meeting heather

I was
   waiting for Heather.

she would be
   arriving soon
as our
   appointment
   had been made
   some weeks before
and she was
   usually prompt

Heather
   had not been well
you could
   see it on her
in drawn expressions
and an empty
   and tired account

“Hello, Ronald”
   she will say
as she leans foreword
   with her brief
   and contained greeting
“What have you been up to?”
she will ask
and then
   cut me off quickly
       explaining
her way over
   and how difficult
it has been

What has been difficult
    I wondered
was it the weather
    and the rain?

“Oh, just everything
    all of life
    I guess”
she might say
    and sip her tea
    and look away

Two ravens came
and landed nearby
    and began
        stalking the parking lot
in ever widening concentric circles
Perhaps an omen
    Heather might have said

“Let’s meet by the pond” she had said
“In the park
    we will be near the museum
should we
    want to go there”

but
    it had been raining
        on and off
    and turned cold

I saw
    a young girl
of about six or seven
push her sailboat
into the water
and then stand and watch
as though struck by a memory

“Yes
let’s do that”
I had said
“We might see the Matisse
‘The Woman with the Hat’
we love so much
but there was no answer
I remember
she had changed the subject abruptly
and went on
to something else