



Handout 3 - *Canoe Launching into the Gaslit Sea*, Ishmael Hope (Tlingit and Iñupiaq)

Ishmael Hope (1981-) is the son of poets Andrew Hope III and Elizabeth "Sister Goodwin" Hope. In addition to writing poetry, Hope has been an actor, festival organizer, and lead writer for the award-winning video game Never Alone (Kisima Innitchuana).

Now, as much as ever, and always,
we need to band together, form
a lost tribe, scatter as one, burst
through rifle barrels guided
by the spider's crosshairs. We need
to knit wool sweaters for our brother
sleeping under the freeway,
hand him our wallets and bathe
his feet in holy water. We need
to find our lost sister, last seen
hitchhiking Highway 16
or panhandling on the streets of Anchorage,
couchsurfing with relatives in Victoria,
or kicking out her boyfriend
after a week of partying
in a trailer park in Salem, Oregon.

Now, as much as ever, and as always,
we need to register together,
lock arms at the front lines, brand
ourselves with mutant DNA strands,
atomic whirls and serial numbers
adding ourselves to the blacklist.
We need to speak in code, languages
the enemy can't break, slingshot
garlic cloves and tortilla crumbs,
wear armor of lily pads and sandstone
carved into the stately faces of bears
and the faraway look of whitetail deer.
We need to run uphill with rickshaws,
play frisbee with trash lids, hold up
portraits of soldiers who never
made it home, organize a peace-in
on the walls of the Grand Canyon.
We need to stage earnest satirical plays,
hold debate contests with farm animals
at midnight, fall asleep on hammocks
hanging from busy traffic lights.

Now, as much as ever, and as always,
we need to prank call our senators,
take selfies with the authorities
at fundraisers we weren't invited to,
kneel in prayer at burial grounds
crumbling under dynamite.
We need to rub salve on the belly
of our hearts, meditate on fault lines
as the earth quakes, dance in robes
with fringe that spits medicine, make
love on the eve of the disaster.