## RESPONSES

In the middle of protesting I was haunted by the ludicrous scope of the words by the final note of "end" and "no" by mistake we were repeating.

I remembered the glow of a man I knew Who'd made America a place for me Who'd risked his life for the same word "free" And had medals to show

I remembered the glow of a little girl At the stories of the one who never came back The place that carries his name now The way his mother was so proud And he died a marine.

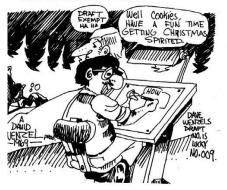
I remembered a slogan they carried then A-war-to-end-all-wars they said Reason enough for the number of dead (and the marchers were ready for trouble)

We're fighting to put an end to war We're fighting to end the unjust one We're wanting to bring our boys home We're wanting to be left alone We're wanting a cause, a reason to live and if we must, a reason for dying.

Protest rang false
But Revolution rang true
In the eyes of the few
who were moved and not moving

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary: Before necessity Before the reason courting Before the fact Say: rennet running in the blood Say: sweat Say God, if you must
But get clear the question before we start the answer
Get clear the breathing behind the cause Listen to skin Ask questions of pulsing Take history from the playing of seven year olds and comprehend hate When in the course of human events men make declarations Necessity's already spun out its story The words photograph it The verb tense is past The only present is the pulsing of tension No late retributions The time is come.

Realize that the reason isn't in the future Realize the present is begotten of the past Realize revolution evades the grand solution The history of the fight is written in the fighting The justification is running in the bleeding The end of the struggle is the sound of the battle The beginning is written in the childhood of foes. After injustices After pride After disappointments and bitterness After frustration mounts to a tension An explosion-is the climax And the denouement is words and rebuilding and a scramble for causes a scramble for the minds that got lost in the battle that all got forgotten by the passionate believers that all were excited out of existence



Now get working on history's results discovering honor for the conscience of the victor discovering the sins of the ones who lost Now make rational the colors of passion to teach school children to write books to understand

When there's blood spilled all over your lap and you feel its redness Do you deny the way your tongue is tiching for it Do you get down on your knees and let it run into the ground so God can hear it? Do you pour it back into the body that is flowing? Do you lay your blood beside it or run for a laundramat? (and why do we have time enough for decisons anyway?) When there's blood spilled all over your lap You feel its redness

But we're—this tradition span—men of action and decision So we make plans and we plan for the execution of plans and we plan out schedules to insure our plans and we plan architecture to enclose our plans and we plan philosophies to justify plans and it works till we plan across someone else's plan and encounter Frustration.

it's the restriction that's the only bad thing you know I mean I dig america at least you're freer here than you are in those communist countries I mean they let you read what you want within reason of course they even let you read Marx we studied it in philosophy and there are certain responsibilities that come with being a citizen I mean they can't just let everybody go wild and do anything they want like taxes if you're to have roads and schools and stuff you have to pay taxes of course they are too high but that's just because of the war once they get that straightened out everything will be ok there's a lot to complain about but why disrupt the whole country sure there's a lot of corruption and all that but look at our progress we're the richest nation in the world and the most advanced of course there's the poverty thing but they've got programs for that all of these things you know the war and the draft and the black thing they're doing something about it all once it's all straightened out everything will be ok I mean what do we want with a revolution anyway even if it could happen here where's it gonna get us

Where in hell are we choosing to go? You can tremble, man be as ugly as you can and spit a gapers from the bottom of your bottle or the dark of your dreams or the end of your bed You can hide if you want to in a cloud of smoke or a dither of reason or behind some trees in meditation We all have a dark place all our own where we get away that's efficiently far where we go insane according to thumbprints where we'd want to stay-away from the clatter if it weren't so educational being alone We march back to commit ourselves to deal with issues to settle things and be rational and be practical and be successful and all

Then there's love that makes a meaning of bittersweet making tears of every accidental touch winding tenderness into a conversation



it picks the lightest colors of the spring to fill the dark expectancy of autumn with a smile and makes smiles bright as innocent daisies growing where they don't belong it imitates the heavy beat of August with the fierce delight in seeing certain eyes and lies deep beneath the cool of eyes in waiting it borrows promises of every April teardrop and even when denied by men it paints a blush on snow bound flower petals and itches up the dancing of the bees But there is no love like they're telling me about when I'm worshiping on altars and graves and streets There is no love like they're wanting You can try all you want for a god-broad world but everything will melt into hating Discrimination! Beautifulit gives my love a meaning Toleration-Beautiful! it gives caring rest Is it uply? Then give me ugly hating and I'll ugly up my loving for the things I detest and instruct my mind to leave my heart alone.

I want to be together
to know what piece belongs and where it fits.
What form
What formless space
What dark infinity of measure sums me up
Where
in this too familiar universe
can I stop finding pieces of myself
and places where my self belongs?
Can't I stop making choices?
Can't I stop spreading thin?
Can't there be a hallow region where my presence doesn't count?
Can't there be a human game where I'm out?
Isn't there an end to freedom and responsibility?
Isn't there a breathing space that isn't me?

When there's blood spilled all over your lap
And Revolution's shouting over your shoulder
and men are dying
When there's a logic to every cruelty
and beauty in the horror of war
and men are laughing
When there's self destruction panting through the streets
and men are tearing at the roots of life
and men are loving
As the rising chaos catches for a breath
As the world is falling down around our ears
As the smell of rotting harbingers the winter
and reason fails
Kick an answer through the fallen leaves
Whisper close
I am I am

Alice Therrien