

First Place

Kelly Eastlund, Springfield

Soft Targets

Beirut, Baghdad, Paris, San Bernadino...
soft hearts, bellies full of dreams,
how many were killed?

I'm listening to Joni (*Help me, I think I'm falling...*),
a flash of last summer—fields of Queen Anne's lace,
plate-sized blossoms tall as me.

A guy on the corner holds a cardboard sign:
"I love you" is all it says.
A crow lands nearby, hops in a curious, lopsided way.

There are people whose mission is to bring on the Apocalypse.

There are people whose mission is to make refugees laugh:
Clowns without Borders—yes, for real.

I stagger through this world like that lopsided crow.

Last night I dreamt of marigold seeds—packets I must share:
how I will divide them, where I will leave them.
Over and over the seeds returning,
the need to give them away.

Driving home I see something waving out a car window.
A child's arm? No, closer I see: a dog's tail wagging—
a flag for the country of Happiness.

Stop lights reflect on wet pavement—
The rain makes little shrines everywhere.