The Key

by Laura Searles

The key is beyond the locked gate,  
sitting contentedly behind a stone wall beneath the sunny sky,   
watching the moves of every flower, every petal,   
growing from bud to full bloom to lost petals to emptiness.

Inviting all who will listen.

Monstrous fortresses of sand loom over,  
tempting the flowers to creep up the walls   
to bloom with ease and stay forever.

But it is not so. It does not last.

The cold sand around the wall sweeps away in strong winds and rains.   
Wilts the strong and kills the weak.   
Shifting under and over the flowers as they try to take root. 

The stone wall and the key do not move.  
waiting patiently for the flowers to reach over and search for the key.   
The key to water and the spirit.   
The key to sunshine and hope.   
The key to everlasting life in the garden.

The ground past the wall are brown and unshifting.   
Full of nourishment and life.  
A flower reaches the top of the wall to be strengthened by its friends.   
The flower vines work together.  
Stretching, longing, reaching for the key,   
until finally they reach it and rejoice with one another.

He smiles for he knows the journey well.   
"You have done well my children," says the key.   
"I shall open the gates to the everlasting garden."  
The everlasting garden with the everlasting Sun, refreshing springs, and grace  
"You have done well.   
 You have done well..."