

# dandelions

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Dandelions are just weeds that infest the yard with sunshine, spots of gold and yellow perched on a pedestal of bulky filth. My eyes are addicted to yellow like my body craves coffee. Every time I see a dandelion while I stroll along the pavement I can't help but be fooled by the beauty of the petals, layers upon layers of yellow triangles angled so majestically. It's all a lie though. Dandelions aren't actual flowers that are supposed to capture hearts with awe and seduce the nose with magical scents that dance through the air. No. Dandelions are just weeds, but perhaps I'm just attracted to ugly things. Perhaps I am gullible as a child. Perhaps, but it is complete nonsense to live in a tense other than the present so here I sit in a pile of dirt gazing at dandelions scattered throughout this patch of grass.

Piece by piece, I begin to pluck the blades of emerald grass from their roots, sliding it out of the ground as easily as it got there. Thoughts drift through my mind wandering about like the clouds in the clear sky. Today I can feel the pull of gravity. I inhale the freedom of being in the now. My body struggles at forgetting the forgiven as my thoughts dangle from the ledge of happiness into the darkness.

As a little girl, I didn't understand my surroundings, what was happening or why. I knew there were days where the storm struck inside the sealed window and I would feel

like I was drowning in sorrow and tears. Pain soaked my mother's face as droplets of rouge rolled down amongst the purple patches that began to invade her body. I used to think my father was helping her from the ground before his hand clasped her neck rather than her hand. I was too weak to be a savior and too old to cry. I witnessed my father grab his bags, and without a word brushed past me in haste and out the door. I never got a chance to say good-bye. I stood there like a statue paralyzed with fear.

The strings of my heart were pulled in various directions between expectations and reality. I couldn't understand why my dad would abandon me like I was filth on the bottom of his shoe. I was his daughter, his little girl, and without a second thought he left me with the broken and unfixable. I was a child comforting my mother now crying on the floor of our kitchen begging for him to return. I didn't understand. I couldn't understand. However, he returned a few days later, smiling as if the sun couldn't shine any brighter. It was as if all was a distant memory that no one remembered. Even my mom pretended all was okay, and so it became a game.

When I was thirteen everything seemed clearer. I learned the repetitive cycle and became numb to the violence that hit my life on a regular basis. I grew angry; my smile faded

fast, as the eggshells began to crumble faster the worse the tension grew. My father's temper struck like a snake devouring its prey. It was almost as if he transformed into someone else, someone unrecognizable as he smashed plates against the pale walls previously indented. It was here I began to transform into the shelter from the storm. I became the wall between her face and his fist. What cut me to the core was the fact that I could forgive a man for such treachery that shook my foundation while knowing that no matter how many times he apologizes he will hurt even more. Every time I would forgive him, produce excuses; I blamed my mother for causing his temper to flare, but really, I was trapped in the middle defending the helpless, loving the hurtful and being the hopeless.

I am seventeen now. I've been wounded in fire. I've been the broken and the bruised. Now I'm just the scarred. I've seen the shadows lurking in my mind, paranoid and afraid. I may have escaped from his grasps, from the flames of a family long extinct, but he forever stole my trust and broke my heart. I spent my life sweeping shattered pieces of life

beneath a rug; I've always been the healer and never the healed. Today the clouds began to darken. I could feel a chill race down my spine as tension began to brew. Without thinking, I ran out the front door before my father could even think of leaving me, and I kept running, my soles smashing each pavement square with anger, an anger I was never allowed to express. I could hardly breathe, and as I raced through my life, I began to discover the root to my anger, bulky filthy that turned me into a weed.

However, once I stopped, an emotion of freedom flooded my being. I could finally express anger. I could feel it, and it was feasting on the numb state of mind that caged me like an exotic bird. Then I sat down in a patch of dirt gazing at the weeds that lied realizing it was only the roots that held it back from true beauty, and I smiled realizing anger was not a solution against violence, I would only reincarnate into the problem. After all, the petals can be plucked from the stem and eventually can be blown in the wind upon a child making a wish if only the seasons would change.

