Wake Up From Ignorant Indolence, Portland

by Melissa Coffman

Portland, are you still asleep?
You must be
that is why
our brothers and sisters
can't open any doors
you've locked them out

Portland, wake up you lazy prick
our people are despondent
in the streets
like a plague spreading

countless come each day
from North, South, the East
watch them absorb reality
look at our people's harsh panorama

Portland, you callous wretch
council members and mayor
who hold the dough
to fuel a solution
live in an alternate existence

look out your windows
walk up and down west burnside street
baby steps for the ignorant indolent

wake up

our people are hungry
junk sick from needles
starved forsaken stomachs

open your damn eyes
do something

you inept bureaucracy
I do my part
because I am impelled to

hear

their stories
and help them
pull the needle out
while allaying
voices some hear
commanding they step
in front of the train

Portland, who is human?

If we are all worthy
why aren't we all worthy?

Have you looked
into eyes of another life
weeping and desperate
because there was
no easily evident
remedy to their

suffering

and then expressed
what you can do for them
tell them you'll fight for them
support them
give of yourself so that they
can start to see relief in their

future?

Portland, where are you hiding, you coward?
This is our community
come have a genuine look
dig deep
deeper

not one more
man
woman
or child

deserves experiencing homelessness
in our city
so wake up
dig deep
deeper

Portland, you have the influence
decree with action
all lives have value
basic human necessities
those who need more
than your coiffed
head can perceive

needing more than just
a meal or shower

Portland, your alarm is buzzing
quietly shut your door
watch the sidewalk
a woman and her child are
curled up sleeping
blocking your fortifying gate

there is no way around

you are awake now
to the plight of our people
they are lying on cardboard
in plain view of you
you cannot unsee this inhumanity

you can
despite dismissive grey suits
reconstruct the people's future

go fight the fight
you represent all people of
this broken overloaded system

benevolence propagates exponentially.

Melissa Coffman works in mental health crisis services as a peer support specialist.

22 SW 3rd Ave.

VOODOO DOUGHNUT WORD JUMBLE

1501 NE Davis

EMLPA

IPLF

MEOHR

ASMMOI

Which doughnut is named after Elvis Presley's entourage?

Print answer here

THE

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