

The Goldfinch

Kitty Donnelly

It died quietly on my palm,
externally unruffled -
its body just beyond
a living warmth. I fought the dual
tragedy & privilege of holding it,
unsure at first which bird it was
on the turn of becoming:
a jag of lemon lightening
across each wing, red-masked -
I recalled the Fabritius painting:
wall-fixed perch, chain clasped
like an iron rosary to a claw-foot
sore from the wings'
insistent rising, the expression
marked by an uptilt of the chin
like a child suppressing, with pride,
their furious griefs.