

JANUARY GILL O'NEIL

Never Let Them See You Cry

Bury your tears in the yard with everything else
you hope might grow. Let the green stalks rise
to meet the sharp edge of your pruning shears.
Peace is what you seek right now. Pay no attention
to the back-and-forth of the grackles in their noisy
he said/she said conversation. What do they know
about the stone in your heart? What do they know about
the open throats of tulips choked by rot underneath?

Inside, dinner is on the table as the afternoon
drifts into dusk. Your family awaits your return.
Let them wait. Let your soft animal self breathe.
Now, take the shears and clip forsythia branches
for the dining room table. Make the room
dumb with beauty—let no one be the wiser.