

哈佛 50 篇 essay--5。影响

“Dandelion Dreams”

By Emmeline Chuang

My big sister once told me that if I shut my eyes and blew on a dandelion puff, all of my wishes would come true. I used to believe her and would wake up early in the morning to go dandelion hunting. How my parents must have laughed to see me scrambling out in the backyard, plucking little gray weeds, and blowing out the seeds until my cheeks hurt.

I made the most outrageous wishes. I wished to own a monkey, a parrot, and a unicorn; I wished to grow up and be just like She-Ra, Princess of Power. And, of course, I wished for a thousand more wishes so I would never run out.

I always believed my wishes would come true. When they didn't, I ran to my sister and demanded an explanation. She laughed and said I just hadn't done it right. "It only works if you do it a certain way," she told me with a little smile. I watched her with side, admiring eyes, and thought she must be right. She was ten years older than me and knew the ways of the world; nothing she said could be wrong. I went back and tried again.

Time passed, and I grew older. My "perfect" sister left home – not telling my parents where she had gone. Shocked by her apparent fall from grace, I spent most of my time staring out the window. I wondered where she had gone and why she hadn't told us where she was going. Occasionally, I wandered outside to pluck a few dandelions and wish for my sister's return. Each time, I hoped desperately that I had done it the right way and that the wish would come true.

But it never happened.

After a while, I gave up – not only on my sister – but on the dandelions as well. Shock had changed to anger and then to rejection of my sister and everything she had told me. The old dreamer within me vanished and was replaced by a harsh teen-age cynic who told me over and over that I should have known better than to believe in free wishes. It chided me for my past belief in unicorns and laughed at the thought of my growing up to be a five foot eleven, sleek She-Ra. It told me to stop being silly and sentimental and to realize the facts of life, to accept what I was and what my sister was, and live with it.

For a while I tried. I abandoned my old dreams, my old ideas, and threw myself entirely into school and the whole dreary rat race of scrabbling for grades and popularity. After a time, I even began to come out ahead and could start each day with an indifferent shrug instead of a defeated whimper. Yet none of it made me happy. For some reason, I kept on thinking about dandelions and my sister.

I tried to forget about both, but the edge of my anger and disillusionment wore away and the essence of my old self started to seep through again. Despite the best efforts of the cynic in me, I continually found myself staring out at those dandelions

– and making wishes.

It wasn't the same as before, of course. Most of my old dreams and ideals had vanished forever. Certainly, I could never wish for a unicorn as a pet and actually mean it now. No, my dreams were different now, less based on fantasy and more on reality.

Dreams of becoming a princess in a castle or a magical sorceress had changed into hopes of someday living in the woods and writing novels like J. D. Salinger, or playing Tchaikovsky's Concerto in A to orchestral accompaniment. These were the dreams that floated through my mind now. They were tempered by a caution that hadn't been there before, but they were there. For the first time since my sister's departure, I was acknowledging their presence.

I had to, for it was these dreams that diluted the pure meaninglessness of my daily struggles in school and made me happy. It was these dreams and the hope of someday fulfilling them that ultimately saved me from falling into the clutches of the dreaded beast of apathy that lurked alongside the trails of the rat race. Without them, I think I would have given up and stumbled off the tracks long ago.

It took a long time for me to accept this truth and to admit that my cynical self was wrong in denying me my dreams, just as my youthful self had been wrong in living entirely within them. In order to succeed and survive, I needed to find a balance

between the two.

My sister was right; I hadn't been going after my dreams the right way. Now I know better. This time around, when I go into the garden and pick my dandelion puff, my wishes will come true.

