

from *falling apart, radiant* by Mary Jane Ryals

**Walking East Early Sunday Morning
in Florence**

remembering Kitty Gretsche

She was gone, and I saw a blue rose lying on the sidewalk
that she'd never come upon. She would have loved
the street cleaner's tangerine uniform,
the older lady in navy walking her black pug,
the younger in navy scolding her white *chihuahua*.
She'd notice the swallows around churches,
and the green sheen of the pigeon's feathers as it dodged
humans and walking into *Antico Forno* in case
one of them would drop bread. She'd celebrate
and envy the joggers in fluorescence because
they had two legs, not one lost too early.
And the windows at the sexy shop, black and flesh,
and the words *Perche L'Amore e un Arte*;
She'd crack up at the blunt English, *Please me*.
The surprise of a bride walking across the road
in white, and when we got to Gucci and Prada,
Dolce & Gabbana and Dior, the smell of piss.
She'd have gathered with the ladies all
gawking at shoes, she with her one spirited leg
and the high heeled sandals with glitzy metal,
dug from richness of dirt. That thief,
cancer, that takes so many back to dust.