

Words after Charleston, SC

Barukh she'amar

With Your words, You created worlds
variegated flowers, star shaped seed pods,
the geology of craters and ranges
striations of color
the bedrock of Your world
and pinnacle of divine hope-- people

With our words, we extinguish love
and life
strain out what seems odd different
drain the color out
of creation
Imitation of our Maker?

Some of us came to praise you--
Most of us,
In a house called *Emanuel*--
We are with You, God--
The bullets rang loud
One came to hate
Was he with You too?

I strive to serve You stand before Your people
Always aware that one bullet from now
is someone's last stand
Another family orphaned.

And the names, the names always before us
Anders Behring Breivik Dylan Storm Roof

"The black people are taking over the world"
The Jews must be through
Goddamned socialists, democrats, republican pigs
The children, the innocent children must be guilty

Trayvon Martin Emmet Till
boys rich with power
Tywanza Sanders poet, artist
Conquering countries with his verse
Ethel Lance house keeper, church cleaner
manipulating markets with her duster

Don't you just want to laugh and push it all aside
Who could feel all the world demands we feel

There are no patterns here, no action to take
No social injustice or alienation
just lone wolves

isolated souls
who one after one after one after one after one
Join disjointed hands and pull apart the music's notes
iron staccato combing across our ears
our minds
our hearts

It was not supposed to be like this.

And somewhere
inconveniently
out
of the way hope is waiting
perched atop a canted granite pinnacle
the smallest sliver
a glint to cut the fog

Awaken, America, Awaken.

David Kosak
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