

## **Mouth**

**by Valerie Senyk**

Your mouth is full of the unspoken  
like an ice jamb behind your teeth,  
words jostle each other for room  
and keep your tongue swollen

what to say, and then when,  
when fewness of words is laudable;  
these crawl back into your throat  
like chastened children

deep into your belly they swarm  
where thousands of infant letters  
rebel against their unbirth,  
mewling and crying 'I am!'

mouth subdued, inner voice rails  
at the clenching of teeth and lips,  
rigidity of tongue, a waste  
this carousel of words that fail

This was your way times past  
your learning was deep and  
and it kept you dark and safe;  
now let words pass your lips at last