

Christ Discovered in the Temple

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After the painting by Simone Martini

He stands there like a spoiled child
so certain is he of his mother's love.
Her gesture is kindly, reasoning,
nothing he wants any part of.
He hugs himself, his book to his heart
while Mary's lies open, skilled in the art
of multitasking, like any good mom
who needs to keep her children alive
and go about the business of living.
But not her son. He's got a one-
track mind. Even now he resents the time
they are robbing him of. "Things will be fine,"
he seems to say, though grumpy Joseph doubts
the boy has a clue what they're worried about.