

Happiness in Love

by Ann Bogle

The wedding was to have taken place at the spout, at the fish mouth of the fountain, where the ice had stopped its tumble from the bubbler, that in summer entertained the old and the children and caused the others to look for pennies in their pockets and purses, pennies to cast to the feet of nudes. Parish priest passed over, the pastor was to have given the order of service and the man, the groom, a handsome daredevil of rectitude, was to have given his hand to the woman, the bride, the statuesque caregiver of whispers. G. had had this in mind the entire time, asking how does this? wearing white mink for winter, before supper. Given savings. The running arm of love of one man for one woman who saves him, each day mattering a little more than the next, each day mattering a little more than the last. Each day mattering more than the thirst. How in this loving matter only loving matters. The man, the woman, the footpath. The lovers heard early in the morning at their water. Pouring water for coffee from the tap. Arriving graciously, cautiously, warily, safely to nest. Talk of love on the phone. It was an easy conversation. The love was a bumper crop. The love was coming out noodles through the receiver. He loved her more than he had ever loved anyone. His happiness was complete. She let him more than she had ever let anyone love her. The happiness was a tablecloth for a picnic. The happiness was the carpet in the hallway. The happiness was the wall behind the painting. The happiness was the sky behind the cloud. The happiness was the seating in the Saab. The happiness was the carrier, the weekend, the chimes. The happiness was not among the people or women who were to have witnessed it, who could not be clear without or about it, who were in it, whose own happiness was phrased in book order—she, her happiness was to have been a seal within eternity, in the Wednesdays of life.

