

The Eyes of Your Enemy  
By Christian Paige

A great woman once asked me  
"What do you look like in the eyes of your enemy"  
My Grandmother used to read me  
"We don't battle against flesh and blood but against principalities in high places"  
A wise woman once said  
"They will always remember how you made them feel"

Since then,  
I've wondered what oppression feels like when it sees me I wonder if it trembles when I make connections with the like-minded I wonder what happens to  
poverty's point of view when there's a wealth of knowledge in the young minds I teach What access taste like in the mouth of the exclusive

This is not a conversation about raising funds But fundamentally changing how we mentally cultivate community beautifully Choosing to scoff in the face of  
division while building bridges for unity You and me Have to decide to torment the things that torment our children

To write an eviction notice for homelessness To tell it that you can't stay here anymore

To tell poverty it's time to pay what you owe our families

To dethrone white supremacy  
To hang it upside down by its boot straps and shake the change out of its pockets until there is change in the pockets of the communities it has robbed of their  
resources

What do we look like in the eyes of our enemy?

We should like an interruption  
Like an unsolvable equation of equity  
Like a persistent people's pressing powerfully into each other until oppression can't tell us apart We should like unshakeable Like a fortress surrounding the  
well-being of our babies

Our babies should feel like rockstars  
Taking risk beyond the deficits prescribed to them Stage diving into the hands of communities waiting to watch them crowd surf into their wildest dreams

We should feel like megaphones  
Amplifying the voices that have been forced into a whisper

Giving power to the people who stand most affected

We should understand the principles

The broken ideologies and poorly written policies That chronically create disproportionalities With no form of apology My apologies If this is not what you signed up for There's a door over there If you are starting to feel scared but there's too much at stake for us to fake like we are not fighting against more than just misfortune.

We have to work to do

But it's up to you

The only gaps that truly exist are the ones that we allow to persist when we wish instead of move Dream instead of create Tomorrow is too late Our children can't wait Another year To be loved and supported from cradle to career

And I hope that our enemy sees us

And knows that it has no choice but to concede

I hope it sees a collective

That will stop at no cost until

We have created a community

Who speaks of oppression

Of gaps

Of poverty

Not as issues that they face

But as parables of what can be conquered by collective impact

A wise woman once asked

"What do you look like in the eyes of your enemy?"

I hope that our answer, is ready.