

Book of Life

for Timothy Liu

Dayna Patterson

If there is a literal book
on a plinth of filigreed gold, and an angel
standing as sentinel at heaven's

needle-eye entrance, who's not to say
our names appear etched
on its pages,

un-erasable. Maybe no church on earth
holds power to inscribe, or to cross out
and deny access to the garden

of God's fruit: fig, pear, ambrosial
pomegranate. After we've shed
impedimenta, stumbling

blocks of flesh
removed by death's
flensing, maybe we write our own

names in the book, write them with a quill
dipped in the ink
of our hearts,

flawed, but mostly good. Maybe
friends await, the ones whose hands we held
as they passed through the nadir

of their own shadow valleys. Maybe God
baptizes us anew with the green
of her gaze, her blazing

godlight. Look—her luminous
fruit like light bulbs,
velutinous and warm

in the palms of our hands.