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## Choices

“Do you want to be  
bored to death or gored to death?”  
That’s what the psychiatrist said to me.  
Why don’t you speak to me like that?’  
Clever-sounding words:  
does the specialist think in rhyme? I ask myself.

An erudite man who’s become fond of me  
as I see him through the aftermath  
of assaults, kidnapping, rape: gored  
— not yet to death.  
Semi-recovered, is bored the word  
for how he is, the blankness of his days?

He’s no matador  
yet I predict he will return  
to that arena, the war-torn country  
however I speak to him:  
it’s where he’s known love.



Helen Pavlin