

Do not ask why we are hated

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At the end of Ramadan, the North Shore of Boston,
at the intersection behind a Ford-F150, the rear plate
advertises 617-666-.... I hear the word Dabbah.

The irony of it - Washington Street, Pandemonium
and the great beast of hubris idling in a phone number.
On the passenger side, a gas station, here more

Washington by the gallon, rubble pulled from our wallets
to buy paper cups of coffee. Just the other morning
a sinner scratched off one thousand Washingtons here

performed his Missa Solemnis in front of the attendant.
He waved the perforated stub like an amputated limb,
a minuteman, the whites of his eyes, obelisks of sclera

there was a backmasking of Hallelujah. Christ, how he
could utter he would rather have claimed 500 dollars
to forego the ride to the lottery office.

If only someone were to wrap him in stars and stripes
and pour unleaded Washington, 87, 89, 93 brand the word
SUPER all over his body, give him 666 reasons to cry.

- *Woburn, MA*