I have just realized that the stakes are myself
I have no other
ransom money, nothing to break or barter but my life
my spirit measured out, in bits, spread over
the roulette table, I recoup what I can
nothing else to shove under the nose of the maitre de jeu
nothing to thrust out the window, no white flag
this flesh all I have to offer to make the play with
this immediate head, what it comes up with, my move
as we slither over this board, stepping always
(we hope) between the lines

April 1968

The value of an individual life, a credo they taught us
to instill fear, and inaction, "you only live once"
a fog in our eyes, we are
endless as the sea, not separate, we die
a million times a day, we are born
a million times, each breath life and death:
get up, put on your shoes, get started, someone will finish

Tribe
an organism, one flesh, breathing joy as the stars
breathe destiny down on us, get
going, join hands, see to business, thousands of sons
will see to it when you fall, you will grow
a thousand times in the bellies of your sisters.

April 1968
store water: make a point of filling your bathtub at the first news of trouble, they turned off the water in the 4th ward for a whole day during the Newark riots; or better yet make a habit of keeping the tub clean and full when not in use change this once a day, it should be good enough for washing, flushing toilets with when necessary and cooking, in a pinch, but it's a good idea to keep some bottled water handy too get a couple of five gallon jugs and keep them full for cooking

store food--dry stuff like rice and beans stores best goes farthest. SALT VERY IMPORTANT: it's health and energy healing too, keep a couple pounds sea salt around, and, because we're spoiled, some tins of tuna, etc. to keep up morale--keep up the sense of "balanced diet" "protein intake" remember the stores may be closed for quite some time, the trucks may not enter your section of the city for weeks, you can cool it indefinitely with

20 lb brown rice
20 lb whole wheat flour
10 lb good beans--kidney or soy
5 lb sea salt
2 qts good oil

dried fruit and nuts
add nutrients and a sense of luxury to this diet, a squash or coconut in a cool place in your pad will keep six months

remember we are all used to eating less than the "average American" and take it easy before we ever notice we're hungry the rest of the folks will be starving used as they are to meat and fresh milk daily and help will arrive, until the day no help arrives and then you're on your own.

hoard matches, we aren't good at rubbing sticks together anymore a tinder box is useful, if you can work it doun't count on gas stove, gas heater electric light keep hibachi and charcoal, CHARCOAL STARTER a help kerosene lamp and candles, learn to keep warm with breathing remember the blessed American habit of bundling

April 1968
Left to themselves people
grow their hair.
Left to themselves they
take off their shoes.
Left to themselves they make love
sleep easily
share blankets, dope and children
they are not lazy or afraid
they plant seeds, they smile, they
speak to one another. The word
coming into its own: touch of love
on the brain, the ear.

We return with the sea, the tides
we return as often as leaves, as numerous
as grass, gentle, insistent, we remember
the way,
our babes toddle barefoot thru the cities of the universe.

April 1968

at some point
you may be called upon
to keep going for several days without sleep:
keep some ups around. to be
clearheaded, avoid "come down" as much as possible,
take vitamin B along with amphetamines, try
drained guarana root, available
at herb drugstores, it is an up
used by Peruvian mountainfolk, tastes
like mocha (bitter) can be put in tea
will clear your head, increase oxygen supply
keep you going past amphetamine wooziness

at some point
you may have to crash, under tension, keep some downs
on hand, you may have to cool out
sickness, or freak-out, or sorrow, keep some downs
on hand, I don't mean
tranquillisers, ye olde fashioned SLEEPING PILL
(sleep heals heads, heals souls) chloryll hydrate
(Mickey Finn) one of the best, but
nembutal, etc. OK in a pinch, remember
no liquor with barbituates
at some point
you will need painkillers, darvon
is glorified shit, stash some codeine & remember
it's about five times more effective
if taken with aspirin

ups, downs & painkillers are
the essence: antibiotics
for extreme infections, any good
wide-spectrum one will do, avoid penicillin
too many allergies, speaking of which
cortisone is good for really bad attacks
(someone who freaks out asthma-style, or with hives)

USE ALL THESE AS LITTLE
as possible, side effects multifarious
and they cloud the brain
tend to weaken the body and obscure
judgement

ginseng tea, ginger compresses, sea salt,
prayer and love
are better healers, easier come by, save the others
for life and death trips, you will know
when you see one

April 1968

#6

avoid the folk
who find Bonnie and Clyde too violent
who see the blood but not the energy form
they love us and want us to practice birth control
they love us and want the Hindus to kill their cows
they love us and have a colorless tasteless powder
which is the perfect synthetic food...

April 1968
there are those who can tell you how to make molotov cocktails, flamethrowers, bombs whatever you might be needing find them and learn, define your aim clearly, choose your ammo with that in mind

it is not a good idea to tote a gun or knife unless you are proficient in its use all swords are two-edged, can be used against you by anybody who can get 'em away from you

it is possible even on the east coast to find an isolated place for target practice success will depend mostly on your state of mind; meditate, pray, make love, be prepared at any time, to die

but don't get uptight; the guns will not win this one, they are an incidental part of the action which we better damn well be good at, what will win is mantras, the sustenance we give each other, the energy we plug into (the fact that we touch share food) the buddha nature of everyone, friend and foe, like a million earthworms tunneling under this structure till it falls

April 1968
every time you pick the spot for a be-in
a demonstration, a march, a rally, you are choosing the ground
for a potential battle.
You are still calling these shots.
Pick your terrain with that in mind.
Remember the old gang rules:
stick to your neighborhood, don't let them lure you
to Central Park, everytime, I would hate
to stumble bloody out of that park to find help:
Central Park West or Fifth Avenue, which would you
choose?

go to love-ins
with incense, flowers, food, and a plastic bag
with a damp cloth in it, for tear gas, wear no jewelry
wear clothes you can move in easily, wear no glasses
contact lenses,
earrings for pierced ears are especially hazardous

try to be clear
in front, what you will do if it comes
to trouble
if you're going to try to split stay out of the center
don't stampede or panic others
don't waver between active and passive resistance
know your limitations, bear contempt
neither for yourself, nor any of your brothers
NO ONE WAY WORKS, it will take all of us
shoving at the thing from all sides
to bring it down.

