

Karen Friedland – Two Poems

And Then the Fathers

And then all the fathers
died—
their bodily presence in the world
just gone,

their blue dress-shirted
gentle pot bellies
no more—

first one,
then the next,
succumbing horribly
yet nobly

to the masses and cancers
and infections
to which flesh
is heir.

And we could only watch
in horror,
as our mothers
became widows
and carried on.

Devour

I ate the whole Boston cream pie donut,
because Boston is the city
of my soul's birth,
and I needed to honor that;

too, this false-spring,
with its giddy cries of bird song
and dogs barking
through open windows.

I am open to everything,
am reading feverishly—
newspapers, novels, posts online—

wanting to cram the entirety of human existence
into my skull
much like the donut I just devoured,

before the brain and body wear down
like a ticking clock—

because I don't want the herky-jerky music
of what happens
to ever stop.

A grant writer by day, **Karen Friedland**'s poems have been published in *The Lily Poetry Review*, *Constellations*, *Nixes Mate Review*, *Writing in a Women's Voice*, *Vox Populi* and others. One of her poems was nominated for a Pushcart Prize and another was displayed on the walls of Boston's City Hall. Her books are *Tales from the Teacup Palace* (Cervena Barva Press) and *Places That Are Gone* (Nixes Mate Books). She lives in West Roxbury, MA.