson about living in
Hate
My silence is violence
At bay
Rest easy knowing I could still put you in the ground
Today
I assure you if I thought it would
Matter
I would stab with tined tongue until all your blood
Splattered
Be intentionally mean and unquestionably targeted with words
Pointed
I am the king of crucifixion by language and you'd be
Anointed
A knight in the court of the willfully
Ignorant
Is this clear enough or are you just not getting
It

COMPROMISE

My body is no temple, more like a Rube Goldberg machine
Largely, I'm content with me
Acknowledging this is just how I'm built
The last five years I've become more in tune and attuned
I have discovered the way my parts are interconnected
Like how my old man back is due to tight hip flexors
And a lot of my ear issues are due to sinus connectors
Yoga is amazing and at age 44
I can do a forward fold and put my palms on the floor
Ten years ago I lived in my revenge time, getting five hours
Of sleep but I've compromised the last few years
Trying to get 7 or 8 and no whiskey or beers
This has made me gentler, kinder and contemplative
About my body, nature, and lessons lost from natives
Who knew about plants and matters serene
Who I now try to emulate by living a life clean
I want quality over quantity for my remaining years
But if I can get a little quantity too there won't be any jeers
From me because I have things to do
Get to know your body, I implore you!

RESOLVE

I have the finest friends!
Many of whom are the strongest of women
They gas me up when my tank is low
Cheer me up when I'm feeling woe
I'm more resilient than I used to be
In large part to the women who tolerate me
Their bravery and resolve are an inspiration
With feral amounts of determination
Juggling with ease things I didn't know could exist
Probably even letting me mansplain more than I wish
I'm a work in progress but, thanks to you, getting better
So if I can help clear your path, I better!
Knowing each of you is a blessing to me
Who for whatever reason love me unconditionally
I am thankful for every kindness extended
Which I hope to repay tenfold by the time my life is ended!

BRAVE

Sometimes brave is walking away
Sometimes it's not engage
Anyone can be an asshole
But can you let yourself avoid the hassle?

HEADCANON

Inauguration cameras rolling
Elon too, on ketamine
Look! There! Bezos and plastic bride
And now comes Zuck to her side
Without discretion Mark drinks without pity
Having a long hard look at another man's wife's titties
My new head canon is that this is the shot
Fired carelessly without thought
Make the billionaires brawl! To the death for these fighters
Let stared titty be the ignitor
They can do each other in
For caught on camera cardinal sin

GESTURE

Do it then

If that's not what it is

Do it when you see your boss tomorrow

Do it in front of clients

Make the gesture to the person who signs your check

Have your kids do it to teachers

Show your pastor or priest

If it wasn't that

Then you have nothing to be afraid of

Come on do it

UNGOVERNABLE

Let kindness radicalize you!
Do not allow hate in your heart
Like so many faux zealots
Instead open your heart to those around
Embrace the things that fuel your passion
Do hobbies without care of monetization
But because it brings you joy
Hang on every word of your lover
Until the very sound of their voice
Makes your heart try to escape your chest
To be a little closer to the one you love
If you must fight, fight true injustice
Giving voice to the meekest, poorest, the downtrodden
Support with time and money to build community
In these pursuits lies your revolt
Become ungovernable
In the sense that you are building a gentler world

AMERICA

Oh yeah I love being in the cum!

C - anada

U - nited States of America

M - exico

REBELLION(5)

I do little rebellions
It's a game I like to play
Just subtle fuck yous to the establishment
Of which I'm a starting player
I gotta eat, too, man
I got people to tend
Doesn't mean I have to totally fit in
Doesn't mean I need to sell my soul
Doesn't mean I can't rock n roll
So I'll do my little rebellions
100% commitment to the bit
Simultaneously giving a shit
And not giving a shit

CONFLAGRATION(2)

Metaphorically speaking
Or literally
Doesn't matter to me
There is about to be a conflagration
Wildfire sweeping through
Burning up me and you
Will it be a proper blaze
That cooks to a crisp
Could we witness a sea change
Let mother nature sway her hips
It could just be some rich guys
Fighting to keep their wealth
Doing us dirty through deceit and stealth
Yeah, there's a conflagration coming
Not sure which way she's gonna blow
But when she comes she'll shake the earth
This for sure I know

RIGHT

Attack my character
Attack me too
Kill all my friends and anyone I knew
Make me watch
Then kill me too
Whatever you do and whatever you say
And whether I'm alive or dead the outcome is the same
I'm still right
You're still wrong
And you'll always be wrong
Long after I'm gone

CRONYISM

What if Humpty Dumpty is an allegory?
Cautionary tale about cronyism and more than a kid story?
Humpty invited "all the king's men" - you know - his boys
Even appointing some horses to cabinet positions of poise
Then shit hit the fan and the straits became dire
And all these fuck boys the president...I mean King hired
They didn't do shit because they were all clowns
Along for the ride, a four-year long night on the town
When things got real and the king cracked asunder
Unqualified clowns committed blunder after blunder
After blunder after blunder until they had yolk on their faces
This is why you don't appoint noted disgraces
And especially don't appoint a horse to the committee
Lest you find yourself up creek, and shitty!

