sleepless grief
rises quietly
twice a night
to change its soaked
pajamas

a fist lodged in its throat
submissive grief
sips the offered broth
but spits into a napkin
the minute you look away

after fucking in the underbrush
jealous fury and voracious grief
walk slowly home
in opposite directions
their hair full of dead leaves

impatient grief
braids and unbraids
the tablecloth fringe
taps out Morse code
with its loafer toe
sending messages
to the newly dead
the body’s a bear trap
while enduring the fat pastor’s
kindly insights and pouring him
more coffee
root cellar grief
burrows in a crawlspace
beneath its former home
never wipes its feet and mounts
the stairs into the well-lit house
where casseroles featuring
melted cheese are being reheated
and children are having their baths

in volcanic grief
the sufferer never again
enjoys life aright till the lava
has cooled and taken on
wondrous blackened forms

soul-wandering grief
no longer recognizes proper conduct
the wicked are dear to it
with the virtuous it finds no delight

long past midnight
solitary grief
may be briefly relieved
by the loud sounds
of lively mice
banging around
inside a cold stove