

## The Affectioned Gardener

He prefers the weeds, spindly and lank,  
over perfumed blossoms who've passed  
their prime; cultivates them with careful inspect,  
watches them root, sprout—  
tender shafts that waft white.

Nights, he digs  
feverishly at red-soiled nails, grafts bandage  
to green thumb, pulls thatch  
from his dead head and buries  
the tell-tale tendrils of a day's harvest  
beneath the loam  
of some forgotten forest.

Tomorrow, crops  
of plastic-ponchoed wildflower  
choke his fertile garden,  
bag the tender weed,  
and weep.

—*Michael Pracht*