Dedicated to the children of one day
The children who will become
Global changemakers
Abolitionists
Advocates
Peace warriors
And work to make
Our model for humanity
More equitable
More just
And more loving
TO THE CHILDREN
OF ONE DAY
2020-
“I stop by this beautiful mural everyday
On my way home from school
The sun and the waves
Doves floating through clouds
Even the grass is breezy and cool

I helped paint it three years ago
And you know what I love?
I love that the color yellow always fills me with happiness and love
The blue makes me a bit sad
But I feel peace when I see the white dove
What about you? How do the colors make you feel?”
“Well it is pretty clear to me
I see what you see sis
Red is a bright color but can represent
anger
Blue is always sadness like my tears
Green is for plants and nature and
growing
Yellow and Orange
are always happy and glowing
Purple reminds me of royalty like a queen
White is beauty because it can be
anything it wants to be
And Black is scary, dark and mean.”
And as the sky darkened above, Red began to speak her mind about love or lack thereof.

“Did you hear what they said today? They don’t even know me! I’m the calmest fingerprint on this brick wall. I go out of my way to listen to others. Help them up when they fall.”

“Red, you need to quiet down. The other fingerprints are asleep. And this is nothing new. Everyone thinks red is angry. Everyone thinks blue is sad. You just learn to ignore it. Don’t let it make you feel bad. But if you must speak your mind. Even though I don’t agree. Let’s just wait until the morning. And when the other prints awake. You can let them know. Their identity is definitely at stake.”
"You're just a print stuck on the brick. You can't peel yourself off and start again. You think people are going to see you? Help you get ahead?"

"Really?"
"Wanna bet?"

"Really?"
"Wanna bet?"

"Really?"
"Wanna bet?"

"It's a 99 degree morning on this artsy boulevard."

"Wall is getting awfully sticky in the school yard."

"You're just a print stuck on the brick. You can't peel yourself off and start again. You think people are going to see you? Help you get ahead?"
“People don’t see color.”

“So they don’t see our mural.”

“Imagine if people actually noticed.”

“People do notice.”

“No they don’t!”

“Yes they do!”

“Yes they do!”
“Look I’m tired of this talk. I was born to make music. My horizon painted with risk.”

“Ethan painted me when he was age nine.”

“Elijah was a student age ten.”

“Jazmine is now eleven, but she was age eight.”

“Remember when the teacher told her she couldn’t paint the clouds purple.”

“I actually would have preferred that fate.”
"How can people not see color?"

"It's not like our wall is faded."

"The kids painted us three years ago."

"They're colorblind—the whole world. If they don't realize this truth Then you'll see They're going to lose themselves in this fight And we're going to get lost You and me."
“They say they see, but they don’t actually see us.
Get it everyone?
Now does it make sense?
They pretend not to see, so they don’t have to change.
It’s too much effort to just rearrange.
In fact, it’s easier to just stay exactly in the same place.”

“I think I’m beginning To finally understand.”
“Okay, prints. It's like this. When you pretend you don't see you make up the colors. You make it up without even knowing. The world becomes what you want to see. No problems. No injustice. Peace overflowing. It benefits you. Everything around you. Flowers always in bloom. Why change things when the world works for you? We're used to quieting voices in the room.”
“Well then we’ve lost our eyes.”

“And our ears…”

“Soon enough our hearts will run away, too.”

“Yeah unless we speak up
Unless we speak out
Redefine the world
And what it’s about.”
Just yesterday we heard a little voice from a girl who comes here on Sundays. She was explaining to her kid brother what the mural was all about.

At first I thought it was lovely. But then I felt misunderstanding and doubt. “Look it’s like this: Blue is always sad. Red is always angry. Green is envy. And yellow happy. Black is storm clouds engulfing white. Paper birds of peace fluttering amongst the calmest of seas.”

“I heard her say it too!”

Why is hurtful to label someone without knowing them?
“So she does see. I told you. I knew it.”

“Yeah. She sees. But not the real us.”

“The world has framed us the way that they want.”

“By saying things like, I just don’t see.”

Why do people say they are colorblind? What does this mean?
“So we stay on this wall no doubt.”

“And we stay in our place.”

“Afraid to seek change.”

“And we stay silent.”

“And we stay where we are.”

