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Matricide

We buried the mouse
in a cardboard box
at the back of the vegetable garden.

She was eaten by her children.
They left her head among the wood
shavings,
their parent,
their provider.

"Ashes to ashes," my daughter said—
the officiating priest,
the murderer.
She doled out food and water:
she forgot.

Dreams stalk my sleep;
death visits me.
It wears white teeth;
it carries a dagger.

Life turns, like the earth—
soft as a furred belly,
crumbly as bones.
"Dust to dust," my daughter said.

Vegetables die, too.
They lie, limp and brown-edged
under the strong, tall spears
of their children.

Jill Solnicki
Toronto, Ontario