

ELLEN WEHLE

Sunday Mass

Because our daughter ran with a rough crowd, every week
we wrestled her to church like sailors untie knots in rope
to loose fair winds, the priest and his white stole invoking
that divine light which longs to be brought to earth in us
as my mind wandered away to last year's crop of glorious
failures (how I called the in-laws drunks, hid from howls
behind my open book) which I've been told comprise true
life, scored-out pages littering carpets in abandoned rooms
the only notes Heaven hears though our concertos thunder
on. My intention to *simply be love*: that ballerina who took
a dive in her snowflake tiara and slippers. Four rows back
from the orchestra we couldn't help but see her wide-open
surprise as thirty dancers swayed together like candelabra
in a draft, cattails on a lake and she flew up, sat down hard,
and the world with its snowy kingdoms dropped into her.