The Dining Room
Poetry — Alysha Matthews

shuffle into the kitchen
And lay the food on the table.
He sits by the window
The TV is on, but it’s too early for wrestling
Oh
He’s watching that church in Texas.
Or maybe he’s looking out the window at his garden.
The garden has not been the same
It’s been hard
since he got sick
“Thanks Doll”
I don’t need to fuss at him about his sugar
or his medication
or the oxygen pumping in through a tube from the other room.
e’s already pricking his finger
lancing at the medicine chart Shirnett made him
And the oxygen tube is draped over his head and plugged into his nose.
So I sit
I look at him
I tell him about covid
about old friends and coworkers
about our grandkids
and how the basement flooded and
so many of his things
are gone.
He nods along while he chews his yam and chouchou
He smiles
it trembles as if he’s holding in a laugh
But the chair is empty now.
The Tv is off and
I sit alone.
It’s been a long time.