

CAIN CONFESSES

Marcia Golub

“I’m bad,” he cried, the child in my arms.
He wept against my breast that he’d done wrong,
and broke my heart, his toddler flesh against
my flesh, trembling long—despair? alarm?—
insisting he’d done wrong moments before,
and that I would not love him anymore.

I said I’d love, no matter what he did—
“You cannot make me stop loving you.”
“I killed an ant,” he cried and wept anew.
“I’m sure it was an accident,” I said.
He shook his head and said that wasn’t true.
“I killed—no reason—it’s what I chose to do.”

He was not five, he was still four.
I said it was okay but kill no more

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