

Trash Day

black bags swollen with debris
knotted to keep the worst from spilling out

in less than an hour the city crew
will back its beeping hearse up to the curb &

carry off fried chicken & fruit trays
a half-eaten cake

dozens of Styrofoam cups
like silent candles cool & dim

paper plates stitched together
with casseroles

all those things we throw away
to avoid recalling clutter that remains

that vinegary stench can be unbearable
old meat & berries saved too long

their stink a hodgepodge
of our unrewarded miseries

it's difficult enough
without the arrogance & waste

(from the book *Ultra Deep Field*: Brick Road Poetry Press, 2018)