

What this election means right now

I've been told that I do not belong, that I should go back to my own country. But I'm not alone, and we're not alone.

By [Mihee Kim-Kort](#)

November 11, 2016

I continue to cry on and off throughout the day. Tears of sadness. Tears of betrayal. Tears of confusion at the kind of community it seems we live in now—or apparently, *have always* lived in since we stepped foot in this country as immigrants.

I keep staring out the window wondering, Now what?

We lost something on November 9. More than an election. Something—call it humanity, compassion, hope—faltering and perished, and something in me, too.

A friend came over Wednesday night. To be in a safe space, somewhere she didn't need to worry about how people read her. *Is she Latina? Is she Arab? Is she a citizen? Is she undocumented? Is she a student? Is she a worker?* Somewhere she could lash out and vent, rage, and despair over what this election means now. What this election means in terms of the people around her, yes, but also what it means in terms of how the country views her as a woman, a woman of color, a young woman of color. Perhaps, that she will never be good enough, smart enough, capable enough. Or that she will be all those things, and that she certainly is all that, but that in the end it won't matter because they will still choose a man, a white man, even if in comparison he's completely incompetent, morally devoid, and psychologically unstable.

I despair with her, for myself.

I despair with her for all the ways I have felt this defeat, and probably will in the future. For all the ways I've been told I'm not good enough, I do not belong, I should go back to my own country. And then, for our little Anna, only five years old, what

does this mean for her? Not only the question of women's reproductive rights, but for what we believe about women. What they can do. What they are called to do.

What this election means right now is that hate, misogyny, and bigotry have won out. What it means is that racism and xenophobia are given free reign to fully and totally express themselves. What it means is that the utterly superficial platitudes of unity and reconciliation are just tools of white supremacy to get everyone in line. What it means is that this country has said very clearly who belongs here, who is safe, who is one of "us." What it means is that I'm afraid. I'm afraid for myself. Afraid for my family. Afraid for loved ones and neighbors who have been targeted by Trump's campaign these last two years. I'm not afraid to say anymore that **I am afraid of whiteness, and white supremacy, and all of the blatant and explicit, insidious and hidden ways it exists and perpetuates itself.**

But, what it doesn't mean is that I will roll over or that we will go running for Canada (maybe [Pittsburgh, though](#)). For now, I will keep on doing the everyday, and feign some semblance of normalcy for the children, and continue to be hopeful and optimistic about our lives. Driving them to school. Going to the store. Attending church every week. Sports practices, music lessons, hikes, and somehow, making what we do together as a family mean something, for it to matter. We'll keep trying to teach and model love, acceptance, dignity, consent as much as possible. We'll keep doing work that matters— loving and leading our communities, and showing them that it does mean something.

God help us, we're up against a lot.

But. I know, without a shadow of a doubt, that I'm not alone. That we're not alone. And that I can help others feel that they're not alone either. I can be [supportive of local groups and actions](#), and be an active part of these [collectives and coalitions](#), and reach out to those groups in our community that need to know that we're here for them and with them. I can [work to make this election mean something else](#), mean something good and real. And the little ways I can with what little I have at my fingertips—telling stories, lifting up the stories of those in the struggle, those who are fighting for what is right, for humanity, for the dignity of those who are considered the least of these. I'll set that table wide, and fill it overflowing with good things to eat and share, and cram as many people around it as possible. I'll look people in the eye as I pass them on the street and expect to see the *imago dei*, the image of the Divine, and all the beauty and courage possible.

What it means is that I'll keep trying, keep believing, keep hoping.

Originally posted at [Kim-Kort's blog](#)