

MARY RUEFLE

Critique of Little Errors

I was a failure as a gingerbread baker,
I was a failure at drawing grasshoppers,
a failure as a tailor, a failure
as the official keeper of tariffs on all signet rings,
and I failed to put the cap back on the glue.
But it has been a beautiful day,
go down the street as far as you can go
and ask anybody.
The serpentine hours circumvented it,
the sunset couldn't eat its edges,
eyes everywhere unfrosted.
When I am old and selling nutmegs
I will be a failure at remembering
how when the syllabub drinkers beat the barmaids
the barmaids expired in their aprons on the floor
and I prevented it from happening.
Even so, this was the one day
no one seemed to care that the cap
was making trips in the dumbwaiter.