

All Hallows' Eve, NYC, 2017

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High on sugar, ebullient,  
our children suffer  
through the last hours  
of school, so many monsters,  
masked, fake blood trickling  
from the corners of their mouths.  
The city—nation—pretends  
for hours, sometimes days at a time,  
that evil isn't real, that it isn't  
at this very moment cloaked  
in righteousness, climbing  
into a rented truck, repeating  
misappropriated incantations, justifying  
what it is about to do. Tomorrow  
bells will toll for eight more souls,  
unwitting martyrs—only two American.  
This is no holiday stunt, orchestrated  
for the benefit of early trick-or-treaters  
or the antsy Stuyvesant students about to be  
dismissed. The street will soon be littered  
with bicycle shrapnel, scribbled notes  
praising the God of ninety-nine names,  
the sheet-draped bodies, alternately lit  
a pallid red and blue.