Wai Li at the Coffee Maker

Wai Li leaning against the coffee maker
as though in prayer,
forearm up to fend off
the consequences of her invocation;
a slipped salute;
shard of swastika; Canute’s
oh, no!
facing the tsunami no-one predicted.

Not so much. Someone said
hurry up! that’s all
or she grew impatient
with her life,
fiddling with the iron teats of it.
Machines are so slow,

like prayer,
and sometimes, lately,
as the deep brown hot
liquid hits the cup
with a flat smack
like God’s disfavour,
not even that, either.

Robert Lumsden