**Finding A Place To Die**

It could be a campus,

a place of renewal, a beginning,

cedar and spruce on rolling hills. It’s vistas

pounce on my chest like a full-grown panther.

We tour the grounds,

the building, the empty room––

a fresh rose lay blood-red on the pillow.

I fear the lingering scent.

You comment on the mismatched furniture.

The social worker’s creamy voice

overfills my ears with sensitivity

and the non-resuscitation clause.

You take notes and question procedure.

I stare at the wire-lined balcony

where bones in backless gowns sit in the sun

smoking their last cigarettes.

A shining smile in bustling white

offers coffee, water, juice.

I picture you

cradled in her fat, black arms

at peace,

oblivious to her pillowed breast.

The chapel’s silent echoes

bang in my brain

threatening to pour from my mouth,

but we escape to the car

where you make your plans,

weigh the pros and cons

and consult your calendar.

If you don’t mind,

I’ll weep in the back seat.