Up stand six yellow jonquils in a glass/the stems dark green, paling as they descend into the water/seen through a thicket of baby’s breath, “a tall herb bearing numerous small, fragrant white flowers.”

I have seen snow-drops larger. I bent my face down. To my delight they were convoluted like a rose.

They had no smell, their white the grain of biblical dust, which like the orchid itself is as common as hayseed.

but as tightly compacted as a tree trunk, greenish rubbings showing in spots through the brown:

wiry, forked twigs so close, which from a distance looked like a mist.

I could barely escape from that wood of particulars...

the jonquils whose air within was irradiated topaz, silent as in an ear;

against the glass, the stems leaning lightly in the water, cross like reverent hands

(ah, the imagination! Benedictite.)

Enter monks. Oops, sorry!

Trespassing on Japanese space.

Exit monks and all their lore from grace.)

I was moved by all this and murmured to my eyes, “Oh, Master!” and became engrossed again.
in that wood of particulars
out of character, singing
“Tell me why you’ve settled here.”

“Because my element is near.”
and reflecting,
“The eye of man cares. Yes!”

But a familiar voice
broke into the wood,
a shade of mockery in it,
and in her smile
a fore-knowledge
of something playful,
something forbidden,
something make-believe
something saucy,
something delicious
about to pull me
off guard:
“Do you want to be my Cupid-o?”

In fairness to her
it must be said
that her freckles
are always friendly
and that the anticipation
of a prank
makes them radiate
across her face
the way dandelions
sprout in a field
after a summer shower.

“What makes you so fresh,
my Wife of Bath?
What makes you so silly,
o bright hen?”

“That’s for you to find out,
old shoe, old shoe.
That’s for you to find out
if you can.”

“Oh yeah!”
(a mock chase and capture).

“Commit her
into jonquil’s custody.
She’ll see a phallus
in the pistil.
Let her work it off there.”

But I was now myself
under this stringent force
which ended,
as real pastorals in time must,
in bed, with the great
eye of man, rolling.”