

Harvesting Sunflowers

by Dulce Maria Menendez

While you are gone,
I harvest sunflowers.

It used to be
the same day
everday.

I was stuck
in the Midwest
as the seasons
changed and
the wind blew
as twirly birds
fell on my head.

I let the weeds
grow long and hard
breaking through
the chainlink fence.

While you are gone,
I harvest sunflowers.

I pulled the weeds
with my aging hands
and my garden
grew hummingbirds,
honeybees, and gold
finches.

Yesterday as
everyone looked

up to see the eclipse
I looked down
to see the golden
shadows of my giants
while they talked
among themselves
across the deck
as a mammoth
butterfly swam
across the wood grain.

While you are gone,
I harvest sunflowers.

It is a constant
pushing, pulling, release.

I throw the seeds
back to the earth
and wait for winter
to clutch them
close to her
frozen heart
and like spring
you return.

