

## Altar flowers

by [Mary M. Brown](#) in the [August 22, 2012](#) issue

They choose silence, their petals  
held like tongues. Their stems  
entangled, some are broken, others

sick with their own stiffness, their  
own oily fragrance, with the sway  
created by the chancel fan and with

the white noise of the nave. They  
deny their own violence, opinions  
fixed in pink. But finally one breaks

through even her own infernal silence,  
won't, in fact, shut up. She calls out to  
the others boldly, Beatrice of the vase.