

New Poetry by Todd Heldt: “This Is A Drill, This Is Only A Drill” and “Suffer The Children”



ACTION IS PRETTY / *image by Amalie Flynn*

This is a drill. This is only a drill.

They voted to abolish history.
There had been no commercials.
We didn't know which wrong to fear most,
and nobody got the joke.
When the polls ran out of ballots,
somebody hurled a beer bottle
through a church's stained-glass window.
Peace officers deployed
pepper spray for the white kids
and bullets for the black.
You should expect to see things
like this in democracy. Because
the cost is always
what the market will bear.
We all went home or to jail,
or to hospital or morgue, grateful.
America in action is pretty,
the Blue Angels swooping in for the kill
as spectators cheer from the beaches below.
We don't even know who we are fighting.
Someone is crossing himself.
Someone is crossing the border.

War is just how we learn geography,
and someone scaled a wall
to pick your corn. Good people
are unarmed and
defenseless in church,
and no one will tell us straight
which group of not us we should bomb.

Suffer the Children

12000 kids in detention
300 shot dead in their schools
200 bombed by drones
the ones we don't know to mention
and the ones the future will starve
my two who are safe in their bedroom
who cry when they are scared