What causes some voices to become silent?
“So eradicate this. Get rid of that. Come on let’s define who we actually are. We need to design our new mural with truth. This color blindness has actually gone too far.”
“I’m Purple. Who said I have to be arrogant? I’m no royal. Take me. Put me on the grass as I’m gentle. I’m Breezy. I’ll sway in the wind, eager, humble and loyal.”
"Move me away from Teardrops.
Blue doesn’t always represent Sorrow.
I’m not always calm.
Create trees blowing with fury
I can be angry
Go on—paint me in a hurry."
“I’m tired of Red as violent
A bias people just made up.
Place Red as calm rolling seas
A voyage somewhere far away
Well thought out and wanting to seize
the day.”
“Yeah well yellow doesn’t have to be
happy—an egg yolk liquid
sunny-side up.”

“I hold a lot in my heart and the yellow is
a mask
So since this is my shot
I’m tears of sadness
On the faces of those passed up and
ignored
I have many tears
That run down the skies
More feelings where those are stored.”
“Hey friend! Come over here! We need you.”
“We can’t stand here and pretend this is all we got. That’s not enough if we want to actually give this a shot.”
"So you’re saying
We have to repaint
This mural
New paint revealing
Thoughts
We have hidden
All those thoughts
All those topics
All those colors
That have always been forbidden?"
“You haven’t talked about Black and White.
If this something is forbidden
Let’s talk now.
Start making things right.”
"I’ll tell you about white
White clouds of dreams and passing doves
Creating moments of
Tranquil blankets
Kindness and pure
And I’ll tell you about me
Black roars in as
Clouds of thunder
Dismal
Terrifying
Let go- despairing darkness and shadows
Crawling in hidden corners
Of woe."
“I’m sick of what is
I’m sick of what has been
This isn’t my mess
You want change?
Well it depends
You going to say something White
Or be silent again?”

Anger can be a good thing. Why?
“Well white is a blank canvas
This is how we always begin.”

“I’m not so sure
If we are doing things right.”

“That’s the problem.
You are pouring over
The mural with white.”
"A new canvas
A new beginning
always starts with White
New
Me
Always the foundation
Purple and Black are right
I haven’t listened
I’ve caused the mural to stay the same
If we want to really start speaking the truth
I should be expected
To do the same."
“I’m white clouds of selfishness
I’m all about me
I’m white droplets refusing the wrongs
I’m rough clouds of irresponsibility
I’ve watched lies spread from above
I’m far away from being
A symbol of integrity
And love.”

“I’m black clouds painted with magic
History at my core
I’m a blackbird of freedom
Magnificent wings on which I soar
I’m the shadow of a new day
Hugging the universe on a starry night
I am a culture and I fight
Always to make things right.”

What problems may occur if we always start with the same color?
“Okay. Now is the time.”

“Let’s travel on the red seas.”

“Make a wish on a purple cloud afar!”

“Let’s share tears where needed.”

“Bloom flowers of green hope where depleted.”

“Let’s reach the unreachable star.”
So with the strength of
The prints
The canvas began
Starting with black
instead of white
The class printed and painted
and while they did so
They began to
Redefine their role
Redefine by sight
Redefine and shed some light

On a mural
Where we must
Be better
Do better
Speak out
See color
Be more
A mural still unfinished
Half done
Half painted
Half discussed
Always with love at our core
It won’t take weeks
Nor days
Nor months
This mural is a lifetime away

But what YOU can do
is admit your mess
Change your wrongs
Start making it so the world celebrates
Humanity one day
Labeling a person can be hurtful. Sometimes it stops them from being who they were meant to be. Get to really know someone first with an open heart.

Sometimes, people say they are colorblind. This means they don’t talk about race. They need to listen more and love more. Listening can be difficult for many people.

When we label someone, we can hurt them so badly that they are afraid to say anything.

Colors just like people can be labeled “good” or “bad.” Just remember that no color is “lesser than” or “better than” another.

Being angry is not always bad. Sometimes we need to be angry to make good things happen. What we do with that anger is what counts.

Always starting with the same color can really hurt the world. When everyone thinks you are the greatest, you start spreading the opposite of love.
A special thanks to all my dear family and friends who made this book possible. Please consider visiting todaypgh.com to donate money to extraordinary organizations that work humbly to create a positive global community and uplift immigrants, refugees and black and brown youth. They lead with love.