

Gail White

Orthodox Easter

If Beauty is your breaking point, the Greeks
Have got a church to sell you. It's all gold,
Enamel, chanting, candlelight. It speaks
To me, the skeptic, and I'm nearly sold.

But faith without its doubts is love without
What Milton calls "reluctant, amorous
Delay" — only the golden glint of doubt
Makes dusty dogmas turn auriferous.

So many times I've almost been enticed
By faith and in the end said: That's not you.
But fashions change: Old garments look like new,
And doctrines youth rejected have sufficed.
Chrysostom tells me Death bit down on Christ
But couldn't swallow him. I hope it's true.

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Feeding the Feral Cats

Three at the door tonight —
big ugly orange one,
two gray and white —
staring reproachfully
over the empty dishes:
Where are the loaves and fishes?

And I put out some food,
having no more excuse than that
I might be heaven's feral cat —
driven by cold despair,
not seeking warmth or bed
or even entrance there —
but sure of being fed.