

Cheryl Rivera: Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about what you're doing here today?

Protester: I'm at Washington Square Park on the 4th of July protesting for Palestine.

Rivera: I'm in Manhattan for a protest. I've been to dozens since October 7th. More than dozens. I spend all my time in the movement—it's basically my job. I'm trying to do things that matter, but it's hard to know what's useful from so far away, which means I'm doing a lot of different things. Today I'm also holding a microphone.

Rivera: Where do you see the movement right now? Like, what's your assessment? We're out here today, this has been going on since October 7th. We've been out here. What do you think about this moment? Like, where are we at?

Protester: Yeah. Um, I think it feels like we're in a lull. Which is a little depressing because we've, you know, obviously been protesting this genocide for nine months at this point. It feels a little bit like people are wondering where to go.

Rivera: In October, we didn't necessarily know what we were doing, but we had to do something, so we started marching.

In November, me and a group of other writers occupied the lobby of the New York Times after they published a series of Zionist propaganda articles. We also shut down the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

As it got colder, we sent what money we could to people in Gaza. In January, we blocked every bridge from Brooklyn to Manhattan. These were massive actions. It reminded me of summer 2020, a new movement exercising its muscles.

In February, Israel murdered 118 people waiting in line for food, the Flour Massacre—at that point, we were still naming individual massacres.

In April, college students occupied their campuses. By commencement, they'd all been shut down.

Now it's summer. I'm trying to balance living my life in the movement and just... living my life.

In some ways, the genocide feels far away, but we're responsible for what's happening. I don't know what's next—which is part of why I want to record: to document what it feels like. What it means to fight a genocide in Palestine, from here, in New York.

Protest chant

DSA meeting washes in

Rivera: People are starting to make connections between fighting for Palestine and fighting the cops. Eric Adams is pushing for a new police training center in Queens. It's our very own cop city.

At the DSA office there's a meeting with people from Atlanta, people who worked on Stop Cop City actions down there. They're helping us figure out how we adapt some of these strategies for New York.

Rivera: Hey Garon, how are you?

Garon: What's up, Cheryl?

Rivera: I meet my friend Garon there. We're cofounders of the Crown Heights Care Collective, my organizing home base.

Rivera: We just had this meeting, how did you feel about it?

Garon: I thought the meeting was great, very informative, I learned a lot.

Rivera: Okay, now let's talk like you're a normal person about like—

Garon: First of all, I'm not a normal person!

Rivera: (laughs)

Rivera: Garon and I talk a lot about what really keeps movements going. Sometimes it's not just politics.

Garon: I also want to do something sexy and cool. And I'm trying to see what, if this will be sexy and cool. (Rivera laughs)

Rivera: In July, the weather is fantastic. I can be outside for sixteen hours a day.

Rivera: I'm at La Plaza Cultural, the garden. It's beautiful. There's a few weeping willows, um, there's some big, beautiful flowers. They're red. They're huge.

Rivera: I attend a lot of meetings. Most of us show up in our keffiyehs, despite the heat. I show up with my recorder.

Rivera: We are, uh, meeting to just sort of, like, get to know each other as a movement for Stop Cop City. There has to be at least like 150 people here. Like a third of the people there, I was like, I know you through some capacity, your face, or maybe I know you closer. People I know from the abortion scene, people I know from doing migrant stuff, people I know who are organizing around COVID, tenant organizers, you know, our standard abolitionists, of course.

Soccer player: Right now we are painting a banner for Autonomous Football League.

Rivera: Oh, fun.

Soccer player: Sort of an expansion off of our Stop Cop City Football League.

Rivera: I didn't realize there was a Stop Cop City football league!

Soccer player: There is a Stop Cop City football league.

Rivera: Cool.

Rivera: Hi, Jamie. Hi, Mia. What's up? What's up? Are you, are you speaking? I am speaking. I'm a little nervous about speaking.

Rivera: I thought this was gonna be like a little thing. I was like, cool, cute little mixer. And I got there. I had not prepared.

