

## Annunciation

Wheeled thru the corridors,  
no strength to blow out a candleflame—  
I kept whispering,  
“Remember to phone back the sisters at St. Anne’s.”

Is someone slipping me an orange?  
It’s only ammonia.  
I lay my head forward  
on this plinth, now that one  
now share one with another woman. The crush—

I envision girls  
a host  
in ammonia-pale dresses  
slipping off to first communion

oranges in their fresh-scrubbed palms  
like girls in a garden.  
The sun’s stern, strong  
pungent air parting—slashed from stem to stern

in a wave of light  
at their coming  
as if they were trim ships  
(all sails clipped) sailing a bit close to the wind:

split to facets of diamond  
warm globes of the world in their hands  
lighting these corridors  
already white beyond white, bright beyond bearing.