ATTACK(4)

All of our food
All of our water
All of your sons
All of your daughters
Pretty much fucked
The way we've been living
Microplastics in the ovaries
Microplastics in the balls
Microplastics in the water
Microplastics in the walls
Our whole world attacked
God damned poisoned
By corporate boys and
Corporate girls
Government subsidies
Allowing this crud we eat
What should we do
What CAN we do
When the number one things we need
Are now number two

REVOLT(5)

Cornered animal
Teased and abused
Cornered animal
We don't see you on the news
Frightened animal
In a corner you are backed
Frightened animal
Of course you would attack
Little baby
Too traumatized to cry
Little baby
I know you long to die
Little child
Left to freeze without a coat
Little child
I know why you long to revolt

KLEPTOCRACY

Sweeping the leg
With a pen and some paper
Way more effective than a gun or a rapier
Still allowed to own business
Trade stocks and get interest
Too many lobbyists wheelin' and dealin'
We have \$9 eggs while these assholes keep stealin'
Is it kleptocracy? It sure ain't democracy
Shit ass country doing its own citizens dirty

MISINFORMANT

Sage words to live by
Always be asking why
Ask about what
Inquire about the when
Do this line of questioning
Again and again and again and again

If on the socials you find something compelling
Beware! Ask yourself: "What could they be selling?"
Is it conspiracy, juicy and believable
Maybe straight up propaganda, twisted and evil
Regardless, have care and questions plenty
Don't take answers at face value; ask what they meant-y
Misinformants are everywhere, on everything
From right to left, from 4-chan to Bing
Finely tuned engines producing lies
Cautionary tale as we watch America die

GLOBAL

Global shit show
Pay as you go
Everyone's a journalist
Everyone's taking a piss
You can do anything so long as you pay
But if you ever stop paying....
You can start digging a hole
Then lay down inside it
All your cards folded
All milk gone sour and scalded
No bootstrap to grasp
No attitude to adjust
Simple global shit show
All hands are bust

QUIET

Hell yes I'm horny...

H - onestly

O - ther than the few times I get a chance to be in

R - ough country, with no people around deep in

N - ature, I rarely get a chance to just enjoy the quiet

Y - ou wouldn't believe how loud silence is

PERSIST

IDK...

Every single day there's a new and worse tragedy
Horrors beyond our comprehension
For my part, I can comprehend them
I recognize that if one were to....dwell
After years of it all, one could be compelled
Imagine death's sweet release
No more of life and its little defeats
FWIW, persist!
If for no other reason than to see one more day
Kiss one more lover, maybe get laid
Finish that book or television series
Spend one more day with all your dearies
It's gonna get worse, this I can promise
But it will also be great - I'm being honest
Persist! Persist with all your might!
IDK, tonight might be your night

DEFIANCE(5)

Nobody asked me my reasons
Instead they made up stories
Fictions to explain my defiance
Or rationalize my self-reliance
Some tall tale to shift the blame
Away from self-reflection of behaviors and shame
Paint me as something I am not
Their voices just backing tracks now
I don't watch this show for the plot
Mainly because I know how it ends
Eerily similar to how it began
Fundamentals of communication long forgotten
No sense beating a dead horse with "why I oughta..."

SIEGE(4)

We are under siege

Constant war, constant anxiety

Pushing, driving, dividing

Perpetually marching towards our grave

Unrelenting, no rest, no reconciliation

Constant war, constant anxiety

We are under siege

PLUTOCRAT

Wealthy ruler

Won't you lay your blessing on me?

Wealthy ruler

Can't you see that I just want to get my way?

