

GRIEF

STEPHEN RUFFUS

We cannot abide the small nameplate
pressed like an afterthought
into the still, dormant grass

while waiting for the stone
that begins the last step-sun,
moon, stars-in this journey.

He lies covered with snow.
I shovel a long path to him,
brush off the garden lights,

the feathers and wooden stalks
his sister had arranged
until the grey flat stone is set

in the fall still far off.
But come this spring
when the mower lords over

the land and all will be tossed
and cut smooth, there will be
nothing there. Gone will be

what was made with our hands,
things we wished
could stay and last forever

gesturing softly in the breeze,
as he did, things that have held
throughout the storm.

