

**Open for me my heart:  
An anti-racist Feminist Queer Muslim response to systemic xenophobia**

Kwe, Adaberz, Assalamu Alaikum, Bonjour,

J'ouvre mon discours avec une section du koran dont ma mère m'a récemment introduit: *Oh rabb!*  
*Open for me my heart.*

I acknowledge the unceded Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) land on which we are gathered here to mourn tonight. As an anti-racist Feminist Queer Muslim South Asian Womxn, I acknowledge the grief and injustice that this land experiences and witnesses on a daily basis, including ongoing systemic oppression against Indigenous and Black Nations, against Migrant and Racialised communities, including Muslim communities, and against Queer, Trans, Womxn identifying people part of these communities.

After a day of checking in with family in the u.s. amidst fascism, including systemic violence against refugees and Muslims, I found myself in moments of speechlessness, grief, rage, and uncertainty upon hearing the tragedy in Ste-Foy. I continue to be faced with an incomprehension to understand how much systemic hate can exist in this world, and how much hate can be transformed into organised murder. I am thinking about those in Ste-Foy, those who died at the mosque, those who have been wounded, physically, emotionally and spiritually. I am thinking about those who are fighting to survive. My thoughts are with you.

I want to say that this injustice stops here and now, that systems based on oppression, power, and privilege leading to the tragedy we are trying to grapple with today must end now. It must. I also know that so many of us have been saying this for far too long, including protesting state-sanctioned white supremacy and xenophobia, like the racist and misogynist (un)reasonable accommodation commission, and the so-called charter of values. And so, I invite us to take a moment to reflect on our humanity, and to keep holding each other in all of our complexity, lived realities and identities, to keep holding each other as community, to keep holding each other in space, in words, in art, in conversation, in breath with deep love, care, and compassion. To keep holding, to keep holding, to keep holding. Please let us remember to keep taking care of ourselves as we take care of each other during this trauma. To my family, friends, and communities who are living in fear and sadness, let us breathe in resilience, let us breathe out resilience. We will make it through, even if through the haze of our tears, in solidarity in our fight for social justice and liberation.

I end with words from my dear ammi who continues to teach me the values and politics of love, care, openness and justice. She could not be here tonight because she is taking care of family members. And so, when I asked what message she would want to share, she expressed her condolences to the families, and wishes strength and serenity upon them. May those who passed away rest in peace. She also stated in our mother tongue Urdu/Hindi: Sub ko reneh ka haque hay poureh doonia mein. Everyone has the right to live in this world. Aman kay sath rehenh. May we live with/in peace.

-farha najah  
Solidarity Vigil, Tio'tia:ke  
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