

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.