Rivera [speech]: We've been lying in wait. It's been sad years. Eric Adams in charge of our city. It's been a struggle. This ongoing genocide in Palestine, uh, which has been terrible, and which has cohered another, uh,

streets movement again in the city. Uh, a really large one. Um, we've been getting our asses kicked, by the NYPD. And so that movement has become, in essence, as any movement in this city does, becomes a movement against the NYPD - the police. Because if you want to do anything in the city, you must defeat the NYPD. If you want to get anywhere in this country—

Clapping

Police: This is the New York City Police Department. You are unlawfully walking in the roadway. I am ordering you to go back on the sidewalk now. If you do so voluntarily—

Protestors: Pigs go home! Traitors! Pigs go home!

Rivera: It's not worth it!

Police: Go back on the sidewalk now. If you do so voluntarily—

Rivera: I'm always trying to bring energy to the street actions—

Rivera: Look at how many of there you are, and you all have guns, you fucking coward ass bitches!

Rivera: Sometimes my role at protests is just trying to keep the chants on beat.

Protesters: No cops! No KKK, no fascist USA! No KKK, no fascist USA! No cops! No KKK, no fascist USA!

Rivera: But when I'm alone at home, I wonder about what I'm meant to do.

Rivera: I feel a heaviness that, at this moment I'm being asked, I think, not—that's not the energy I need to be showing up with these in spaces. I need to be showing up with a different kind of energy, and I do. But, meanwhile these children are like, still showing up mangled on my timeline every day. It's hard to see these images, I feel sad, a lot. It gets quieter all the time, from Palestine, from like the journalists, because they're all dead. And so you have to figure out how to carry this this thing forward, this movement forward, and give the energy and show up in a certain way, um vitalize other people, people who are just coming into the fight need to feel like this fight is winnable, you know, there's things to win. Um, yeah.

Kids playing, wind

Bisan Owda: One hundred and fifty kites carrying the Palestinian flag are over the camps here in Khan Younis. So the sky is already liberated! See this with me!

Rivera: I try to keep up with the news from Gaza. I like Bisan's videos.

Owda: (laughs)

Rivera: They make me feel hopeful, even though I'm always afraid for her.

Owda: This is one of my dreams, to see kites carrying the Palestinian flag, and everyone is flying the kites. I mean it, everyone. I'm living my dreams, okay? I'm living my dreams!

Rivera: On August 1st, there's an event at Marcus Garvey Park in Harlem called Gaza Mutual Aid Kitchen. There are workshops and tables of people giving out free things: books, food, mental health services.

Rivera: All sorts of stuff is happening.

Rivera: There's also a basketball tournament going on, so it's crowded. Our grills are off, but everyone else is barbecuing.

Rivera: I'm walking with my comrade (laughs) who—

Comrade: Shall not be named.

Rivera: Shall not be named.

Rivera: He's a young Black communist I met at a Juneteenth event. But our relationship, it's actually more of a friendship than an organizing thing.

Rivera: What did you think about the event? Do you think it was good? Did you like it?

Comrade: I liked the event. I don't think anyone, like I don't think any events that happen in parks seem to run the way that I would try to push for them to run if I was involved in organizing them.

Rivera: (laughs) What does that mean?

Comrade: It mainly means—

Cheryl: You said they need to be grillin' out here.

Comrade: Yeah, first of all, that grill needs to be, that grill needs to be turned on. They need to emphasize that the things there are free more. Um, some dude who was sitting next to me, he was like, "Yo, everything over there, like the food over there, is free?" I was like, "Yeah, everything over there is free." And they were shocked. You got to put that word up there. Because for the most part, people who are there organizing do not live here. Almost nobody. And I think that sometimes, for us, it reminds us of gentrification. When you look and you see a bunch of people who look kind of liberal, a lot of them are white, and you're in the hood for real—this is Marcus Garvey park, bro—and there's people there who don't look like they're from here at all. It does look like an outside thing, kind of, you know. When you don't know what the fuck's going on, and it looks like things you've already been rejected by, it's not really gonna want you to put hands on it.

Rivera: The next day, August 2nd, Kamala Harris becomes the Democrat nominee for president. It's been three hundred and one days since the genocide started, and she doesn't promise to end it.

