**Dandelion**

Julie Lechevsky

My science teacher said  
there are no monographs  
on the dandelion.  
  
Unlike the Venus fly-trap  
or Calopogon pulchellus,  
it is not a plant worthy of scrutiny.  
  
It goes on television  
between the poison squirt bottles,  
during commercial breakaways from Ricki Lake.  
  
But that's how life  
parachutes  
to my home.  
  
Home,  
where they make you do  
what you don't want to do.  
  
Moms with Uzis of reproach,  
dads with their silencers.  
(My parents watch me closely because I am their jewel.)  
  
So no one knows how strong  
a dandelion is inside,  
how its parts stick together,  
bract, involucre, pappus,  
how it clings to its fragile self.  
  
There are 188 florets in a bloom,  
which might seem a peculiar number,  
but there are 188,000 square feet  
in the perfectly proportioned Wal-Mart,  
which allows for circulation  
without getting lost.  
  
I wish I could grow like a dandelion,  
from gold to thin white hair,  
and be carried on a breeze  
to the next yard.