

Three Poems

KELLY CHERRY

That Boy

Halfway around the world, that boy who wore
blood in his hair and sat obligingly
because he could not comprehend Assad's
reign of evil is, I now believe,
the son I would have had, if only I
were younger and if only I could have
had a child and if he did not belong
already to a family in Aleppo.

I too can't comprehend Assad's black reign
of evil. Does it cheer him up to fling
small boys into a cauldron of hurtling fire?
I think it must. Yet all a little boy
wants is a toy or two and his parents
and if he has a sibling, then he wants
his sibling. Pita bread would also be
good, but there is no pita bread.

A Harder Art

cf. Elizabeth Bishop, "One Art"

Harder to master than the art of losing,
the art of forgiveness requires a sacrifice
of ego, a deliberate and painful choosing

of other over self. Accept the bruising
of faults disclosed (your every little vice).
Harder to master than the art of losing,

to forgive's to give, one writes, meanwhile musing
on one's failed attempts to be normal and nice,
to subdue the stubborn, selfish self, choosing

other over self. How very confusing.
I can't deny that I have paid a price,
grace being harder to master than the art of losing.

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