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## Worms

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WORMS

May, the laundry hanging,  
the back steps piled with gardenias,  
potbound, aching  
to be planted, but the garden  
still being turned, opened.

Barefoot, our shovels hacking,  
we keep watch: first a squirming  
then those rings around the neck.  
It's worst to see them thicken  
move from dark to light, our hair  
washed so carefully in our eyes and mouths.

My mother in her bedroom resting, silk  
scarves hanging on pegs in the closet. This  
time, behind the garage where the leaves mulch,  
my brother throws worm taunts so close  
I can see the hair on his face.