

Wrapping

the dead baby, a cold burn
for a minute, then white duck nappies
changed, the blanket folding over, tucked
eloquent, a wool cocoon with room for
the head, the fingers, life's dignified
casing.

They say, "Forget it, have ano..."

They say... awkward, apologetic,
and of course we understand.

There's no adequate etiquette
without tripping maudlin, heavy
on the violins, or switching subjects briskly.

Yet, in utero, premature, after six months
of expectation, suddenly, say, a gray
pigeon feather, lying flat across the screen
and a consoling hand on the cheek
as opposed to an Alpha Centauri wail.

Still, loss is born, so it must not
be a dream, bad, forgettable. The body
knows, having carried, held pictures, a triptych
now ripped at its hinges or, no, not ripped,
rather bound quite invisibly, as if at a distance..

So we and our child travel