



Weeds

by L. Alicia Monroe, Mentor, SI 2009

Hands hidden behind his back,
halo of sweat beading on his brow,
dimples framing his ladybug lips,
swimming pools sparkling below coal lashes,
he tiptoes toward me.
“Guess what I have.”

He doesn't know
moments ago
I spotted him through an open window,
prancing around the backyard,
scouting for sparse bursts of color,
henbit tickling his toes,
crabgrass caressing his roly-poly knees.

Extending his arm,
cherub fingers choking dainty dandelion stems,
he rejoices, “Pretty flowers!”
A benediction.

With grace
I help him place
the bouquet in a juice glass atop the altar of the kitchen table.
Golden pedals crown emerald wisps lounging in a crystal cradle.

In reverence
of innocence
I whisper a prayer.
“May he always find beauty where
some of us never look.”

Reflections on writing “Weeds”

On a Saturday afternoon in June as I was working on my personal narrative, I heard the backdoor open. Then, I spied Harry wandering around the backyard, looking for the only “flowers” there—the dandelions he frequently picks for me. Minutes later, he appeared in the doorway with his hands behind his back. As I expressed my appreciation and admired his enthusiasm, I decided this was one of those moments I had to capture with a picture ... *and* a poem.

After sharing the poem with my writing group, I deleted a few words as Jason suggested and divided a long line into two as DeAnna recommended. I then posted “Weeds” on the E-Anthology where I received a little food for thought and a lot of kind words in response to the poem.

In January 2010, I entered “Weeds” in OWP’s annual Write to Win contest, and it won the teacher prose competition. It is published in the 2010 anthology of winning writers.