

Marilyn Westfall

Renewal

The automatic door
hisses shut.
Rain-soaked daffodils and mulch
are sealed away.

A balding woman wheels
up and down the hall.
Aides in scrubs bundle
sheets wet with waste.

At the desk
 I ask
for a Styrofoam cup,
ginger ale, and thickener.
 I knock.
Hello, Sis. Today she doesn't
shift her head, wiggle
her working fingers.
 I see

that stubble has covered
the cleft and scar
where surgeons took
a slice of skull—
cutting a hatch
for her swelling brain.

Outside her window
geese are feeding,
their long S-necks
like teacup handles
that in time
she may grasp.

Marilyn Westfall has published poetry, fiction, and various non-fiction pieces, including interviews, essays, and scholarly works for many years in publications such as *Studies in English Literature*, *The Humanist*, *Concho River Review*, *Salt Hill* and others. Most recently, her creative works have appeared in *Right Hand Pointing*, *Southwestern American Literature*, *Earth's Daughters*, *The Autumn Sound* and *Halfway Down the Stairs*. Additional poetry is forthcoming in *Illya's Honey* and *Contemporary Haibun*.

