

An African proverb says,  
When an old man dies  
A library burns to the ground.

And when an old woman dies,  
I say,  
A school burns to the ground.

And when a child dies,  
Well,  
A church, a synagogue, a mosque,  
All burn down to the ground.

And when anyone utters the truth,  
Speaks out for the poor, the powerless,  
The forgotten,  
For those too tired, too tattered, to care (anymore)  
It's a symphony,  
A great clap of thunder,  
A thousand voices chanting their own favorite word.

And when justice gets tipped into balance,  
And the sky opens,  
So that even the rain feels so cool and pure,

Then we all sigh  
Like birds of paradise,  
Our souls ablaze  
Our tongues on fire  
And no one dies.

No one ever tweets true love  
No one cries in email time—  
No one faces the facts on Facebook.  
We sing,  
We enchant.  
We touch each other.

Like waiters doing the best they know,  
We say, justice is served—  
But what?  
A good meal?  
A rich dessert?  
She is blind, after all—  
What can she taste?

We mean:  
Look—the books, they're back in the library

School's back in session  
A new mission opens its doors  
Justice can see again.

We mean:

Look—in the deep hollow of the dark  
Night,  
Through the fires,  
Justice extends a hand  
Singed and slightly scarred,  
But a hand clearly extended;  
Through the flames and the ashes  
A hand,  
And we can do nothing  
At times,  
Nothing  
But grab,  
Grab that oh so steady,  
Oh so blinded hand.

We mean:

Look closely—in the smallest cracks  
In the meanest streets,  
Grass roots grow.

We are all lost.

We are all homeless.

We all stand uncommon

In the chat of the commons.

We hold out hands

To hold out hope.

Sometimes,

Just sometimes

Help is not a four-letter word

But means what it means to say:

Give

Take

Soul

Gift

Play

Sing

Care

Feel

Love

Nick

Fish.