

JACQUES J. RANCOURT

A Detail from the Bayeux Tapestry, 11th c.

Auspiciously a comet hangs
 in the tabby linen
above King Harold

the way the Hale-Bopp
 once in 1997
blipped above the funeral parlor

the night before we buried
 my cousin
You'll never live to see this again

the aunties sighed the air thick
 with peepers
while thirty-nine of

Heaven's Gate Away Team
 attempted to reach
the spaceship trailing

the comet's wake
 by swallowing
phenobarbital

mixed with applesauce—
 that star-smear
across the sky no doubt

scrawling some sentence
 from some holy book
no doubt signaling

another turn toward war
 & further down
the tapestry ghost ships

cross a corrugated sea
 horses midgallop
trample the woven acres

between king & king—
 because all art once
was about conquest

history will remember
 those horses
even as time robs

the yarn of its dye
 even as I place
my hand to the glass