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## Lion's Teeth

You'd once asked me to name the flowers  
littering the grass. *Dandelions*. Though  
from four floors up

they could be anything—catsear, coltsfoot  
or snake root—though only the last  
can kill you. *Denti di leone*, you'd smiled.

The ripped pieces of a poem I'd written  
tumble across the floor...*ti amo*...  
*dimmi qualcosa...un'altro*...From the window,

I watch a flower break free, flicker across the grass  
becoming a white moth or perhaps,  
as my mother told me, the soul of someone

I'd once loved. Every wishing child knows  
if you blow hard and all the dandelion seeds  
fly free, your wish comes true. Though one breath

is all you're given. One by one, I hold a flame  
to the fragments of torn paper... *dove sei...*  
*chiedermi...dove sei...* throw their burning into a bowl.

I'm careful. If you hold a moth  
too close, they say its wing dust on your fingers means  
sure death. All night, a wind hammers

whatever stands in its path. By morning, the white  
flowers are gone, their seeds blown  
god knows where. The bowl, empty.

### Breakfast Monody Beginning with a Line from Kay Boyle

I have wanted other things more than lovers...  
but not for very long.

I've wanted other things more than sex  
but only for a while.

And I believe  
when the rough grief of Rome's filthy seagulls  
in their nimbostratus scuffle, the xylophones  
and zithers, the green tomatoes sizzling in my mind's  
electric fryer, when it's all about to stop,

I'll still want a body.

I'll still want  
when I'm ninety-one and have long forgotten  
condolences or condoms  
to crawl in bed with the octogenarian

in the hospice room next door.

I'll wear pink socks and we'll share oxygen.

There've been mornings when I've settled  
for something less

but I know that when I wake tomorrow  
I'll still crave bacon  
and with the smell, my mouth  
will fill with water.

Sarah Wetzel

Sarah Wetzel is the author of *River Electric with Light*, which won the 2013 AROHO Poetry Publication Prize and *Bathsheba Transatlantic*, which won the Philip Levine Prize for Poetry and was published in 2010. Sarah currently teaches creative writing at The American University of Rome.