

Ash mark

by [J. Barrie Shepherd](#) in the [February 27, 2019](#) issue

Thumb-born across the temples,
Earth's smear, in all the surface brush
and shove, wipes speedily away.
But to those who bear the season,
who wear the stark and somber mark within,
a depth plumbs deeper
than the tomb, a path leads
beyond the dust toward a garden,
a light that shines beyond mortality's
dark warning.