

## Because One Is Always Forgotten · *Carolyn Forché*

When Viera was buried we knew it had come to an end,  
his coffin rocking into the ground like a boat or a cradle.

I could take my heart, he said, and give it to a *campesino*  
and he would cut it up and give it back:

you can't eat heart in those four dark  
chambers where a man can be kept years.

A boy soldier in the bone-hot sun works his knife  
to peel the face from a dead man

and hang it from the branch of a tree  
flowering with such faces.

The heart is the toughest part of the body.  
Tenderness is in the hands.

*in memoriam, José Rudolfo Viera, 1939-1981, El Salvador*