

Girl With Fragment

Susan Bright



Girl With Fragment, c. 1998, by Alan Pogue

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Say it's true,
for the sake of argument,
say one could
reduce a country
to one person,
or believe George
who loves freedom
must be allowed
to take out Saddam
who doesn't.

Say it's true,
for the sake of argument,
that a single person
could symbolize
an entire culture.
Say what works
for one person, works
for everyone.

Say one person could represent all people, one species our vast earth,
assume for the purpose of debate this is a credible way to think
about reality, or history, or at all.

Say, for now, we allow a single human being to represent Iraq.
I say we choose this ten-year-old Muslim girl in Al Deer,
holding a missile fragment, Christmas, 1998.

Her finger tips are radiant. The embroidery on her scarf is delicate
and fresh. The missile fragment which she holds up for the world
to see came from the rubble of a school.
I say, we choose her.

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