Rivera: The Kamala stuff did depress me a lot, in a way, you know, this, uh, everyone became coconut pilled, I don't know. I saw these guys on Fire Island who had like, made matching Kamala t-shirts in the Brat colors, and I was like, it's just all getting grotesque over here.

Rivera: A week later, Israel bombs a school in central Gaza where thousands are sheltering and it also expands its military campaign in the West Bank.

Owda: This is how America is ruling the world, to steal the lands of Gaza to the Israelis, and to steal the gas of Gaza to the Americans. That's it, this is the deal, my dear world, and my dear people. Whenever and whatever they find anything worth a genocide they commit a genocide without thinking twice.

Rivera: I've become really active in Writers Against the War on Gaza, or WAWOG for short. By this point, we've published twelve issues of our paper, the New York War Crimes. We hand it out at protests.

I also take care of my friend Ben and Maddie's cat, Lou, and he bites me three times.

Rivera: Do you want anything to drink? I have, like, a Trader Joe's chai.

Sammi Al-Iryani: I got this, this bad boy.

Rivera: I'm with my friend Sammi. We're just fuckin' around.

Al-Iryani: I am Sammi El Iryani. I am a, uh, humble and, uh, currently unemployed, uh, communist revolutionary who, uh, is, would just, yeah, doesn't know what he's doing, but hopes, hopes, uh, to, you know, hang out and be friends.

Rivera: Sammy and I are both trying to figure out exactly what we should be doing.

Al-Iryani: There's um, there's a Palestinian principle in, in the resistance called tarakum, which means accumulation. Like through struggle, it builds, and you can see it, right? Like you see it from, you know, the first Intifada is like the Intifada of rocks, and then the second Intifada, you know, they get some small arms, um, and then, you know, like there are waves of resistance, um, that build on the consciousness and the power of, uh, the previous wave.

Rivera: People are always telling me this is crazy, we can't do this or that thing. And I mean these people are in like fucking like open-air like prison lockdown like monitored to degrees that I don't think we can really fathom, but the sort of surveillance and lockdown these people are under all the time and yet to still make the sort of moves that they made and people are telling me stuff like, it's not possible to do like small-level resistance against the cops

Al-Iryani: That's, like, the thing, we need to, like, rethink our first principles. Like we don't have to come up with answers, right, and we don't have to have the solution right away. But what if we, like, just sat with the idea that it is possible.

Radio DJ 1: This is Resistance Stream. We are here until midnight, uh, eastern time. And via the QR code you can send funds for mutual aid in

Palestine, as well as Stop Cop City in Atlanta. Keep it locked in, and uh, enjoy.

Rivera: On Sunday, I was on The Lot Radio.

Radio DJ 2: We have a few speeches, I'm excited.

Rivera: And I was just asked to come give a speech. It was a really cute place. These large windows that overlooked Bushwick. There was a dog who was really cute, really tiny. I was a little nervous. Cause I've been on radio a few times, like, I've been on the DSA's, uh, WBAI program, but I've never been on—this is gonna sound, uh, kind of, uh, rude to DSA—I've never been on a cool radio show. I've never been on a show where I was like, damn, the people who listen to this and the DJs who are set to play, um, the DJs who had already played, are all so cool.

Radio DJ 2: Introducing the first speaker, from Crown Heights Care Collective, Writers Against the War on Gaza, and New York City DSA. They're here to speak a bit about Stop Cop City.

Rivera: I just spoke as if I were speaking into an invisible crowd outside the window.

Rivera: Hello, this is Cloud. I'm speaking to you from Brooklyn, New York, where my comrades and I are preparing for a fight to stop the renovation and expansion of a police training facility, otherwise known as Queens Cop City.

Rivera: Many of us have spent the days since October 7th in the street. We have been resisting and we have been in solidarity with the Palestinian people and with their brave resistance. And I'm not speaking to you as an expert. I'm speaking to you merely as a, uh, single person, person inside of this movement, just like you. Uh, and I am in this fight here, in New York City, and people are in this fight in Palestine, and I hope you're in this fight wherever you are.

