**Betterment**

Nicholas Trandahl

Blue dragonflies flash

above the emerald green grass.

Dad and I walk around the yard

and talk about the trees—

how to keep them healthy and strong.

He knows more than I’ll ever know

about trees, flowers, and plants.

He knows their true names.

He shows me where to be violent—

where to be tender.

These are things I’ve had to relearn.

 *Saw off these branches.*

 *Then the crown will get more water*

 *and be fuller—*

 *healthier.*

The burl of the aspen weeps sap.

Dad tells me that’s fine.

 *It’s healing from a trauma—*

 *forming a scar.*

 Forming a scar.