

KINDNESS

There it was, on Congress Street today,
a body limp and twisted
by a fender's curled metal.

Someone shouted, "Listen,"
and we heard a gurgling in the boy's throat,
we saw him raise a hand.

A man rocked the boy to his chest
despite the known command
to leave the injured where they lie

and pressed his ear to the boy's lips.
"I don't know it," the man said,
"I don't know the song."

A woman cradled the boy's face,
blood spitting into her eyes,
and began to sing a song

for which I knew the melody
but was feeling for the words,
my mouth moving in shapes

as the sirens drew nearer
and the drilling of a jackhammer
resumed.