

Laurie Lamon

Just say

the terrorist's vest was packed
instead with strips of shredded speeding
tickets, lost-love poems, divorce papers,
X rays filled with dark matter—just say
metal detectors at the mall, the stadium,
the city's tallest skyscraper detected
longevity, budget surplus, the last hour-
long phone call to your mother—in a second,
the burgeoning cumulous mounting
like the Blue Angels, or a pyramid of real ones
waving from the head of heaven's gold pin.

Say the terrorist, adjusting his weight, knew
something wondrous was about to happen:
an eclipse, or a comet that appears every 400 years,
the tail's rock and ice like trillions of dirty martinis.
Say it was raining, and thousands of umbrellas
flew their colors. Say it was 84 degrees,
a Wednesday, seven billion people breathing
in and out when a woman's shoe shushed the back
of his shoe as they walked into a building

and he heard when she said "Excuse me,"
and he answered "It's Ok," or "No problem,"
or "Yes, thank you, your voice is the sound
of my mother's hair drawn up by my father's hands,"
and the vest of nails and plastic explosive
was instead Iftar, a Styrofoam box of rice and bread,
or a space capsule for newborns curled inside
the future, or newlyweds looking out at the earth
and envisioning light, just say, ordinary
light through a living room or a bedroom window.