

A SPRIG OF LIGUSTRUM

DON RUSS

A sprig of ligustrum I brought in from my walk
now lifts a clouded dream of leaves and aromatic stars
from a skull-shaped shot glass, symbolic
should I intend it.

The kitchen window, its views of street and trees
in flower, should also stand for more—and the door
and setting forth. Yes, even sung in empty praise,
the work is ready-made a hymn.

From under the bony dome of all there is of me,
I say a poem of mine will end in spacious halls of light,
the dwelling place—they used to say—of God.
I ask myself once more,

have not such declarations always borne me up
on specious wings?