

KARA MCKEEVER

When Asked about the Garden

We let it go—

Behind the house, a verdigris burgeoning
 untended, that summer we learned that nothing
 we had was worth anything. Our crops combed
 the landscape in their English-garden rows,
 but the backyard ran rampant with rosemary, raspberry
 bramble and bee balm. The plots
 spilled over and the trees bent down and curtained
 the paths. Within the tangle, deep, where
 we could never reach, tomatoes ripened
 and rotted, peppers grew arched and contorted,
 strawberries sank like little lost hearts, laid open
 to spiders, aphids, ants.

That was the summer of work
 we couldn't bring ourselves to complete
 of the wooly, tentacled shadow trellising
 up the chicken house until the pen was stained-
 glass green and we could no longer see the hens
 fluttering, raggedy, in the dirt
 until what had been seeds
 we once held in our hands
 swelled over the roof
 and strangled
 the weathervane
 which wouldn't stop
 pointing

ISSA M. LEWIS

La Grippe

I imagine a stout, aging French lady reclining on a chaise with velvet upholstery, still looking *en vogue* in pink silk and lace and eyes lined to look like Bette Davis. *Just a touch of la grippe*, she says, fluttering the back of her hand to her forehead. How appropriate the word—*grippe*—the insidious viral fingers wrapping themselves around us, clenching until we ache. Gasp. Wheeze. Drink willow bark tea and turn our faces to the sky, hoping to breathe in any piece of it. Maybe now we call it aspirin. Or maybe now we take azithromycin and hydroxychloroquine and rest our heads on a gurney because the hospital beds are all taken. Either way, we can hear *la vie en rose* in our heads and imagine ourselves in Paris.

ADAM VINES

Apprenticeship

He butters up the corners, base
 and fishtails, tamps the brick in place,
 then rasps the trowel across the joint.
 He butters up the corners, base
 then slides the chock and plumb line up.
 “Boy, scrape my mudboard, keep it wet.”
 He butters up the corners, base
 and fishtails, tamps the brick in place.