

As an un-stretched hand
at the front of the plane,
with white canvassed hair,
reached to turn off the overhead lights,
not before reaching for his wife's,
only preparing for landing --

taught me to delay the dull ache --

And for a time my mother's fever
remained shaking under thin sheets
baffled the noise
of a blue body turning static.

So with the urgency of being human
became the first time I prayed
for someone to come help me carry her
and her fear

over the tubes inserted into her nose and throat;
attaching to
old and bad black holes in the walls
of her colon
left unaddressed --
every day murmurs to the architect.

Shut down for a second surgery
to remove hardened wind-blown weeds --
I brush her hair and
wash her scent away.