

DOROTHY BARRESI

Nature

Now the spring flowers annoy me,
blossoming past June
with brown-fringed kicks at pastel glory

to prove I am unworthy

because I am not constant,

I am not sincere in my waterings
(the old carthorse and watering can routine)

now the sun
blares like a terrible
radioactive glee club

withering me
but not, definitively, the doggy heads
of the ranunculus

or the pansies in their cunning,
drooping *chapeaux*
(they are always auditioning, those
cut-rate chorines),

or the shrunken heads of the snapdragons
run up a flagging flagpole.

Why do they go on?

What purpose batters forward
a bud-in-reverse?

Grim resistance fighters,
they remind me of the nuns at my old high school
returning from hysterectomies or
bouts with the bottle

to teach me and I am
unteachable,
weak-willed as ever.

No one mentioned marriage in March.

Between nail polish remover
and chocolate-covered macadamia nuts, I bought them
on a seedling whim.

I mid-wifed a bloom or two,
but it was never a calling.

Now the little brutes are shaving their heads, and fisting-back
to essentialism:

Bernadette Devlin in combat frills.

Something moist still lives
at the eaten heart.

Dry up.
I stopped believing in you weeks ago.

Die, and let summer come to me
now with its white hot stillness
and final solution

(sun tips us toward regime change,
not revolution);

then I shall be ready to begin
my new life
indoors,

in clean rooms,
wearing lab coats fitted-out against the monstrous
air conditioning whispering
one name in my ear all day long—*my* name—

as I sit
assembling microchips, caring for nothing.