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DEAREST WOMYN OF COLOR

Rosie Brown*

Dearest womyn of color,

For me, it was incredibly painful to hear the harrowing testimony of Dr. Blasey Ford and the news stories of other women speaking about their traumatic memories of assaults by a man who had achieved all the markers of a successful American life. The predictability of the situation—from the description of Kavanaugh’s actions, to the reactions in the media and political arena—felt like an affirmation of what I already knew: women are devalued in this country. Not only that, but if a white woman with a pedigree like Dr. Blasey Ford is discounted and ignored, what of a non-white woman, or someone who is nonbinary or trans*? As much as the media attempted to make analogies to Anita Hill, they were quick to point out that this time was “different.” Was it different because of the #MeToo movement (founded by black female activist Tarana Burke), or was it different because of the races of the people concerned?

In any case, this was a moment of mourning and of action. I was reminded of the phrase from Audre Lorde’s *A Burst of Light*, “caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”¹

The Womyn of Color Collective at UCLA School of Law recognized that we must care for ourselves and for each other. We cohosted an open space to talk with faculty and therapists available in the Public Interest Law and Policy courtyard; and I hosted a potluck brunch at my home. We sent quotes from women of color to our members to lend strength and inspire hope, and to remind our community that we are powerful, and we are enough. We will continue to support each other, to have spaces where we can be ourselves and be together, and continue our self-preservation.

* Rosie Brown is a Juris Doctor and Masters of Public Policy candidate at UCLA with an expected graduation of 2021, and she received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Pennsylvania in 2012. She has a long history with the labor movement, advocating for low-wage immigrant workers; and she is particularly interested in the future of work in the age of Big Data.

1. AUDRE LORDE, *A BURST OF LIGHT AND OTHER ESSAYS* 131 (1988).

There are opportunities even in the most difficult moments.
— Wangari Maathai²

there are far too many mouths here
but not enough of them are worth
what you're offering
give yourself to a few
and to those few
give heavily
- *invest in the right people*
— rupi kaur³

Though we tremble before uncertain futures
may we meet illness, death and adversity with strength
may we dance in the face of our fears.
— Gloria Anzaldúa⁴

You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the
world. And you have to do it all the time.
— Angela Davis⁵

With love,
Rosie Brown
Womyn of Color Collective co-chair

2. WANGARI MAATHAI, UNBOWED: A MEMOIR 144 (2006).

3. RUPI KAU, THE SUN AND HER FLOWERS 205 (2017).

4. Gloria E. Anzaldúa, *now let us shift . . . the path of conocimien-
to . . . inner work, public acts*, in THIS BRIDGE WE CALL HOME: RADICAL VISIONS
FOR TRANSFORMATION 575 (Gloria E. Anzaldúa & AnaLouise Keating eds.,
2002).

5. James Anderson, *Angela Davis talk at SIUC on Feb. 13, 2014*, YOUTUBE
(Feb. 16, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6s8QCucFADc&t=943s>.