

Only 1535 days left, depending on time zones, as this impacts the whole globe.

Look at it positively. We have only 1528 days to go till the next president.

Is this a comedy or a tragedy? A humorous story or a serious one? Americans are habituated to look for the silver linings. We believe that things can be better....even if they are terrible. I had fully intended to preach about humor today and may still give it a try.

“Humor is the grace, it is poetry, it is the wild airborne yeast that activates the dough of reality. Humor adores the particular and abhors the abstract.”

As the clown priest who just died put it so well, humor is the stuff of comedy and it shows you where the life is after death. He preferred, as a Christian, to forgo the dramatic arcs of tragedy and comedy and their happy/sad ending binaries, on behalf of a death and resurrection joke. That one is perhaps the biggest joke of all. When something really dies, like our hope died this week, resurrection looks like a sick joke. We even wonder if it is true that we are wonderfully and marvelously made....but somebody decided to make us all different from each other.

Listen to what Hillary Clinton said on Wednesday: We must accept this result and then look to the future. Donald Trump is going to be our president. We owe him an open mind and the chance to lead. Our constitutional democracy enshrines the peaceful transfer of power. We don't just respect that. We cherish it. It also enshrines the rule of law; the principle [that] we are all equal in rights and dignity; freedom of worship and expression. We respect and cherish these values, too, and we must defend them.

Hours later, President Barack Obama was even more conciliatory:

We are now all rooting for his success in uniting and leading the country. The peaceful transition of power is one of the hallmarks of our democracy. And over the next few months, we are going to show that to the world....We have to remember that we're actually all on one team.

The president added, “The point, though, is that we all go forward with a presumption of good faith in our fellow citizens, because that presumption of good faith is essential to a vibrant and functioning democracy.”

There was a time when I would have applauded this high mindedness. They go low, we go high. The major one is that I am going to deeply examine what President Obama means about trusting that those who voted for the president elect were acting in good faith. I don't think they were. I don't think I can fully tell you what a change that would be for me, as a Christian, an optimist, a progressive, and a person of hope. I don't know about you but I wish both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama had told more truth. They were so polite. You would

think they didn't are about the tremendous human damage that is going to come through and by this election.

I am going to figure out how to learn how to face evil. I don't want to wake up in 1935 or 2017 with any more blood on my hands than already exists. I know these are big words. Let me make an analogy. It's like having to redecorate your whole house. It's like having to get rid of all your old art and mugs and clothing and put on a new outfit throughout. I think of Georgia O Keefe with her minimalist wardrobe and flashy flowers. She stayed clear to be able to paint. I need to clear myself to be able to think. My apartment is littered with stuff that doesn't make sense any more and that it includes my optimism. I think of Shaker furniture severe and simple. I am the kind of person who really just wants to pay attention to which green bean casserole recipe to use for Thanksgiving. I'm working on the menu. There is no longer that kind of freedom for me. I need to become severe and simple. I need to redecorate my apartment. I need to clear myself to be able to think. So little is not against so much. I know that eventually demography will resolve the splits and the hates and the scapegoating and the narcissism and the sexism and the racism and the nativism, etc etcI know that the country will tip into colorful beauty. But so much damage may yet be done along the way. I can't do anything more. I can do something different. I will build democratic institutions and change from being a peppy optimist to being a peppy realist. I will clown around but on a cycle of death and resurrection, not comedy and not tragedy either.

Masha Gessen rewrote their speech: The president-elect has made his intentions clear, and it would be immoral to pretend otherwise. We must band together right now to defend the laws, the institutions, and the ideals on which our country is based."

Seriously: there must be some good in the awful division in our nation. There must be something marvelous to it. But I cannot see it yet.

If Harry Katoukas was here, he would say TITS UP GIRLS.ROLAND WOULD SAY RIGHT ON.MEI MEI WOULD LISTENDICK HUBER WOULD LISTENDAVID JOHNSON WOULD CONNECT.

