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LOUISE GLÜCK

I COULDN’T DO IT AGAIN

I couldn’t do it again,
I can hardly bear to look at it—
in the garden, in light rain
the young couple planting
a row of peas, as though
no one has ever done this before,
the great difficulties have never as yet
been faced and solved—
They cannot see themselves,
in fresh dirt, starting up
without perspective,
the hills behind them pale green, clouded with flowers—
She wants to stop;
he wants to get to the end,
to stay with the thing—
Look at her, touching his cheek
to make a truce, her fingers
cool with spring rain;
in thin grass, bursts of purple crocus—
even here, even at the beginning of love,
her hand leaving his face makes
an image of departure
and they think
they are free to overlook
this sadness.