

Conservation cemetery

by [Marda Messick](#) in the [June 16, 2021](#) issue

A year since, I couldn't find you—  
“you,” that is, the hard bits,  
the stardust and grit of you  
left beneath the sparkleberry tree.

The find-a-grave app useless as memory,  
the trail flooded, the guideposts  
painted over.

It was terrible not to find you, terrible

until I did find you—  
“you,” that is, your name  
on the brass marker small as a leaf  
in the end-up place  
conserved for us.

As if you've gone to bed first,  
until I, elemental,  
“I” lie down beside you,  
my name marking  
another's loss.