Rivera: Very sweetly halfway through the speech, I could feel this pressure up against my thigh. I was sitting on the floor pillow and it was the dog (laughs), the dog had come and was just very happily chewing her bone right on the pillow next to me. And that was really comforting.

Rivera: Care for each other. Care for one another. If we wish to win this fight for our lives then we have to pull together our movements. The Palestine Solidarity Movement, anti-war activists, abolitionists, earth defenders, tenant organizers, mutual aid organizers, homeless organizers, migrants, abortion actionists, socialists, communists, and anarchists, all over the world. We need to recognize that we must be in solidarity with each other. We must be in communication with each other. And most importantly, we must be organized together and across our movements. But I think that we need to pull together a little more quickly y'all. We need to do it with a little more energy. We need to fight for our lives. That is what we must do if we wish to fight and win. And I want to win. I hope you want to win too. Liberation is possible.

People in the studio cheer, clap

Radio DJ 2: Thank you, Cloud, that was beautiful.

Rivera: Afterwards I got up and, one of the sound engineers, she gave me a really huge hug, a really long hug. It made me feel really good. I felt really a part of something bigger than myself.

Rivera: It's hot. Unseasonably hot. Ceasefire talks resume, again. Marches are happening, some are huge. But we're not going new places, or hitting new targets. I get back to a project I started earlier in the year, in which I paint cows. I'm painting one hundred of them, one hundred cows on letter-sized canvases.

Rivera: I'm laying in Herbert Von King Park, just having a rest on this nice Saturday, and I'm trying to take a bit of time away from, um, moving too fast, doing too much...

That's one of the drawbacks of like, making these connections between movements really visible, is that then, you do start to dip your fingers into all sorts of areas, and it's very tempting to, to like wade a little deeper in.

And as I was laying in this park, I was approached by someone with the Shut It Down for Palestine Coalition promoting a few different rallies and campaigns that are going on. It's cool to see, you know, other people in the movement and feel, you know, even as I'm trying to take a rest today, it's good to feel that the movement is inescapable.

Movie Clip: You know I can't figure you man.

Movie Clip: What's to figure?

Movie Clip: I mean, what are you in this for? You want power, you want revenge? What is it?

Movie Clip: Hey it's simple Willy. I just wanna be free. How 'bout you?

Rivera: So the other day I saw this film. It's called The Spook Who Sat By The Door. It's a 1973 film and it's just recently been restored. I hadn't really heard of this film before. And also it had been banned in some places. And I really found out why!

This whole theater was full. It was a full house, people really excited to see this movie, this restoration. A lot of Black people, I love it when Black Brooklyn comes out.

Garon and I, we saw our friend Tracy, a tenant organizer. We've worked together on a few things. I really like Tracy. And so Tracy saw us in the crowd, we were looking for seats and Tracy, you know, had a great seat in the middle. So I had, like, prime time viewing.

The film is about this Black CIA agent. The CIA decides to integrate.

Movie clip: And so on behalf of the director of our agency I'd like to offer congratulations on completing our tough preliminary training course.

Rivera: They don't really wanna fucking integrate, but you know, they say we're gonna pretend we want to integrate.

Movie clip: Somehow I forgot Freeman even existed, he has a way of fading into the background. But he's been among the top three in academics and first in athletic training.

Rivera: He spends five years at the agency and then he quits and he goes back to Chicago where he's from and becomes a social worker there, and the CIA is like uh, good luck. But really what he goes to Chicago, what he goes back to do, is to find a youth street gang and turn these young people

into the guerrilla underground that he was trained in the CIA to identify and fight.

Movie Clip: You really wanna mess with Whitey? I can show you how.

Rivera: Incredible scenes of him training these, these young people, these gangsters, into becoming these disciplined revolutionaries, these underground revolutionaries.

Movie Clip: The kids are our only hope. And I got to them before they got jailed, or killed. And now they'll do anything to be free.

Rivera: It ends with this riot in the street. And, this message of: you must keep going. The movement cannot die. That's the only way to win: the movement can't die.

Movie Clip: Don't quit, until you either win or you die.

