

## **Planting Tulips**

Pulled by coming darkness,  
shorter days, we enact old rituals,  
kneel as supplicants  
on the cold ground of November,  
plant our small fat intentions  
which will in time become  
silken flame, ruffled apricot,  
a parrot-fringe of green and yellow  
as tulip bulbs settle  
on their satin haunches.  
The tides that suck at earth

are no less than the moon's tug  
on the swaying hammock of ocean  
as we wait for winter to lower  
her iron gate. The bulb,  
like the blood-red eye  
of the cold-slowed lizard,  
will keep its vigil throughout  
the long night—as will the ruby,  
firefly, your own mortal heart,  
all forged in a collusion of stars,  
all adepts of that light.