Wealthy ruler

You've got to see my side of the debate

Wealthy ruler

If you could just sign here for this subsidy that'd be great

Wealthy ruler

Don't you see me sport your China-made USA hats

Wealthy ruler

Don't even worry about that word...plutocrat

Wealthy ruler

You better make the ball bounce my way

Wealthy ruler

Otherwise there will be hell to pay

HEEL

Without regrets is how I try to live my life
Embracing a feeling of openness to new experiences
Yet, some regrets linger as open wounds
Hard to close, they fester in the wee hours
Igniting fight or flight and exerting their midnight powers
To a fault, they are self-inflicted
Almost exclusively about the times I chose to be a dickhead
Meanness because I could be mean
Even when the pain my words inflicted could be seen
On the faces of my targets, in real time
And let me tell you, angry and mean me was PRIMED
Shoulders perpetually chipped and hackles raised
Always ready to cook someone, to braise
I hate that version of me
I hate how I used to be
This is a blanket apology to those festering cuts
Although at this point it probably isn't worth much
Those grains were sown and long ago reaped
Strategically the only recourse now is to not be cheap
Throw kindness around like noxious weeds
Water them until they grow as tall as trees
Both repentance and a call to arms
To do better and cause less harm

DRAGONSLAYER

We have tales of dragons; lizards winged and fire breathed
Bravest knight (a working-class man)
Fights gluttonous beast, sword in hand
It wasn't ever just the abhorrent hoarding of coin, golden
But the attacks on the workers, violent and emboldened
Repeated tragedies until common folk raise more than voice
Resounding chorus of solidarity, leaders forced into choice
Hero emerges to stand up to the breather of fire
Armed for battle with plan well conspired
Bravely doing what must be done
For the good of the village, for everyone
Dragons have terrorized these parts for almost 40 years
Generational wealth hoarded while stoking fears
Dragon's agents dividing the land
Convincing villagers to disband
To stay in their homes and cower in the dark
While the coin they sold their bodies for mysteriously departs
Up to mountain, hollowed, and into lizard's vault
But the brave knight understands that it isn't the villagers' fault
They've been manipulated and not taught how to think
So when a winged lizard's greed starts to eat
Consuming the necessitates the townsfolk require
Hoarding resources to the point it creates situations, dire
Well that's why we need villagers, our fellow taxpayers
To take up the mantle of dragonslayer

THANKS

If you made it this far, thank you and I'm sorry.

(With romantic intent) Thanks to K for putting up with my shit and for being the kindest and best and cutest human I personally know.

Thanks to E for editing and being my best friend *(derogatory)*.

Thanks to Jamii and Annamaria for teaching me to care and to generally do better.

Thanks to Julie for always putting gas in my tank.

#RIP Puma Perpetua Kittendorf. You were a real one.

Thanks to Dead Uncle Jim for getting me into poetry, posthumously.

Thanks to America for giving me plenty to write about.

Thanks to NOFX for the book title. Listening to NOFX is part of what helped me see that things I believed were not truths and that to get the truth you must work at it, read a lot, watch a lot, think a lot, and care too much. But I appreciate it, nonetheless.

To the ILlest kids, sorry we let it go so long and now you have to clean up the mess and bear the burden of our parents' mistakes. You should be on easy street living a charmed life, not about to go through the next 50 years of unnecessary bullshit. But don't let it harden your heart. Let it remind you how special the good times are. Find a way to make good times. Even if just for a few minutes. And please remember to be kind, especially to each other.

And always do better. Oh, and Fuck Ronald Reagan.

LAST NOTES

I recognized in one of my last editing runs that some of these poems start to blend and almost become different stanzas of a longer piece.

That was not intentional. But it was a logical outcome considering I would have about 20 minutes to write each of these because I had a self-imposed daily deadline. Sometimes I would spend maybe an hour on one of these but most of them I would knock out fast. I did do some cutting and trimming, but I would say 97% of this is the same as the day I wrote it. All that to say, I'm sorry if it gets a little monotonous. But god damn it if life isn't that way sometimes.

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- Read *The Testicle Canon*
- Buy things

ABOUT ME

I am literally only putting a bio here because other books do it. This is my second book. The first one I published on Amazon. This one is def going a different direction and that's okay.

I like gardening. I like punk rock music. I like to read but I can't really read books anymore because phone in bed. I am a recovering asshole. I'm really trying to find ways to be kinder, to everyone and everything. Being a heel for so long wasn't rewarding, even if it made me feel alive.

I am trying to see all of the national parks. I have like five other writing projects going at the same time. I work full time and every day I have to do the dishes.



The last few years I try to be kind first, authentic second, and appear cool above all else. This was the most pretentious pic of myself I could find. I do love that jacket, though. I have wildly bad resting bitch face.

