

Disregarding the Facts

by Ron Watson

She might have been disentangling our brains
from the long tentacles of the Dark Ages
or weaving a few loose ends at the fringes
of the Renaissance. She could have been

connecting us to vital strands of our humanity
with motives Mother Teresa would admire,
her lesson plans strung along a rosary of bells.
Surely, she must have said something to us

as her mouth moved across a silent atmosphere.
I should have been listening as others were.
Yet, as I sat next to her, our desks in a ring,
windows open to April and daffodils abloom,

my eyes stayed fixed on her feet, so help me,
and I cannot recall a thing she said that day
which would help me pass a test in English class.
But I memorized the details, nevertheless—

each as vivid to me now as they were then:
the strawberry gloss of her toenail polish,
the braided curvature of her sandal straps,
the higher education of her anklebones.