

Lesley Wheeler

Inside the bright

wall
of the stalled

wave, my 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

wec
bikini

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

surge
comes to turn

then 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.

Scary to watch, but it must feel good
to concentrate seaward.
One beautiful threat at a time.