

Purple Knots by Julie Fitzpatrick

My stomach in knots - tight knots.
Red, blue, red, blue - purple knots.
How to untangle them? Hardly can sleep.
Hard to shake the nightmare. Even in
The daylight squinting, turning to my
Phone, Praying to it almost. Please say
This mayhem will end. Please say the
Terror will stop. Please say a new day
Has come. We need someone to look up to,
We need someone to lead, we need someone
To remind us where our hearts are. Where are
Our hearts? There has been darkness, cruelty,
A shadow that has spread- invisible and insidious,
Savage and selfish. Hands to oneself instead of
Reaching out, Children torn from their families,
Women covering their privates denigrated by
His grabbing. Our friends - black, brown – fearful
At sundown. Four long years. When will we wake up?
Noontime today, the news came in: Biden is going
To be the 46th President. His VP is a woman: Kamala
Harris. Half Indian – it's not lost on me that these are
The Diwali Days: The Hindu festival of light where
Colored powder is thrown in the air. In celebration,
In hope, in faith. Pigment blowing, lights shining-
Flickering with beauty and human kindness. I can't
Seem to stop crying. The anxiety of living beneath
His tweets, the exhaustion of listening for his latest
Crime, the earache from his constant complaints
Will end. I can hardly believe it. To me that person
Now in the White House, soon to be exiting from it
Represents the worst of us: the moments where I am cruel
Where I am self-absorbed, where I am wrapped in my own
Ego. If he wins, I thought, late into the night on Tuesday -
Groaning and writhing in my skin - if he wins, so does
The worst of me, of us – and what I have seen in
The raucous rudeness of his fans. If he wins so
Does crassness, so does savagery, so does
inhumanity. I work every day to keep mine at bay.
I work to be better than my worst self because
I have seen how madness can take someone's life,
How rage can destroy a human heart. If he wins -
My knots tightening - so does the pain, so does
The horror, so does the heartlessness. Today
We heard he did not win. Decency won, patience,
Intelligence, empathy, humor, won. And if we can
Walk the monster out the door on Pennsylvania
Avenue, we can walk it out of our own doors as
well. We can rise and work to be our best selves.
For one another, no matter what color: red, blue, red, blue.
The purple knots are coming loose - it may take a while.
Let us be gentle with one another. We all have them - our knots.
Perhaps we can help one another with the untangling –
one knot at a time. That is what our next president would do.
I'll follow his lead.