

# **New Poetry by Jennifer Smith: “So This is My Career?”**

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# **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