

Spider Bite

Today I watch
the neighbor's cat
(short hair, black
and white, with a collar)
which, in like fashion,
watches a gopher.

The cat watches and waits
(pristine, yet attentive)
as the gopher pops up
and back down again, then
pushes up some dirt which
overflows the growing
mound.

Earlier today I
took my mattock tiller
(adze end down)
and swung it over my
head into the
ground. I was
probing the soil and
turf for tunnels.

I reasoned if I
could collapse the tunnels,
it would trouble the
gopher and he would
leave. I have done
this for three days.

The first day I stepped
into an invisible
swarm of chiggers,
or so I reasoned after
I began to itch.

Chiggers are not fun.
The bites itch intensely,
and I wake in the night
to scratch them.
After a few days
my ankle develops
weeping blisters.

I apply coconut oil
and bandages. Still
I go into my yard to swing
my tiller and collapse
the tunnels.

Two weeks ago I
was bitten by a spider while
taking our trash container
to the curb.

--Joseph H. Rosevear