

## Identity

*by Julio Noboa Polanco*

Let them be as flowers,  
always watered, fed, guarded,  
admired,  
but harnessed to a pot of dirt.

I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed,  
clinging on cliffs, like an eagle  
wind-wavering above high, jagged  
rocks.

To have broken through the surface  
of stone,  
to live, to feel exposed to the  
madness  
of the vast, eternal sky.  
To be swayed by the breezes of an  
ancient sea,  
carrying my soul, my seed,  
beyond the mountains of time or into  
the abyss of the bizarre.

I'd rather be unseen, and if  
then shunned by everyone,  
than to be a pleasant-smelling flower,  
growing in clusters in the fertile  
valley,  
where they're praised, handled, and  
plucked  
by greedy, human hands.

I'd rather smell of musty, green  
stench  
than of sweet, fragrant lilac.  
If I could stand alone, strong and  
free,  
I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed.

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