Rivera: Boy, I could really, I was like, I know why the hell they banned this film. Because no fucking way. Do they want us watching this shit! Because people like me might see it and go, Hmm, you know what? I'm getting some ideas. I'm really getting some ideas. I'm getting a lot of ideas.

I'm uh, I'm in the bathrooms afterwards, you know, Black women in the bathroom. We're like, hell yeah, hell yeah, that was great. Uh, we were all fired up. Everybody was leaving that theater inspired. Uh, and I saw my friend Ronit. And Ronit was like, "My God, Cheryl, we were just saying, we cannot let you see this film! (laughs) She said, "Or maybe we *should* show it to you."

A few months ago, I was like, what can we do? I guess now I'm like, what can we *do*? (laughs)

music

Rivera: My WAWOG friend starts a comedy podcast. We celebrate its launch at a dyke bar in brooklyn. Her cohost does a strip tease in an elephant costume. By now, I've seen The Spook Who Sat by the Door so many times my friend puts me on a panel to talk about it. The U.S. approves another \$165 million in weapons for

Israel. I go to watch the Harris/Trump debate at a bar in Flatbush, but spend the whole time with comrades outside.

Rivera: Marian don't go, where are you going?

Marian: Well I just have a 9 a.m. tomorrow, so—

Rivera: Okay. Well, it's not late! Okay, but I understand you wanna go. Fine. Fine. But I don't know, we haven't talked about anything. What are you, what are you feeling in this current political moment in this climate?

Marian: Yeah, yeah. Um, I really wanna be in the podcast, so I really wanna say something deep that makes the cut. (Rivera laughs)

Rivera: You're also the person I first got into abolition organizing through.

Marian: Yeah, and I was really like, I was like, "Cheryl, you need to do this. I really, I saw the future, I saw a vision."

Rivera: Shut the fuck up!

Marian: I was like, "Cheryl, look me in the eye, listen to me. I know I sound crazy, but you need to do this."

Rivera: But what about now? What about now? What do you think about this current situation we're in? How are you feeling?

Marian: I don't know, humor comes to my mind. You gotta either laugh or cry. You gotta laugh to keep from crying sometimes.

Rivera: It's strange. I'm having a good time, even when this is a bad time.

Rivera: I don't know. I have this neighbor, Miss Judy. I love Miss Judy. Miss Judy's an older woman who, she's in like a kind of shitty situation, had tenant issues. And I took on a task of just like, sort of helping Miss Judy with stuff like being around when her super came, who she was, like, afraid of, had sexually harassed her. You know, helping her file paperwork. I look things up for her. I find, like, potential job opportunities and stuff. I've accompanied her to tenant meetings. We talked one day, we were just standing on the street, I met her outside her house, and a march came by, and I was telling her I've gotta go to a march in the city, that's where I'm going, for Palestine. And since then, Miss Judy really has just been sending me updates. I saw this or that article on Palestine! She says, "They're

spending all this money to do this bullshit over there. Why are they doing that when we don't have stuff even over here? And they're over here making a war." Miss Judy is not an idiot. Miss Judy has concerns. She's not going to be able to be at a protest, you know, outside all the time. But she understands herself to be part of this world.

Rivera: On Labor Day, there's an enormous march.

Rivera: I'm at Union Square. It's Labor Day. There are thousands of people out in Union Square for Palestine. It's pretty crowded out here. People have a lot of flags, people have a lot of flyers, are giving out zines. We're um, marching under the full sun. Not a lot of clouds in the sky. The mood is pretty good.

I wish I had worn my crop top because it's too fucking hot out here.

Okay, something funny is, uh, everyone has a Baggu bag, literally I've counted twelve of these since we started marching. Uh, Baggu! The bag of the resistance!

There's a man carrying a very fluffy white dog across the street. I don't think he's part of this.

It's too hot for me to wear my keffiyeh, so I have it tied around my bag.

Protestors: Free free free Palestine!

Rivera: I'm roughly in the middle of the march.

Protestors: We say justice, you say how?

Rivera: I can see it, extend, possibly like three—

Protestors: End the siege on Gaza now!

