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Collide

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Collide

Sprigs of baby's breath stretch
to fill spaces in a spray of lilies;
stars and stripes curve
over the polished casket;
padded corners soften the edges
we touch.

Blood, beneath the skin,
looks blue, but the blood spreads,
tributaries on the map
of flesh; red empties into dark oceans,
climbs the faces of yellow
banks, grabs soil from brown,
red, and black roots,
falls back onto itself, foams,
tumbles through rocks, bursts,
settles for awhile; bruised.

In the back room, we hunker
around the table, a candle,
its flame flinching
from the slap of our breaths,
our knees just touching, sore
beneath the cloth.

Trish Lindsey Jagers