

Ash Wednesday

by [Carol Gilbertson](#) in the [February 12, 2008](#) issue

no bicep, no bone, no lung
and no cheek, so lean, not
even breath not even earth—
humus, placental—nothing
but dust nothing but ash
burnt up consumed—
not the predominant water
no song and no sound
no taste and no touch no hunger
not even age-lame or deaf
not even tomb-bound and rotting
no pain yes but also no feeling
no hope and no hunger
the end of *I* and *I think*
not *I hurt* or even *am nothing*
no cross on the forehead
no forehead no
thing at all.