

# kindness lives here

kindness lives here  
in this vast and tangled land  
we know its good and steady bones  
its grip and heavy hand  
when storms move through us and our town  
like boisterous visitors  
leveling homes  
scattering photos and memories and kin  
kindness sprawls out on the ground with us  
right there among our remaining things  
sheltering us from despair and emptiness  
gives drink and meal  
brings the nails and plank  
boards up shattered pieces  
puts us back together again

when shoulders cave at lonesome burial sites  
and masked and muffled cries haunt the grief filled air  
when bellies pine for a hearty meal  
and once filled cupboards are bare  
we know kindness lives here  
when paychecks won't make the stretch  
we've come to know grace too  
we know its awesome limber reach  
fluid  
flowing alongside us and our blossoming dreams  
lifting and holding us up when we fall  
pointing us toward the new plan ahead

Kindness lives here  
when we call out to a stranger  
or flash a smile or give a nod to lift haggard spirits  
when we step aside and let another take the shine  
when we let bygones go and cross the dividing line  
to listen  
to stand with  
to stand up  
to say I don't agree  
and I honor your humanity  
we know kindness lives here, lives within us  
we dab tear-streaked faces  
make bread and covered dishes  
lend a dollar, give a ride  
stand in when someone couldn't  
just do it when others wouldn't

Kindness

seeks no return, no fanfare

no grand gestures

in its elegant silence

it moves the needle

it makes a mark

it's a small ax

chipping away

It's our salve

It mends and heals

It's our confetti

heaping bright handfuls

tossed into the air

landing on us

weightlessly

coloring our vast and tangled world

landing on us softly

so gentle that we hardly notice

but leading us to a trail, a path, a way

to do better, to do more, to just do