

## Bartram's Ixia / Robert Morgan

To find in the deep  
swampglow a blue  
light near the ground  
between pools of stagnant  
ink, bright  
as a fly tied with lasers,  
a kind of antilight  
lost for nearly two centuries  
revealing itself a few  
inches out of mud.  
The color takes root  
in the retina and  
drains into recognition—  
as the ground will in  
a few days draw  
this special candlepower  
back down the stem.

## Canning Time / Robert Morgan

The floor was muddy with the juice of peaches  
and my mother's thumb, bandaged for the slicing,  
watersobbed. She and Aunt Wessie skinned  
bushels that day, fat Georgia Belles  
slit streaming into the pot. Their knives  
paid out limp bands onto the heap  
of parings. It took care to pack the jars,  
reaching in to stack the halves  
firm without bruising, and lowering  
the heavy racks into the boiler already  
trembling with steam, the stove malignant  
in heat. As Wessie wiped her face  
the kitchen sweated its sweet filth.  
In that hell they sealed the quickly browning  
flesh in capsules of honey, making crystals

of separate air across the vacuums.  
The heat and pressure were enough to grow  
diamonds as they measured hot  
syrup into quarts. By supper the last jar  
was set on the counter to cool  
into isolation. Later in the night  
each little urn would pop as it  
achieved its private atmosphere and  
we cooled into sleep, the stove now  
neutral. The stones already  
pecked clean in the yard were free to try  
again for the sun. The orchard meat fixed in  
cells would be taken down cellar in the  
morning to stay gold like specimens  
set out and labelled, a vegetal  
battery we'd hook up later. The women  
too tired to rest easily think of  
the treasury they've laid up today  
for preservation at coffin level, down there  
where moth and rust and worms corrupt,  
a first foundation of shells to be  
fired at the winter's muddy back.

## Woodsburn / Robert Morgan

Goes out digging through underbrush,  
flushing thickets, throws ahead to pines  
and lushing runs a footlog.  
Shards of a castiron stove are  
exposed in the gully.  
Roots hiss and sap foams from  
a burning stump.  
I've fit flames all night  
with a pine limb lest their rabid spit  
touch the cedars.  
Fire walks  
on outcrops and rhododendrons  
to the summit where an