

Ellen Goldsmith

What We Want

What we want is to be like words
that are more than one part of speech,
maybe both a noun and a verb
like *work* or *spring*.

What we want is to be in the middle
of things: our parents at a movie,
a dream going in different directions,
a cup of coffee.

We want to be like a bird, a fish,
maybe a tiger in the ways
we choose. And some of us
want to stop wanting.

Be Warned

A gibbous moon will starve you,
gardenias turn your laughter
to tears, set off alarms
only sunrise can silence.

A crescent moon holds promises
the stars are trying to steal.
A tree concocts schemes
it keeps secret from the sky.

Dreams are like books
with the best parts
on the frayed pages.
Sometimes words are missing.

Ellen Goldsmith is the author of *Where to Look, Such Distances* and *No Pine Tree in This Forest Is Perfect* which won the Hudson Valley Writers' Center 1997 chapbook contest. "The Secret of Life" from *Such Distances* was read by Garrison Keillor on *Writer's Almanac*. Recent poems have appeared in *Antiphon*, *Connecticut River Review*, *The Inflectionist Review*, *Kin*, *The Mochila Review*, *Off the Coast* and *Third Wednesday*. A resident of Cushing, Maine, she is a professor emeritus of The City University of New York.