Dandelions

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Recommended Citation
Goodrich, Holly (2009) "Dandelions," The Promethean: Vol. 17 : Iss. 1 , Article 32.
Available at: http://commons.cu-portland.edu/promethean/vol17/iss1/32

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I crave a life of perfect suburban lawn; a uniform green square of 7 by 7 perfection. Paradise unmarred by the scraggily tentacles of crab grass; or twiggy clover clusters, who sow a miniature mine field of triplet green mouse ears and bee-sting wooing pollen balls. But most dreaded are dandelions. When I was little I loved them, collected treasured bundles of them to present to my mother, tiny black bugs and all. Offerings of hands stained pollen yellow and sticky stem milk gone brown. I stuck them in little glass vases with water so they wouldn’t die. She banished them to concrete porches to avoid headaches and sneezes. Both our efforts were in vain; death is a dandelion’s favorite comic.

Mine the clay with an old screwdriver and, “Crack!” Out comes a root, carrot or at least thumb thick. If you’re lucky only five more will pop up. Inject those roots with weed-killer. After 2 or 3 doses, they shrivel and age ten thousand years, burned in hot oil. And you think at last your muddy, busied hands have won. Until a small child, a puffball of soft down, a breath of air and behold ten more dandelions! Brides really ought to invite a dandelion or two to their bouquets; it’s really dandelions that are forever.

Obnoxious yellow neon signs on pale green and purple tinged stems. Loud yellow freaks crashing the dinner party. Making a scene with their bushy, unkempt hairstyle. Clashing with the staid, slender green guests. Revealing in their imperfection. Prolific weeds of hope and humanity, divinely disturbing the monotony of my visions of horticultural perfection. I hate you, yet tremble at the sterile world I would create without you.