

## UNCUT AND CROWDED WITH DANDELIONS

at the old farmhouse here the lawn is uncut and crowded with dandelions, and weeds are starting to take over the driveway, except for where the tires run back and forth. and the stone wall, running against pines, is in need of repair, but as yet i've done nothing to help make it look a little more presentable. it always shocks me when i go over to my parents' place in cairo and see just how neat everything is kept there: the garden has been weeded; the lawn has been cut; the driveway appears just to have been freshly blacktopped. perhaps i should work outside more, but it's difficult when the desire is not there. all i can get myself to do is water the herbs in the flowerboxes outside the back door, and even when i do that i usually have a glass of wine in one hand and the hose in the other. actually i like seeing a field of tall grasses between the house and the barn. and the dandelions are so bright and cheerful, that i can't see doing away with them. it's been suggested that i might want to make dandelion wine out of them. but that doesn't interest me, that idea, no. better just to pick my wine up at the liquor store, bring it home and watch the dandelions grow undisturbed.

## AT THIS POINT IN THE ROAD

surprising how out in the middle of nowhere, at this farmhouse which hasn't been used as a farmhouse in i can't imagine how many years, how so often a car comes down the road and turns around in the driveway and then goes off in the opposite direction. naturally at times i think that someone might be paying me a visit. but that's almost never the case, for two reasons: i don't

encourage such visits,  
and i don't think many  
people feel inclined  
to pay me a visit in the  
first place. but there  
are an awful lot of people  
at this point in the road who  
seem to change their minds,  
or who remember something  
that they had forgotten to  
bring with them, so  
it seems. i should sell  
lemonade in the driveway  
come summer.

#### ON THE INSIDE OF THE HOT HOUSE

my father practically lives out in his small  
hot house through the month of may, and that's  
where i found him this morning when i arrived.  
i had some toast and coffee with  
my mother first, then walked out back  
and went straight into the hot house  
to have some private conversation with him.  
he was on his green stool, fiddling  
around with a group of young plants,  
and when he saw me he continued on  
with what he was doing, said hello, and  
then we settled into the usual topics.  
he complained about his knees going bad, about  
being too old to kneel on them anymore.  
i gave him the glass of orange juice  
my mother had given me to bring out to him.  
it was just beginning to rain, and  
this, i noticed, made him relatively  
pleased with matters overall.  
flies were going crazy at the windows,  
on the inside of the hot house.  
flies of various sizes.  
a very wide strip of bright yellow  
fly paper hung from the ceiling,  
and on it were so many flies  
that the paper was turning black.  
i mentioned this paper, saying  
i'd never seen this kind before,  
and he told me that it was  
nothing new, that often it was  
used in gardens. there's  
a blackboard, which is used for  
reminders. late last autumn i  
wrote a haiku on it in large, bold