

secret children

a desert
a wasteland
cold.

something terrible
thousands and thousands of crude wooden crosses
 the skeleton of a child nailed to each and every one
close your eyes and imagine this
imagine your own child in this place
imagine yourself.

winter winds whip the bones of these children
rib cages frozen in fear decades ago rattle but
 keep their secrets still.

between the bones
 there is ice
inside the ice
 there is fire
within the fire
 there is a secret
the secret that keeps them here.

each child was brought here by an adult
 a trusted friend
brought here
 exploited
 split open
 left here
left to hang in this bitter wind and commune with ghosts.

the child never had a choice.

these children have families that love them dearly
 blind families that will see no evil
 deaf families that will hear no evil
 dumb families that will speak no evil.

families that cannot believe
 a child's body knows the difference between
 fantasy and reality
 ... *are you sure you're not making this up?*

families that cannot believe
 their beautiful children could have been
 taken away
 ... *but you were such a happy child!*

families that cannot believe
this could ever happen to
their own children
... not in this family!

families that cannot believe
the words *sexually abused* could ever describe
their own children
... no secrets in this family, by god!

it is not too late for these children
they await resurrection and salvation
they ache to be healed
but cannot do it alone
fathers mothers brothers and sisters
lovers spouses families and friends
they need you.

take them down from these crosses
trust them
welcome them into your heart
love them
hold them close and warm their coldest places
hear them
feel their fire and honor it
believe them.

one secret at a time
one child at a time
believe them.