

The lamp in the borrowed room

has a white shade and a pale green base
with milky blossoms

down the front in a single spray,
almost Japanese,

each flower made of three
rounded petals, three arching stamen.

Among the blossoms are
plump white dots meant to be buds.

The light cast by the lamp is soft
across the nightstand

and the folded newspaper.
There are, I know, many hells

in the other-where's outside this room.
I know the ceasefire failed

and the Red Cross buses were too late.
A floorboard creaks

when I walk from the bed
to the fraying armchair and back.