

Cancun Journal #10: Thursday, 9/4/03

We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest

"We who believe in freedom cannot rest..." It's a line from a Sweet Honey in the Rock song and we're singing it sometime around 1 a.m. to torment poor Erik who is trying to sleep in the room off the dining room where six of the twenty-five people sharing this house are gathered. Eileen and Rodrigo and Meddle are translating press releases into Spanish, Rio and I are reviewing my explanations of graywater and worm composting, and Andy is reading Tarot cards in his Hawaiian shirt. It's a little like a late night session before finals in the dorm.

"I wish I only had a bad grade instead of a busted head to fear," Meddle says with his cheerful smile. I really appreciate people who can be consistently cheerful in a quiet way on four or five hours of sleep.

It's been a long day. It starts with a quiet morning doing some writing and having another technical battle with my email, then goes on to a six-hour marathon direct action meeting. Around 5:00 we take a break and have enchiladas and ceviche at the cafe down the street. Then back for more discussion and refinement. Some very beautiful young women have come in and spend a lot of the meeting stretching and doing yoga and contact improv in the background. Several of them turn out to be Pagans and we all go out for a quick beer and guacamole and talk about magic and ritual for half an hour. They bring Sean from Australia, with whom I've had a long correspondence on email, and it is good to meet in person. We start to plan rituals and magical activism trainings and it's a very bright interval in the day.

Then some of us go back to the Convergence Center to have a long house meeting, mostly devoted to the question of how many more people we intend to pack into this house. The bathrooms are getting grungy. No one has any time to clean.

It's hard enough just to keep ourselves in water and toilet paper and a little bit of food.

The Indymedia Center is showing the video of the World Economic Forum demonstration from two years ago, and I stand watching in grim fascination as the cops brutally beat people up on-screen. I'm not sure if this is the best thing to show right before the action, or not. But it's real, and in some sense it makes what we're facing comprehensible, not so unknown. We're thinking hard in the action meetings about how to limit potential police violence, how to set a tone that doesn't provoke it. But we also know quite well that if we are effective, our very success may well be met with violence whatever tone we set.

We're tired. We head home, for our late-night homework session. The cards look good tonight, with the Sun at the center of the reading. And in spite of what the song says, we need to get some sleep.

-- *Starhawk*

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