Rivera: —blocks ahead of me and behind me, maybe six.

Protestors, drums, whistles

Rivera: Someone lit a smoke bomb. Walking through a cloud of smoke. Someone's lit another smoke bomb. Multiple smoke bombs on the bridge. They're red, they're Black. All the press are sort of swarming around them. The cops are pissed trying to, you know, put them out. Someone has a flare, he's running down, everyone's cheering (laughs). They love it.

Protestors, drums

Rivera: Multiple flares on the ground, burning.

Rivera: This is a huge rally, the biggest in a while. But there's something about it that feels wrong. Ten months in, all these people are in the street, week after week, thousands of arrests—and nothing. Things are actually getting worse.

Owda: They're trying to kill the people of Gaza by starvation. So no food is entering to the south, or to the north. And we're still under bombing, and people are dying in silence, while no one is moving or talking.

Rivera: These mass marches, I don't even know if I want to call them protests. They're just like little parades. I think we need to really reassess why we're doing this. And I think it's for catharsis, and I think that's a little disgusting. Yes, it's hard to see what's happening in Palestine, and you want to feel like you're doing something. Um, it's a hard truth, because I know it can feel good to be in huge crowds and be like, we all care about this issue. But it's not just about caring, it's about building power, and this is not doing anything except making us feel a little better for being an American watching American bombs rain down on Palestinians. That's all that's doing for us. That's literally it.

Rivera: I recognize catharsis is important, maybe I could use some. It's hard sometimes to really feel my feelings.

Facilitator: So it's hard. It's hard. So I'm gonna need you to rub your hands.

Rivera: I go to a church uptown, one that The Young Lords took over in 1970, and we all just scream.

Facilitator: Clap three times hard.

Screaming, stomping

Rivera: I admit, it feels good.

It's the middle of September. It's still hot—a few extra beach days. WAWOG is trying something new.

Rivera: Um, people take whatever signs you want. We do have one nice large one that has a New York Times, fuck New York Times one.

Rivera: Joe Kahn, the executive editor of the New York Times, lives just around the corner from Washington Square Park. We found his address, and also photos of him posing for some kind of photoshoot.

Rivera: It's like him on a, like, rug on the floor. He's just kind of laid sexily out in this way.

Rivera: For our picket signs, we photoshopped a little nightcap on his head, and the words "How KAHN you sleep," K-A-H-N.

Rivera: Yeah it looks, it's fucking ridiculous.

Rivera: Forty or fifty people show up. We have our demands: retract the article "Screams Without Words", a vicious, debunked piece of propaganda, write an editorial calling for a US arms embargo on Israel, and investigate the anti-Palestinian bias in New York Times coverage.

Protester: Alright, so we're gonna get two lines on both sides of the door, picketing. Yeah? So let's get going and then, uh, we're gonna, Shay and Jesse are gonna start off with our chants, and then we're gonna go into, uh, get some programming. We're gonna do some speeches, so. Sound good? Let's be fucking loud.

Rivera: uh, going to the guy's house is different. Uh you know, we've been to like buildings, institutions. We hadn't yet gone to someone's home personally. We thought that he would be home, but we're not sure.

Rivera: Start us off, chant leaders!

Protesters: Free free Palestine! Free free Palestine! Free free Palestine!

Rivera: Picketed right in front of his building.

Rivera [speech]: We are outside the home of Joe Kahn, the executive editor of the Imperial Tabloid, the war mongering state propaganda organ: the

New York Times. We are here because the Times is not only complicit in the US-Israeli War on Gaza and on the Palestinian people, but we are here because Kahn and the Times must be held to account.

Rivera: Um, I did our intro speech like, why are we here?

We are not here tonight simply to make a media elite feel bad. We do not target the Times because we want them to change their minds. We target the Times for the same reason we target the State Department, because it is an engine of mass death.

Um, but after that I was just playing the role of police liaison, so like, trying to make sure I was the only person that the cops talked to.

We currently have four officers standing across the street who are filming us and watching us.

One was like on 12th and one was like on like 11th. They're like watching us from different locations.

