**Emily Wu**

**Our Garden**

Our garden hasn’t been much of a garden,

Every since you left.

You were always the green thumb out of the two of us

And I’m sure you knew somewhere in the back of your mind

When you packed up your suitcase and left it all behind

That to leave this garden to me is basically

The equivalent of condemning it to death.

And I guess you didn’t really care.

After all, you’re the green thumb.

New flowers will grow where you will go.

I regret to say that in the months following your departure

I had even less mind to garden.

It sounded pathetic to my friends and even to myself

But every blade of grass, every bud of multi-colored tulip

Made me think of you

And it burned me as much as the hot July sun

Made the flowers wither.

So I retreated back to our room (now completely mine)

And I shut myself up like the coward I am.

I didn’t have the heart

To let the roses we planted together die, though.

Every time I thought to leave them to decay,

I’d look up from my poems

(I write them a lot now.

I figure it’s better for my health than tubs of ice-cream)

And out the window and I’ll hear your voice

The day we buried the seeds into the ground,

Remember the way your fingers brushed against mine

And suddenly I’ll feel the urge to water those roses

With my tears.

If you were here you’d have lamented at the mess I made

Of the flowerbeds

The year I tried to replant the petunias

When they didn’t reappear in the summer.

You’d have laughed at the effort I made,

Hours and hours of research that somehow

Ended with me on my knees in a mess of tears and dirt

Bruised and bloody and tired.

I questioned myself that day

For the first time in years.

Wondered why I was replanting the petunias.

I have a natural aversion to flowers, as I’m sure you remember,

Called a pollen allergy

And here I was on my hands and knees,

Attempting to preserve the pollen-producing devils.

I came to a realization that day:

I was doing it for you.

Even though you were thousands of miles away

Probably tending to your own garden

With your new love and your new life

Not even sparing a thought for me,

I was thinking of you,

I had spent the last three years thinking about you.

I’d kept the roses alive, didn’t I?

I also came to the realization that this is my garden now.  
That you left me three years ago.

And you left this garden with me.

It struck me that I could do whatever I wished with it.

So I did.

The petunias didn’t come back.

I think I pulled out the tulips by the roots– or was it the irises?

I never cared for irises anyway.

I kept the roses though.

I’m not that bitter.

Even though my garden has becomes a graveyard

Of our love,

The roses look nice dancing along the hedge.

And somewhere deep inside me I suspected I’ll need them one day

That the day I can look at them without hurting

Is the day your presence finally leaves my garden

The day I’ll become a green thumb myself.