

ELIZABETH SPIRES

A Grave

*I can't stay any longer
In a world of death . . .
—Emily Dickinson*

Moss reaches up.
Touches letters on stone.
A century does its work.
A name, a date, worn down.

The fence makes
a space for you
to lie in. Dead,
you will never die again.

On an August afternoon,
they carried you
out the back door.
Mother, Father,

waiting here for you.
*Now the mind alone
without corporeal friend
will tell how moss*

reaches up,
how a white flower
lies pressed in a book,
and a moth, vested

in black, settles
weightless on this stone,
pauses for a moment,
then flies on.