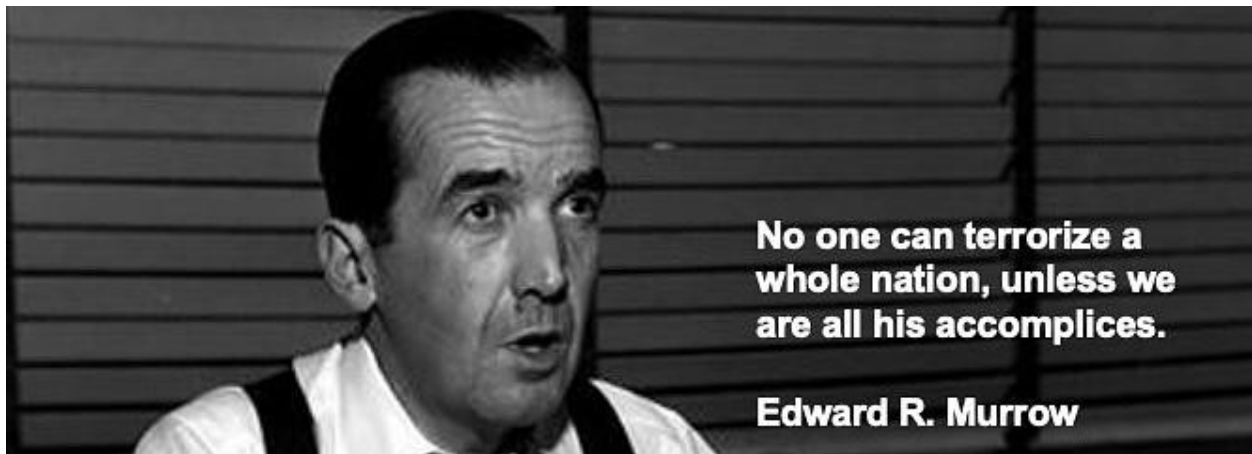


## Opiates of the People



Fear is like a drug.  
Side effects affect.  
Which brings me here to be analyzed  
My knuckles turning white  
Waiting for the first round of testing  
My drug coursing through my body and mind.

"What do you see?"  
She asks.  
What I saw was a blob of nothing made of ink spilled on a blotter.  
I knew it was supposed to have meaning  
Just not to me.  
"Human genitalia?" I heard myself say.  
She wrote something down.

She seemed to have a cross look on her face.  
I must have given the wrong answer.

"Tell me a story about this,"  
She commanded.  
What I saw was a black and white photograph.  
A man was sitting behind a desk giving testimony of some sort.  
I told her the story of Roy Cohn and the McCarthy hearings.  
Cohn's ghost was in the news lately, making an appearance in court  
Standing unseen behind a man who thought he was being persecuted.

She scribbled in her notepad even more furiously than before.  
My guess is, it was something about persecution complexes.

"Complete the following sentences," she demanded:  
Grandma's hands ... are shaking  
Longing is like ... being short of breath.  
His forehead ... had the mark of the beast.

## Opiates of the People

Its teeth are like ... talons.  
The monster ... ate me.  
Determination ... is highly overrated.

The tree in winter is like ... a skeleton.  
The city in spring is like ... a prison.  
The sound of the engine is like ... nails on a chalk board.  
At first glance, the house is like ... a home.  
But after looking more closely, the house is like ... an insane asylum.  
The last box in the empty house ... can stay there.  
Ambivalence ... makes me shake like a grandma's hands.

She stopped writing in her note pad and looked at me like I was a bug.  
She never did tell me why I failed the exam.  
But I knew what the tests meant.

I need a new drug.



DAY 7 PROMPT: Complete sentences in a lightning round of metaphors (some of which appear in the poem). Note: This poem is based on a true story.