

THE NEXT APOLOGY

By Sarrah J. Grubb

Alice Lloyd College

Until I had

Her

Question-asker

Art-maker

Song-singer

Honey-blonde bed head

Diving back under the covers

For just five minutes more

To pretend

We didn't need

To beat the bill

To move forward

By looking back

I want to atone

For number-crunching

Up

The children

Proficient

Not proficient

And reducing them

To a

Square

on

a table

a spreadsheet

a 1 or a 0

red, yellow, green

under the name of

their teacher

lined up next to the

other numbers

Because

The State

Told me that

Reducing them down

Would

Build them up

Help them grow

I wish I could

Break

All of the numbers

From their boxes

Let them dive

Back under

Their cocoon of blankets

Give them their stories

Give them their pictures

Give them our hearts

Give them five more minutes.