

LESLEY WHEELER

Inside the Bright

wall
of the stalled
 wave, two children float, ambered insects:
 the little's one's knees flexed,
 eyes goggled, cheeks inflated, a

monk's
pose, unsunk
 by meditation; the taller one
 gathering all the sun
 to herself, holding on to her

wee
bikini
 top and lungfuls of pent laughter; both
 unburnt for now, afloat
 and unchastened, before a rogue

surge
comes to turn
 them around, followed by another,
 another, another,
 till they can't remember where air

is.

Then she'll fizz

up the beach, refusing the ocean's
unending assault, since

she has more worries than hands. That's

her

way to surf.

It's over once it hurts. Not the boy.

It's fine, I'm fine, he'll say,

and dive back into the churning

grit,

resolute.

The future bears down but it feels good
to concentrate seaward.

One beautiful threat at a time.