



## V'ahavta

7/25/2016

25 COMMENTS

Say these words when you lie down and when you rise up, when you go out and when you return. In times of mourning and in times of joy. Inscribe them on your doorposts, embroider them on your garments, tattoo them on your shoulders, teach them to your children, your neighbors, your enemies, recite them in your sleep, here in the cruel shadow of empire: *Another world is possible.*

Thus spoke the prophet Roque Dalton:  
*All together they have more death than we,  
but all together, we have more life than they.*  
There is more bloody death in their hands than we could ever wield, unless we lay down our souls to become them, and then we will lose everything. So instead,

imagine winning. This is your sacred task. This is your power. Imagine every detail of winning, the exact smell of the summer streets in which no one has been shot, the muscles you have never unclenched from worry, gone soft as newborn skin, the sparkling taste of food when we know that no one on earth is hungry, that the beggars are fed, that the old man under the bridge and the woman wrapping herself in thin sheets in the back seat of a car,

## About Aurora

Aurora Levins Morales is a disabled and chronically ill, community supported writer, historian, artist and activist. It takes a village to keep her blogs coming. To become part of the village it takes, donate here.



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Defend the world in which we win as if it were your child.  
It is your child.  
Defend it as if it were your lover.  
It is your lover.

When you inhale and when you exhale  
breathe the possibility of another world  
into the 37.2 trillion cells of your body  
until it shines with hope.  
Then imagine more.

Imagine rape is unimaginable. Imagine war is a scarcely credible rumor  
That the crimes of our age, the grotesque inhumanities of greed,  
the sheer and astounding shamelessness of it, the vast fortunes  
made by stealing lives, the horrible normalcy it came to have,  
is unimaginable to our heirs, the generations of the free.

Don't waver. Don't let despair sink its sharp teeth  
Into the throat with which you sing. Escalate your dreams.  
Make them burn so fiercely that you can follow them down  
any dark alleyway of history and not lose your way.  
Make them burn clear as a starry drinking gourd  
Over the grim fog of exhaustion, and keep walking.

Hold hands. Share water. Keep imagining.  
So that we, and the children of our children's children  
may live

Feel free to share this poem, but please do so as a link to this blog page. Poetry is labor. Please respect it.

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25 Comments

**susan clements** 7/26/2016 04:48:06 pm

i will never say the v'ahavta again without hearing your words. thank you. and thank you for the fire and inspiration.

Reply

**Barbara Ruth** 7/26/2016 11:09:19 pm

So beautiful and necessary. Thank you Aurora.

Reply

**Tamara** 7/27/2016 06:08:02 pm

Thank you. This is stunning. And one to repeat in the morning and in the evening.

Reply

**Kohenet D'voraK'lilah** 7/27/2016 07:08:12 pm

Thank you so much for this amazing V'ahavta!!! I love love love love it!

Reply

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**Sarah Jacobson** 11/9/2016 06:22:52 am

Thank you again for this poem. I sought out the words this morning

Reply

**Nikee Borden** 11/14/2016 06:54:04 am

Thank you Thank you  
Inspiration felt in my gut

Reply

**Joyce Bressler** 11/14/2016 09:24:40 am

This means a lot right now. I plan to share. Thanks.

Reply

**Parker Lindner** 11/21/2016 05:38:28 pm

Thank you for your wise words. I want to share them with everyone who is mourning our state. We must see the new future in order to create it!

Reply

**Jeff Bloomfield** 12/4/2016 08:17:54 am

Thank you.

Definitely a poem of love, resolve and inspiration for dancing and slogging through these times.

Reply

**Rainy** 7/6/2017 03:21:45 pm

A friend shared this post with me last week, and I keep going back and reading it over and over again. This poem is medicine. Thank you.

Reply

**Chanda O'Donnell de Ramirez** 3/4/2019 07:03:17 pm

Medicine indeed! I bow to you Aurora, me alimenta profundamente la visión que pintaste. Mil gracias 🙏  
Your poem was shared at a recent UU church service and I have been blessed to share it with my comrades who strive to create justice and nurture compassion 💖

Reply

**Karen Rosen** 9/28/2017 07:01:07 am

Thank you Aurora for naming all that eats  
Away at the fabric of our lives and for naming the vision of a world filled with wholeness.  
Tikkun olam

Reply

**Leiah Bowden** 11/18/2017 12:52:47 am

Magnificent. Thank you so much, Aurora. This poem moved my congregation deeply when we share it tonight in services.

Reply

**Nan Seymour** 12/30/2017 10:22:53 am

For two weeks here in Salt Lake City this poem has been moving through our community. I have personally been present at five occasions at which we have read this out loud: a dinner party, a mountain top, a communal writing table, a ritual for renewal, and 10th grade classroom. The message of this poem sings with vitality and hope! Thank you for the words, for inviting us to employ the collective power of our imagination.

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**Judith Simon** 7/1/2018 10:57:40 pm

So moving. I will to go to a poetry open mic just to have a chance to read your poem to an audience with credit to you, of course.

[Reply](#)

**W. Robynne McWayne** 7/13/2018 10:09:06 pm

YES! We need to form groups to work this. . .  
It describes each individual's most sacred responsibilities  
from all spiritual traditions.  
Thank you. Beautifully written, powerfully felt!

[Reply](#)

**Margaret** 10/30/2018 08:04:54 pm

Unbelievably powerful abd beautiful!! Thank you!

[Reply](#)

**Susan Proctor** 11/2/2018 06:23:02 am

True thanks.

[Reply](#)

**Stacey Goldenberg** 11/5/2018 12:36:54 am

Thank you! These are the words I long to hear, about the world that is possible but feels so remote. May we speak these words far and wide. May we hear them echo throughout the choir of humanity until they become universal public policy & second nature. May we commit these words as deeds in a spirit of love, determination and mercy... soon and in our day. v'imiru Amen!

[Reply](#)

**Dawn Isis** 11/6/2018 09:08:51 pm

Just want to echo all the positive responses above....this poem is an amulet, a talisman.  
Thank You!!

[Reply](#)

**Angela Ola-o** 7/19/2019 11:15:25 am

Well said. Thank you.

[Reply](#)

**Robin Birdfeather** 7/25/2019 02:03:37 am

Such deep beauty and power of vision brought tears of recognition for human possibilities we can all share.

[Reply](#)

**David Jaffe** 4/17/2020 09:06:32 am

So heart opening and powerful, Aurora. I want these evocative images of liberation to stay with me. Even more, I thank you for the invitation to imagine the images for myself.

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