
The Garage Behind Cornelius Drive
Dianne Hardin

Hiding in tall weeds, flowers beginning to crown its head
The small garage is more the prey than a predator.
Nestled between rows of tiny houses –
Houses that have
Vibrated to the slow beat of Dave Matthews,
Shook from the weight of too many people lounging on bright gold futons with
pizza and beer stains from older siblings,
Shuddered from the stacks of dirty colored dishes and quirky brown-rimmed coffee mugs of old
aunts,
Quivered to shield dimly lit hallways hiding the secrets of college years.

The garage crouches in its foliage hideaway and—
I didn't even know it was there.

The dark brown spotted boards of the garage doors used to be off-white
But between wild green guardians and tiny pink blossoms,
Cobwebs are its white beard.
The doors are frames by a rusted metal arch and
A forgotten lock protects the garage from embarrassment.
It used to hold a brand-new '94 Mazda 626
And its floors, now mangled with settling dirt and grime,
Used to sparkle so much the driver could see a reflection of her foot
Stepping out of the car.

Now the concealed garage holds three things:
An old couch, a dishwasher, and a lawnmower.

The couch sits on the right side of the garage, seeming to hold the wall up
And its black and green and red and yellow and orange
Pains the eyes, but has since faded
From the time it held a newlywed couple staring into a crackling fireplace that rivaled the
sparks between them.
Now the couch stares at the dishwasher that used to belong to
Jeannie's grandmother Helen—
So proud to give her such a gift to go off to college—
thinking of well-balanced meals on lovely china but the dishes turned out to be plastic cups
and mismatched sets of silverware.
And the dishwasher sits in the eclectic trio wearing suits of dust.
The lawnmower's red is now rust, and underneath where blades of silver once spun madly,
There is caked green so old it's black and now the cover of the deck
houses five brown beetles that burrow in the remnants of cut lawns.
Inside it is silent, slightly warm, and musky.

The garage hopes no one will notice it—
I didn't even know it was there.