

*Joanna Pearson*

## COMMUNION

How not unlike Communion was first love—  
you and I in the church kitchen, Sunday donuts, a dove  
etched on our hymnals. You revered the law  
like God, so we were hesitant when touching. We saw  
each other's nakedness and knew we'd only go so far—  
splayed diagonals of limbs forming a fleshy star.  
One time for a joke you took the blessed econo-jug  
of leftover Concord Grape, sad and store-bought. Smug,  
you drank, then wiped your mouth, carnivorous, bloodstained.  
Still, I took a swig. It tasted ordinary. That explained  
it all. The crumbs of love were also small: denial and restraint.  
You held one hand up like an Old World saint,  
bowed your head, leaned closer to bestow  
a kiss like the All-Mighty, who cannot be told no.

