

## What Are They Thinking Tonight?

On the Occasion of the Boston Marathon Bombing, April 15, 2013

By Patricia S. T. Edmisten

What are they thinking tonight  
as they watch CNN,  
knowing they killed an eight-year-old  
waiting for his dad to cross the finish line,  
knowing a mother's two children each lost a leg,  
Did it bother them that patriot Americans rushed  
to help the one-hundred mangled?

The killers were once infants,  
nursing at their mothers' breasts.  
When did they swallow that nugget of evil  
that took over and quashed goodness,  
spreading toxic ore that suffocated  
will and heart? Only a diabolically powerful teacher  
could convince youth that evil is good.

It would be easier to believe in Satan  
than to understand the evil humans do.  
We could all hold crosses—  
--billions of them,  
--our arms out-stretched toward the demon.  
Each of us could take turns  
with a silver stake and mallet.

We ask, instead, Neo-Nazi? Al Qaeda in Iraq?  
Taliban? Al Shabab? white supremacists?  
We ask what we did to make them hate us.  
Sometimes we even know the answers.  
Their shrapnel of glass and nails tear apart bodies.  
They desecrate dreams with pressure cooker bombs,  
maim with mayhem.

But all Americans were running the marathon on April 15,  
Not Democrats, not Republicans, not Independents,  
not black, white, native, Latino, Asian—all Americans,  
and we have runners hearts that don't give up.  
We have faith in the future,  
courage when confronted,  
and love of country that is unbounded.

