

The Gardener

By Dylan Tran – Washington, D.C.

The sun sets, and I find myself tending
to an abandoned garden, its rusted fence
a crown, its subjects long buried.

And groups of flies take turns
kissing the edges of my ears, once
for every person who's forgotten me.

Weeds grab at my ankles like memory;
leave my life's footprints in the tough soil;
I wonder how a soul can be like a garden.

Traveling pollen tickles the back
of my ungloved hands. Aphids make
homes in the undersides of stones;

I displace them anyway, my shovel
digging into bone, dirt flying.