

In the Middle of a Cold Stone Church

Clad in the Sunday fashions

That matched their faces,

Jaws and asses tight as tongues

set in bloody, irreparable space.

The priest gathered in my dreams, conveying

the usual message, pulpit spitting ancient

names of the damned and damnable,

robes billowing judgement from his mouth.

His tongue being too loose to hold still.

And when I thought “what the hell,” listening

To this little man, I wedged

My tongue between my teeth, letting

The bumps and grooves erode the laughter

Bubbling from shifting feet to sinful mind.

My husband nudged me from his prayer,

jaw starched in quiet contemplation

while my upturned corners saved me

from the festering splinter I sit upon.