**My Dad’s Name Appears on the Caller ID**

Ed Doerr

Here’s a test for moral resolve: a homeless man

harassed by a group of drunk teenagers,

one of them flipping his paper cup

with its two pennies rattling at the bottom

& the others howling as the man,

muttering to himself, crawls on his knees

to chase after glinting copper busy

scoring an infinity sign into cement.

Would you toss aside your briefcase,

tear off your jacket, & set upon the hooligans

with both fists cocked & ready?

You’d like to think so, I bet.

But you didn’t see the glint of hate

dancing like two struck matchsticks

in the cup-flipper’s eyes, or the hungry way

his sycophants rubbed their hands

as the curbside gutter swallowed

the copper treats in one bite.

More likely, would you tuck your head

into your chest, as if to block knifing wind,

even as the sounds of boots on skin

chase you down the block?

Sometimes, I’ll be standing at the board

or driving home, & my phone will give

a phantom buzz, the ghost of intent

etched upon a black mirror:

look at me, pulling up my hood

& staring straight ahead,

never mistaken for the righteous hero

bounding heedlessly into the fray.