I would usually say, let's take real good extra special care of each other right now in an intensification of community and loving and caring and tending and keeping. I'm not going to say that today. None of us can do anything more than we are already doing. We must do some things differently.

So I'm not going to do my usual spiritual nurture for public capacity sermon. And there is one other thing I'm not going to do. I'm not going to use the word fascism, even though I fear we are in a year like 1933, albeit in a different country. I'm not going to use the word Autocrat, or authoritarian, or demagogues to describe my fellow citizens and their president. I know how the authoritarian leader works. He or she refers to a glorious past and tries to get us back there. I'm going to agree with the

pope's emissary who said that the big problem with the president elect is his unpredictability. I am going to look for new all-American all 2016 words to describe the president elect's pattern and that of his constituency. I would say that word is closed. Shut. Windowed. The opposite word to closed is open. For years I have been saying we should get rid of the language of liberal and conservative and replace them with open and closed. They are severely dated words. Aren't environmentalists deeply conservative? Or conservatives deeply committed to a future where they and their kind prevail? First thing I'm doing differently, given the election, is to forgo labels.

I'm also, secondly, putting my snark away. I've been saying for years that the reason white men of a certain kind don't think they are being heard is that they talk too much. They are not open to anything but their own self-obsession. Better put, they are closed to the outside and bubbling away internally about themselves. I am not going to make that criticism any more or snark like that any more. I am going to open myself to a reality that I do not understand. I don't have to like the way white heterosexual men take up all the space they can. I just don't have to always snark at it. Maybe Abraham Lincoln could afford the snark. He said,

"Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters." I no longer can.

I am also going to tend institutions. I am going to deeply love them more than I already do. I am going to nurture our state senator Schumer with all I have. I am going to pray daily for his spine as the Senate comes to the potential of confirmations of Supreme Court Justices in the plural. I am going to be less lazy about the midterm elections.

On Thursday, I attended a meeting of the mayor's task force on religion and the city housing department. 90 congregations with land in the outer boroughs were present. They were there, and I was listening, to prevent gentrification. Called the anti-gentrification task force, the group was led by experts in how to take land and turn it into affordable housing. It was an exiting meeting. But the one thing that the lawyers and pols said over and over – and it was . painful to hear – was that the reason they can't do business with churches is that we are too disorganized. Weak boards. Can't locate records. Don't have permits. Pastor says one thing the people say another. Institutions! I wish I believed the pap about how strong American institutions are. Not schools. Not the medical system. We must build strong democratic institutions while closed people are in church of the government.

Sure the ACLU won The Scopes trial (the right to teach evolution in public science classrooms) and seminal Supreme Court cases

like **Korematsu** (challenging Japanese American internment), **Miranda** (the right to remain silent), and **Griswold** (the right to contraception).

Also the ACLU won the heart of **Loving** (the right of interracial couples to marry), **Gideon** (the right to a court appointed attorney if you can't afford one), **Windsor** (striking down the Defense of Marriage Act), and last year's **Obergefell** (the right of same sex couples to marry). We need to pay attention to our institutions.

Angad Bhalla sent me an email saying: there are clearly people looking for organizing direction right now and I don't see how things don't get worse without confronting the root causes. Root causes of hate? Of poverty? Of democracy closing down?

I like to hum that song, if you like it then you should have put a ring on it. Hum a different song? If you like then you should have put a face on it.

Judson is going to have to step up. We may be maxed out on space and time and staff but there is nothing we can do but try harder and differently to put a face on the immigration catastrophe that is now upon us and knocking on our door. We may have to use safety pins and escort services and anti-hate campaigns again and again because it's not just immigrants but all our brothers and sisters with faces who are in danger. If you like it then you better put a face on it. Here we will take care of each other, face to face, without the need to dominate or to be dominated. Repeat: without the need to dominate or to be dominated. We will tend and befriend. We may even have to resurrect the Clergy Consultation Service.

Masha Gessen. So how do you reassemble the furniture in your house? Think of me as an interior decorator, playful even.