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# How to Unpack a Bomb Vest

Start with the vest itself, each pocket stuffed with scriptures and explosives, hatred and nails, belief and batteries. No. Start with prayer on Friday, or Saturday, or Sunday. No. It's at the hardware store, the mosque, the chatroom. Begin with an olive tree, a way of life, a desert sky. First, learn a language spoken for thousands of years. Learn its words for forgiveness, for war, for love. Learn every word for revenge spoken by anyone who has seen a drone. It is scrawled in the concrete dust of Aleppo, pockmarked across the walls of Baghdad, in the treasuries of the west. Look in your gas tanks for the instructions. Drink the poetry of nomads and scholars in the back alleys of old bloodlines and grievance. Cover yourself with hijab and begin with apology. Dig a hole six millennia down through generations of soldiers' bones and sacrifices to God, between two ancient rivers, and get in it. This is where you will find the directions for grace written in carbon, written in breath, written in songs whose lyrics the dead have long since forgotten.

Matt Hohner

For the original (longer) version, have a look at <https://www.rattle.com/how-to-unpack-a-bomb-vest-by-matt-hohner/>

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