

A tulip per year

Business



Heidi Yoken dark brown curls, white straight-teethed smile, pink lips, sun spots on her chest, motherly bodied, indescribable face structure.

Bland, natural colors imply that she wears a lot of comfy clothing, yet heads turn when she is dressed to go out to brunch or go to a nighttime event; clearness gleams through her jewelry all over her fingers, neck and ears. Her hands so loving that they remind me of a new set of white sheets. Coming close to fifty years, or shall I say fifty tulips picked; one each year. Flavors and love fill the air of a clean house, she only stays at home and volunteers at a bookstore when she feels the need to. What type of woman am I describing to you? Making dinner for her family or reading a book with her reading glasses on on the living room couch. This woman's cooking is memorable and will never leave my mind.

Platters upon platters fill the kitchen island and oven mitts are placed upon the stove. My mind wanders to what I should eat and the voices behind me tell me to hurry up; there is a line of family behind me waiting to plate their food as well. The taste of buttery, warm chicken and sweet brown sugar sweet potatoes make my stomach twist and shout. I write about this memory because I'm missing my woman today. A bystander sits outside on the lawn and sees what goes on inside of the white colored house that holds cornstalks and fall leaves all on the ground. It wonders what type of life goes on inside the house.

The bystander can see that music roars inside this house that sounds like there is an electric feel from years ago still alive in it. The bystander looks at their feet and realizes an hour down the road they were driving barefoot.

They'd left their shoes behind, and regretted their loss of shoes and they laughed out loud and then pictured the mystery I'd left to whomever found them. When I was a little girl my naked feet used to touch the same cement that the bystander touches at this moment. My clear, ageless skin used to bead against the sunny afternoons. Heidi used to call my name from the house and tell me to come around the back of the fence where she could see me.

A pink jumprope used to sit in the driveway with dirty chalk all over the cement. I fiddle with my wet one piece bathing suit and take a breath in to hear my feet clap against the driveway while I listen to the woman whom I loved just as much as my own mother. I love hearing Heidi's well-spoken voice but I always ponder if it's boring how other people talk. Speaking of something I hate, I hate some people's voices and I hate love. There is nothing nice about love.

It's a uncontrollable feeling that nobody but my own family has held for me in my life thus far. The impatience kills me day to day and I always beg myself to not think about why love has not come to me yet; I always lay down at night and think about having a boyfriend and what it will be like. Love will be like when my boyfriend is in the band and all I want to do is watch him. Nothing around me matters but how my boyfriend looks and how he plays under the lights. Someday I won't hate love, it will give me a high. Love is something that wraps your thoughts tightly in order to create something large within a small, finite space.

My mother always laughs under her breath to me because she thinks I'm a kvetch about love. My family doesn't know I've felt like this. It's a hidden secret that I only talk to myself about. Everyone has those secrets that only stay in their head. Ones you can't even tell your best friend.

As I snap out of my daydreaming I start to walk up the driveway and walk across the wet dirt ground to finally open the fence to the backyard. I smell a to-die-for rhubarb pie getting sizzled under the oven and a wave of exhaustion hits me like a brick as the afternoon comes to a close. Something I admire about my family to this day is that we all like to spend time together like a new couple who's in the honeymoon phase. Mentally, inside of the white house I know a towel is ready for me by the bathtub and a woman is inside of the kitchen chopping up organic vegetables from Butcher Boy on the counter and throwing them into a salad. She's calling my mother to tell her to come over for dinner, and my aunts favorite book, *Girl on a Train* creaks open on the counter while she awaits for my mother and I both to attend dinner.