

For an amaryllis in the pandemic

by [Pamela Todd](#) in the [July 1, 2020](#) issue

How unpromising you seemed:  
frostbitten, forlorn, blanketed in snow.  
Dead leaves humped and left to rot  
in a forgotten corner of the garden  
where you had feasted summerlong  
on sun and rain.

With what reckless hope I carried you  
to a dark and silent space inside;  
caressed your withered brown and peeling skin,  
your pale and gravid bulb  
neck-deep in soil,  
half believing that the dead return.

First the killing frost  
and the long, empty stillness of winter.  
Then the sudden thrust of one green shoot;  
the fierce explosion of bloodred petals,  
velvet and transparent  
as any newborn flesh.

I remember how my daughter carried you  
aloft from room to room,  
your crimson blaze against the black and white of winter  
shouting "Hallelujah!"  
for all the pointless beauty of this world  
that even now is fading.