The Happiest Day of Your Life

You wake up and hear rain. You wake up and think there’s not enough rain, not enough songs about rain or memories of rain. Of being numbed or warmed by rain.

You wake up. Your eyes are open. Lilies in a moss-green bowl. Elms through the window moving their hands like cellists. Books exist. And paintings. And pillows.

Blue Mountain and Saddle Mountain. Abundance Creek. Alpha Centauri. Delft. The woman in your dream was putting down a crate of oranges, but then you woke up remembering there is custard. There is Verdi, there is smoke-filled late-fall air. And even joy in what it feels like to grieve. Wanting to sleep instead of bear what you must. Like finishing the best book in the world: “... And so they buried Hector, tamer of horses.” You wake up, wanting to try. You try. Here in the swirling eddies,

in the dark river of time and decay. There is rain. There is this day. There is this day and no other. Praise it with trumpets and zithers. Praise it however you can.

—Michael Lavers