

End of Memory

What can I bring you
after ten long years?
If you had lived
you would have been
too old for tears.
I pluck a sprig of purple flowering
that dried all winter and I set
it broken in the crust of snow
where deer have hoofed
embroidery of nightly visiting
around your stone.
From horror that remains
I raise you tall as I
your otherness, blue eyes, blond hair,
against my dark, having forgotten all
the details of your face except
your head against my neck
and that my last consoling was
to wash your things as though
you still could wear.

— *Jean Hollander*