

WARM BEADS

I'm late. I slept too long.  
Then the strand of carved jade ovals  
you gave me to go with my ball gown  
was not in my jewel case. I searched  
every drawer and pocket.

The shiny wall of my shower reflected  
familiar colors and shapes around my neck.  
And more-- you added new beads  
and slipped the necklace on me  
while I was dragging my dream feet,  
wasting time. Six new beads  
flowered between leaf shades, two each:  
Lavender, pink, white. Glowing  
against my skin those hours I slept.

"Jade isn't always green," you said  
when you proposed and presented  
the original string in a lacquered box,  
"but it's always cold--  
unless the wearer is in love."

My fingers feel the heat stored in each bead  
and I smile  
as I enter the ballroom where you wait.