**Awe**

Sitting in a recliner
in the NICU, lights dim,
holding a baby so small
I wonder at his breath while
looking at the perfection of
his tiny ear

which reminds me
of a flower, an iris, with its
veined petals folding back
and forward, layer upon layer,
opening an closing

which reminds me
that flowers are
strewn over coffins, placed in
the hands of the dead,

which reminds me
that flowers call us with their
quiet odors, pull us closer,
force us to see the exquisite
correctness and fragility
of life.

Janet Hull Ruffin

*Enchantment of the Ordinary*, Edited by John Gorman, Mutabilis Press, Houston, Texas, 2019