

MICHAEL HEFFERNAN

Consolation

If I tell you my mother's death
still speaks to me from her grave
under the bleak grass that shivers
in gray tufts through the snow,
and my father's loneliness
has become an ache
in that part of me that listens
to a father's voice in the night
crying for his sons,
I can require no word of consolation,
even from you whom I love
like an old warrior
who toils through his own fury
shaking that place in his heart
where his mother cries for him
from the coil of dust that was her womb
and his father gives himself up
to the dream that was her skin.