

***Molly Minturn***

## **The Book of Common Prayer**

Turn on every light in the house.  
Open each door, your life  
an advent calendar

where we can all be free, quietly.  
That late-night prank at summer camp,  
a canoe on the dark lake, underwear

woven into a quilt, covering the raft.  
In the morning let it remain, fluttering  
lace and hearts, encircled by water

and pines. Behind each door  
your father, a baby in an incubator, fists  
startling against his face, white peonies.

Your brother in a newspaper crown,  
standing on the king-size bed,  
his bloody lip, his eyes closed,

listening to the dead. Strings  
of light around the birdbath  
all through the winter. Your mother

at the window waiting for the sparrows.  
She does not turn around. The sorrow  
of her shoulders framed in the window.

Speak her name and she will return.