

Apprenticeship

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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

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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.