The Present Situation (Is A Green Jade Bowl)

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Cover Page Footnote

This poem is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol2002/iss4/2
Lately,
  I am haunted
by the memory of a green jade bowl
sitting in the silky light
of the room of the ancients
in the Baltimore Museum of Art.

I remember almost nothing
of the shape or size, but the color
always stops me where I am;
it seems to hold me in place,
  guiding me through
these gray walled days,
perhaps toward a Japanese river—
a quiet haiku—where
I dip the bowl’s paper thin lip
beneath the swift rushing water
and lift it out, heavy

with the weight
of the expectation
that I carry
three miles back
to my home
without spilling
a single drop.