

Friday Crash
for Grace Simpson

I yank off my face,
hang it on the doorknob,
turn the lock and stop the clock.

End of a wicked week
that feels like a hangover I don't deserve,
caught like a summer cold.

I find myself leaning, almost falling
off the chair. I try to sit up straight,
but my head is heavy, my brain sliding.

I look back at the face
| for any sign of change.
It sags, pleated like a hand fan,
mouth agape, ready to scream.

Maybe this weekend
I'll go into hibernation,
finish *Finnegan's Wake*,
eat a dark chocolate cake.

I brew ginseng tea,
gift from Ming
for teaching him English.
It has powers, he said.

I find two cups from the Chinese restaurant
where one summer Grace and I
sipped magic potions
stirring out poems from the leaves.

I fill my cup and hers, too,
step out of my body and toss it
down the laundry shoot.

I drink a toast to Grace, to Ming,
to black cats and orange dahlias.