

## SUSANNA BROUGHAM

### Sorrow Flowering

The teacher says  
everyone has a secret sorrow.

At that B&B in Yorkshire  
all was delightful: homegrown lamb, potatoes, carrots, thyme.  
But I paused, amazed, when the host said,  
“This sorrow is from our own garden.”

Yes, a thrust of sense to it,  
that ache could have a local flavor,  
a notion that expanded  
then deflated—he’d said “sorrel.”

At dusk the doves lilted a worry  
softly, somberly, among cut stones  
jammed and mossed into a farm.

The calls of owls  
flowered through chinks in night silence,  
holes in my bewilderment. Their wings  
billowed the secret and public sorrows

of any and all—mine, yours—  
high up and over the dark valleys.