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## To Lose a Brother

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CAROLINE SPENCE

## To Lose a Brother

I.

Like dirt in a wheelbarrow, heavy on a hill,  
He spills down, and a bird flies up,  
wings whipping by your ears, a buzz of a bee.

Flesh fades into dirt, dirt covers body, body blooms,  
butterflies fly to the bushes in the garden,  
and your sisters and your mother stitch a quilt, twice, to bury.

II.

They saw open wings when they put grandmother's brother down  
But I think our sky is an empty nest  
so stay, dear brother, in the dirt, roots planted, blooming.

I do not have a wheelbarrow to carry you away,  
or enough land, enough dirt to heal your hole in the earth  
and, besides, our mother cannot sew.