

# The Messenger

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## Suicide Watch

Micah Farmer

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# Suicide Watch // Micah Farmer

He always liked to light the matches.  
To feel the flare as the flame took over.  
The fear when it crept too close  
to fragile fingers and the last minute twist  
for extinguished safety. Fact:  
there's only so much friction  
a lively hand can handle  
before the hand is scorched. Even nursery  
pastel walls lose their vibrancy  
when the babies toddle out. The sound  
that crayons make when they scar  
the pages always warped his wrist  
and he'd rub it to soothe the ache.

We come from bunk beds.  
We come from sweaty summer fans  
oscillating the putrid air in swirls  
of primary reds and yellows.  
We fail to see the gradual shift  
from summer greens to autumn decay.  
We fail to see the chromatic chickadee  
contemplating God, but we whistle along  
in the startling quiet like a prayer.  
Where did these notes come from  
and when did they scribble verdicts?  
Because the Lord knows, we don't know  
the words for this world and the world  
pretends to give a speech, pretends martyrdom  
when it points a finger upward in contempt.  
He can't stay static so we stuff  
his face with pills, hoping he'll *just pay attention*  
and regurgitate the lecture we just critiqued.  
Everybody's afraid of the book, afraid to turn  
the pages, because they're afraid  
they might get an answer.