

Elegy for Sister J.A.

Grace passes through this convent
as often as salmon makes it
up the falls at Oregon City,
as often as a politician rises
uncorrupted through the offices,
as often as a love song,
a true love song.

But if it does, even once,
the river stands on end,
the honored judge quits suddenly
and looks back, uncomprehending,
the janitor sings silently and
inconsolably to his dust mop
up and down the late hallways.