Uh...they're a little bit pissy. We have created a line in between our picket lines so that people can pass in and out of the apartment building. Uh, so we are law abiding at the current moment. Let's see how long it takes them to fuck with us.

Four cops stalk over.

Cop: Do you have a permit?

Protestors: Free free Palestine!

Rivera: Uh, so I interrupted them when they came up and they were really, they're of course, they were really fucking rude.

Cop: You're blocking the entryway!

Protestor: We're in motion! We're in motion!

Cop: I'm not talking to you!

Rivera: They were like, we're trying to talk to her. I was like, I'm in charge here. Um, they were really mad.

Cop: Listen! Listen, listen.

Rivera: (laughs) He kept being like "You be quiet and listen to me!" And I was like, We are doing—we can do what we want legally. Because legally you can picket, as long as you keep moving. So you can't stop. So the cops could only stand across the street and like, watch us.

Protesters: Shame!

Rivera: Eventually there was like, seven cop cars.

An NYPD bus has now shown up, as well as another NYPD car.

There was like, five cop cars, two cop vans, they all like, rolled up. There's like, twelve plus cops standing in a line.

Rivera: At some point it starts to pour—and everything becomes logistical instead of political. The cops run back to their cars, we huddle under the building awning. The doorman tells us to leave, but we stay put, clutching our picket signs to keep them dry. After half an hour, everyone goes home

Rivera: It was pretty great. I was very pleased with the picket. Um it's like, I think escalation really has to be persistence.

This is a strategic harassment. Essentially, your neighbors are gonna get sick of this, and your neighbors, which some of them did get pissed off, they have no power over us. We don't give a fuck. We'll still be here. We're going to keep on until you retract.

And we won't be stopping with him. We have other targets that we also want to roll up on. We got to go after the individuals who are holding up these institutions. They've got to feel this pressure. If their lives aren't disrupted, it means nothing to them. I need you to feel hunted, essentially.

Rivera: Time is getting weird at this point. People in Khan Younis receive their third, fourth, tenth evacuation order. The NYPD arrests picketing students on the

first day of classes at Columbia. At JFK, on my way to a friend's wedding, I learn that you can't rent a car using a debit card. I miss the wedding.

Rivera: I took a walk down, uh, to the waterfront, the Brooklyn Bridge Park. Um, I really like Pier Three. It has some nice fields, um, and then you can go and sit by the waterfront, and I watched the sunset. The whole city's in, like, a good mood. But, it's just starting to get that like, chilly bite in the air, and I can feel the approach, the turn, to fall, and feel, you know, how October 7th creeps up on us, and as it turns to fall, and we get closer to October, I just can't, I can't fucking believe it's been one year.

Rivera: On September 15th, the NYPD shoots three people in the subway in pursuit of a man they claim did not pay the \$2.90 fare. On the same day, I find out my cousin Tonio, in Alabama, has died of a heart attack. He was my age.

Rivera: I just have to play Tetris for like thirty minutes because Tetris is one of those games that's supposed to lessen your trauma. I don't know, that's, that's some shit that I read online. I just—I've had many family members die of cancer, asthma attacks, things that they shouldn't be dying of, young, because they're Black people, poor Black people in the South. And I'm getting this news on a day, yesterday, when I'm just really full of fucking, like, rage, because NYPD shot three people in a subway station in Brownsville. And I'm just really mad. I'm angry. I mean it's not like they—they're never around when there's anything happening that people would want them to intervene in, they're never fucking around for those things, no. But they're definitely around to murder people for not paying their fare.

Protester: When we say no justice, no peace, it also affirms we will know justice and we will know peace. I'm serious. I'm serious.

Rivera: A few days later, we turn out en masse and jump turnstiles in protest, holding rallies on the platforms.

I go home to Alabama for my younger brother's birthday, and stay awhile. On October 7th, I'm at a family reunion. My brother teaches me to shoot his glocks.

When I return to New York, WAWOG has released the anniversary edition of the New York War Crimes. We host a reading of the paper in the Vale at Prospect Park.

It's still warm, deep into October. It still feels like summer.

Drums, protestors chanting GAZA!