April 1968
advocating
the overthrow of government is a crime
overthrowing it is something else
altogether. it is sometimes called
revolution.
but don't kid yourself: government
is not where it's at: it's only
a good place to start:
1. kill head of Dow Chemical
2. destroy plant
3. MAKE IT UNPROFITABLE FOR THEM
to build again
i.e., destroy the concept of money
as we know it, get rid of interest,
savings, inheritance
(Pound's money, as dated coupons that come in the mail
to everyone, and are void in 30 days
is still a good idea)
or, let's start with no money at all and invent it
if we need it
or, mimeograph it and everyone
print as much as they want
and see what happens

declare a moratorium on debt
the Congressional Congress did
"on all debts public and private"
& no one "owns" the land
it can be held
for use, no man holding more
than he can work, himself and family working

let no one work for another
except for love, and what you make
above your needs be given to the tribe
a Common-Wealth

None of us knows the answers, think about
these things.
The day will come when we have to know
the answers.

May 1968
These are transitional years and the dues will be heavy. Change is quick but the revolution will take a while. America has not even begun as yet. This continent is seed.

May 1968

#11
drove across San Joaquin Valley with Kirby Doyle grooving getting free Digger meat for Free City Convention grooving behind talk of Kirby's family been here a long time grooving friendship renewed, neat pickup truck, we stopped at a gas station man uptight at the sight of us, sight of Kirby's hair, his friendly loose face, my hair, our dress man surly uptight, we drove away brought down (across fields of insecticide and migrant workers) and "Man" I said "that cat so uptight, what's he so uptight about, it's not your hair, not really, it's just what the TV tells him about hippies got him scared, what he reads in his magazines got him scared, we got to come out from behind the image sit down with him, if he sat down to a beer with you he'd find a helluva lot more to say than he'll find with the man who makes your image he's got nothing in common with the men who run his mind, who tell him what to think of us"

SMASH THE MEDIA, I said, AND BURN THE SCHOOLS so people can meet, can sit and talk to each other, warm and close no TV image flickering between them.

May 1968
the vortex of creation is the vortex of destruction
the vortex of artistic creation is the vortex of self destruction
the vortex of political creation is the vortex of flesh destruction
flesh is in the fire, it curls and terribly warps
fat is in the fire, it drips and sizzling sings
bones are in the fire
they crack tellingly in
subtle hieroglyphs of oracles
charcoal singed
the smell of your burning hair
for every revolutionary must at last will his own destruction
rooted as he is in the past he sets out to destroy

now let me tell you
what is a Brahmasastra
Brahmasastra, hindu weapon of war
near as I can make out
a flying wedge of mind energy
hurled at the foe by god or hero
or many heroes
hurled at a problem or enemy
cracking it

Brahmasastra can be made
by any or all
can be made by all of us
straight or tripping, thinking together
like all of us stop the war
at nine o'clock tomorrow, each take one soldier
see him clearly, love him, take the gun
out of his hand, lead him to a quiet spot
sit him down, sit with him as he takes a joint
of viet cong grass from his pocket...

Brahmasastra can be made
by all of us, tripping together
winter solstice
at home, or in park, or wandering
sitting with friends
blinds closed, or on porch, no be-in
no need
to gather publicly
just gather spirit, see the forest growing
put back the big trees
put back the buffalo
the grasslands of the midwest with their herds
of elk and deer
put fish in clean Great Lakes
desire that all surface water on the planet
be clean again, kneel down and drink
from whatever brook or lake you conjure up.

May 1968
#14 (especially for chicks)

are you prepared
to hide someone in your home indefinitely
say, two to six weeks, you going out
for food, etc., so he never
hits the street, to keep your friends away
cooly, so they ask no questions, to nurse
him, or her, as necessary, to know
"first aid" and healing (not to freak out
at the sight of torn or half-cooked flesh)
to pass him on at the right time to the next
station, to cross the canadian border, with a child
so that the three of you
look like one family, no questions asked,
or fewer, to stash letters, guns, or bombs
forget about them
till they are called for, to KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT
not to "trust"
even your truelove, that is,
lay no more knowledge on him than he needs
to do his part of it, a kindness
we all must extend to each other in this game

May 1968

#15

When you sieze Columbia, when you
seize Paris, take
the media, tell the people what you're doing
what you're up to and why and how you mean
to do it, how they can help, keep the news
coming, steady, you have 70 years
of media conditioning to combat, it is a wall
you must get through, somehow, to reach
the instinctive man, who is struggling like a plant
for light, for air

when you seize a town, a campus, get hold of the power
stations, the water, the transportation,
forget to negotiate, forget how
to negotiate, don't wait for DeGaulle or Kirk
to abdicate, they won't, you are not
"demonstrating" you are fighting
a war, fight to win, don't wait for Johnson or
Humphrey or Rockefeller, to agree to your terms
take what you need, "it's free
because it's yours"

May 1968

DIANE DI PRIMA

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