

*Tracy Putirka*

## **The Tooth Fairy**

I open my mouth and a tooth falls out, a small ivory incisor which lands on a quarter lying on the plush green carpet. I watch as the quarter wraps itself around the tooth and sinks into the carpet disappearing. I wonder if the tooth fairy is getting greedy, wanting something in return for taking away a tooth and leaving a silver dollar in its place. Or maybe he needs to collect four quarters before he can give a dollar. I wonder if I have to give him four teeth. I reach into my pocket and find another quarter and toss it to the ground and laugh so hard that another tooth pops out and lands on the quarter sinking. I throw two more quarters to the ground and laugh. Suddenly I see a sprout growing out of the carpet, a sprout with four root stems extending out toward my feet. The sprout grows taller and begins to bud. The roots wrap around my legs and I fall back onto the bed as the bud begins to open. I watch as petals in the shape of incisors unfold, revealing a gaping mouth. I watch and laugh and more teeth fall out, landing among the sprout's roots. The sprout's stem begins to thicken and I lean back my mouth agape as the flower bends towards me. I'm held tight in the sprouts flowering embrace. Long leaves extend out toward me wrapping around my body, pulling me against the flower. I see my teeth inside. I try to stop the flower's growth but the bloom grows in intensity. I can't escape. The tooth fairy has come, his stem has grown wooden hard and I cannot escape. I give in and lay silent, my face buried in my pillow as the fairy sprout withers back into the ground and disappears and I pray to God that no more of my teeth will fall out for the tooth fairy to come and collect.