

## MEAT AND DRINK

They wait for him  
to sip the communion wine.  
Enormous great-grandmothers  
unable to kneel  
and desirous  
yellow tongues:  
Oh, it must taste so good.

Children fumble  
under pews,  
look up  
and see horror comics  
paste north south walls—  
stations of the cross  
marching east to west  
with panels  
of humpbacked Christs.

Garrish  
red yellow  
green blue  
pieta,  
all four eyes,  
search over sleepy heads  
and holy water,  
outside,  
to the angled days  
slowing to solstice.

They ignore  
the muttered Mass  
to turn over  
the grey principles  
of winter  
converging fast.  
Cornworship  
and harvest,  
making striking  
habitual lists,  
are over.

In turn slick sips.  
Can you curl your tongue  
or take it on the palm?  
Transubstantiation  
sparks past  
red palates  
and unleavened  
becomes unhealed.

They walk to their cars.  
A small dirty cloud  
stops,  
drops through quiet morning  
a thousand crystal  
postage stamps  
that tilt and dive  
onto any nose  
and taste sweet as  
loess shavings.

Eager.  
Porkchops thawing  
and a sinkful  
of potatoes  
to peel.  
They are all  
getting home  
on the bright  
greased highway.

*Todd Vens*