Return visit to a cemetery

Two zebra stripes of white concrete
Advance up the hillside. Though raw
They are confident of future shading.

A little below but progressing
The certain declensions: settling in
Sinking, the lack of stamina in flowers

And the problems of the householders
They too will solve: the stone
Heavy containers, the best are concrete

And that artificial lasts better
(Is this language? A lesson?) This child’s
Grave of roses is replaced by plastic

Which in the flower-holder leads
To no decay: it is the senses
Of the appeasing need appeasing.

Finally most get it in place.
A photograph (sometimes) attached
Though fatal to stop at a minute

Bobbing most expensive stalks
(The florists stock them, understanding)
Resurrect the jam jars, allow

Us to concentrate. Familiar now
With rows, with neighbours — our stone
Is something different in a street

We should have picked it, coming home
From quite a distance. Now the landscape
Adds its patina to eternity.

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