

Amanda Brahlek
Millet's Angelus

Smog from the city and a
cool grey sky. Her voice cracks
praying to a God.

They'd met before the crook of her back
appeared and before his hands could no longer
feel the warmth of her soft skin.
Midnight crows carry prayers deep
into the setting sun. Into an infinity
unheard. They prayed
for a baby soft and pink unknotted
like the potatoes pulled from the frozen ground.

*Please God do not let us starve.
Please God do not forget us like
so many forgotten daily.
Please God fill the gnawing
pit in our stomachs. Fill our lives
with the warm sun that
sets in the unreachable distance.*

As cold and hard as the
infertile soil beneath their feet,
God answered—
not as a warm bundle to fill their
lives with joy—but with a rock-hard seed
that wouldn't take to her womb—they
buried the petrified dream two days
later among the potatoes in the
hard soil and a bitter harvest.