

Third Place 2021

How do they rest

by Adele Aria

She pushes against the small birdcage
he cannot bear to unlock
The dog barks and whimpers
responding to resistance and rage

Her world shrunken and deflated by love
that he labels with shame
She does not go easy
hopes only seen through water above

He takes her future and deletes her past
to remake her as gone
Who and what can she be
when his story is what we hear last