

Peshawar kids

by Rachna K.

I see them gasping for breath,
the ink still wet on their notebook,
now streaked with blood.
Light headed, they try to focus
on the dark faces as their classroom
perishes into a cloudy graveyard.
I weep for humanity and wonder
if the chubby girl on the left,
remembered her mother holding
her mittens this morning or if
the skinny, dark boy smiled thinking
of his favorite lunch waiting at home.
If her grip on the pen is still firm,
if his answer is on the paper yet.
If the burden of these small souls
is too much for the earth to bear.
I wonder if they've forgiven us
for bringing them where there
is so little laughter and love,
and so much hurt.

