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The Vernal Pool

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Dog Begone
By Xotchitl Garibay

Blue and green storage tubs filled to the brim with soil
reeking of manure that now clings to my clothes.

Dirt using my hands as a canvas
and the water filling all the crevices on my old, strong
hands.

Tiny sprigs emerge
growing in a world that abhors the color green.

The real enemy
though,
Es la perra.

If it were my choice, *ella estaría en la calle*
but my grandchildren think these things are
family.

I see her staring at my dirt, paws stained with mud
her favorite pastime is digging and has found her
next target

the agave extends its jade prickled limbs
the ipomoea quivering in the gentle grey
breeze.

"Deja mis plantas"
But she doesn't understand me

she lives in a world of English since
Spanish is irrelevant.

I stand with the hose in hand ready to make the first
stand
only to succumb to wet dog perfume.

The trash bins standing tall
juxtaposed
no match to her mixed breed
strength.

This time she bites the baby gate
a victim of her damp piercing as she drags it
away.

A new wall erected of cardboard and splintering
lumber bulldozed into kindling.

*¿Qué te he hecho para
merecer
este tratamiento despiadado?*

Her burnt brown irises respond,
*Viniste a América pensando que sería
mejor.*