

Longing, Lenten

by [Brett Foster](#) in the [March 6, 2007](#) issue

The walk back, more loss. When I open the door
it's over, so I set to piddling: tidy
end tables, check the mail, draw a bath.
The restless energy finally settles
as I pass the mirror. I peer into it.
My nose touches glass. Not much left,
already effaced, not even a cross
to speak of. A smudge. A few black soot stains
like pinpoints on the forehead. The rest
of the blessed ash has vanished to a grey
amorphousness, to symbolize . . . not much.
Except a wish for those hallowed moments
to be followed by sustaining confidence.
Except spirit, which means to shun its listless
weight for yearning, awkward if not more earnest
prayer and fasting in the clear face of dust.