

Name: _____

Class: _____

Identity

By Julio Noboa
1973

*In this poem, the speaker imagines a vastly different life. **Skills Focus:** In this lesson, you'll analyze how the author uses word choice and figurative language to develop the meaning of a poem. As you read, take notes on how the speaker describes flowers and weeds.*

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

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

[10] To have broken through the surface of stone,
to live, to feel exposed to the madness
of the vast, ¹eternal sky.

[10] To be swayed by the breezes of an ancient sea,
carrying my soul, my seed,
beyond the mountains of time or into the abyss²
of the bizarre.

[15] I'd rather be unseen, and if
then shunned by everyone,
than to be a pleasant-smelling flower,
growing in clusters ³in the fertile valley,
where they're praised, handled, and plucked
by greedy, human hands.

[20] 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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1. **Vast (adjective)** huge or enormous
2. a seemingly deep or bottomless opening
3. **Cluster (noun)** a group of things or people close together