

Terrible Twos

CHARLES HARPER WEBB

O God of Mercy, drop me in the sea.
Turn my feet into propellers; my chest,
a high-keeled hull for cutting waves:
the time he skin-dived the commode—

the time he deconstructed my Boze
speakers into kindling—the time
he kicked a lawyer, then eye-gouged me
and ripped my chest hair as I rushed

us both away—the fights about him
with my wife: like being acid-doused,
then flayed. God of Forgiveness,
except for your grace, I might have

kicked his head like a soccer ball,
speared him like a quarterback,
smacked him like a hanging curve.
Let days I cursed his life and mine

hump toward me in rogue waves
I quarter, laughing like Captain Jim
that time out of Ilwaco when we ran
out of squid, and salmon hammered

our bare hooks. Let me slice through
house-high swells to throttle down
where tuna chase herring shoals
through silver spray. Let me lean over

my own sides to haul green-gold
dorado from the pitching deep. Let
my son, grown tall and strong, catch
more than me.