

Bob Muir and Owen Durni

Mrs. Mutch

AP Literature and Composition

15 February 2006

The Garden Gnomes and the Great Dandelion

Once upon a time, there were the gnomes. They frolicked and played without a care in the world. They jumped and bumped all day long. However, the one Great Dandelion was jealous of their carefree freedom. He also longed to move about, leaping through the wind like the gnomes did, so one day, the Great Dandelion called the gnomes to talk.

“Little gnomes, you are so good at moving.”

“That we are!” the gnomes eagerly replied. “We’re so much freer than you.”

“However, you are not best at everything, little gnomes. I can sway in the wind very smoothly, while you awkwardly stumble about.”

The gnomes, who were always ready to make a bet, were taken aback at this. “We can sway just as smoothly as you can!” So the gnomes shot their arms into the air and wiggled back and forth.

The Great Dandelion saw this and laughed. “Well, maybe you can sway, but you are not best at everything, little gnomes. I can boast colors as bright as the sun itself, while you wear only dull clothes.”

The gnomes, who had always worn brown clothes, were shocked. “We can be just as colorful as you can!” So the gnomes ran home and made bright clothes of green, yellow, red, and sky blue to show off to the Great Dandelion.

When the Great Dandelion saw their brightly colored clothes, he smirked. “Well, maybe you can be as colorful as me, but you are not the best at everything, little gnomes. I can stand completely silent and still with no movement at all, while you are unable to stand still for even one instant.”

The gnomes, who were not ready to back down now, all gathered together. “We can be just as silent and still as you can!” So the gnomes all froze themselves in the poses they were in.

As this happened, the Great Dandelion felt the gnomes’ boundless energy looking for an outlet, so he absorbed that energy for himself. “At last, I can move freely!” However, as the gnomes always appeared old and gray with their long white beards, so too did the

Great Dandelion, losing his spectacular colors and smooth swaying, becoming white and old. As the wind blew, the Great Dandelion felt his petals all blowing away, leaving him bare and dying. He knew that, though he had won his freedom, the gnomes had won in the end.

To this day, the new dandelions will grow bright and sunny, only to become gray and lose their petals. And the gnomes – well, they still believe they are proving to the Great Dandelion that they can stay silent and still as good as he could, never moving from their poses. Humans have found these frozen gnomes and placed them in their garden to show the dandelion weeds in their yard who has had the last laugh.

