

Vigilance

--For Wear Orange Rally, Moms Demand Action, Friday, June 6, 2025

On vacation in another country,
we live much the same as here—
evenings, we walk to the park,
everything familiar. The swings,
a curving blue slide, birdsong
and laughter, crunch of gravel
under tiny, sneakered feet. What
I ask in silence is so different here,
away? Then I catch it—I am too busy with joy
to scan the park for danger, to calculate
possible protective positions—where we would duck
or hide or run. Before me here, a sight
undisturbed by visions of covering my family
with my body, of mothers who have had to
do the same. My fear will greet me
at home and I must re-commit, each time
we return to never being quite so joyful or busy, here, again.

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City of Alexandria Poet Laureate