**The golden age**

It begins with vision

and ends there too.

Here, hills lolloping

down to unseen sea,

islands above the fog.

Elsewhere, the fields

around Haarlem, flat

as they can be. But

tear yourself away

from Ruysdael’s clouds

to be pulled in

by the white sheets

of fabric spread across

the fields, and now

the mind’s telescope,

not held in check

by optics, zooms in

to the sharp rise

of peduncle of

a field of tulips

the Queen of Night

bloom, or lowly garlic

scapes. One can’t stop

the flow, now we are

elsewhere, where cut

flowers sit in vases,

and nearby oranges

glow. Someone’s

showing off how well

he can do reflections

off pewter or a glass.

Why not pull in a skull, or

brace of pheasants, as if

we needed reminding

that demise is next to

domain. But the reflections

are good enough to show

a window, so off we soar

again, into it, out and

about, to soul-touch

the land we’ll walk in

and rejoicing, rejoin.