

## The Edge of Spring

A few inches beneath the frosted surface,  
the dirt warms and thickens, more  
like modeling clay or wet cement  
than anything a root  
could plumb. The blue blood  
evening drags the afternoon  
behind it like an unwilling bride.  
This is the time of year to plant garlic,  
to line the sills with plastic trays  
of seedlings. This is the time  
of year children refuse  
their jackets because the sun's out  
only to wind up sick in bed  
the next weekend when the weather  
really turns. This is the time of year  
I see your casket lowering  
into that muck. I'd snuck in  
a fist full of seeds for each shovel full  
of dirt—grass, flowers, creeping vines, peas  
and carrots, something as slow and weighted  
as this grief. Something to break up  
the grid of monuments and grass.  
Something as sudden and enduring  
as my laughter at the thought of carrots  
sprouting at the foot of your headstone.

Darlene Pagan