

# Restricted

by [Susan Shea](#) (October 2024)



Poppies (John Singer Sargent, 1886)

**I can't even** appreciate the weeds today

meant to be flowers in season  
to look at me, one by one, assure me  
beauty is reliable, wonder is allowed

tell me that I have been given eyes to see  
every individual blossom, colorful and  
free in its turnings

instead, they are strangling each other  
in a mass, overcrowded, thrown together

by a selfish wind of this time, lied to  
told they will not choke each other out

but they have lost their room, their shapes  
they can no longer move or whistle  
their own songs in the breezes

they have become a dump  
of useless idiots cramped into a dark lot  
that does not fit their destiny, left  
with no ground for their seeds to flourish

while a radical violinist serenades them  
telling them that she and her handlers  
have reinvented sight and sound, wind, and fire

telling them they are better off with less  
while they watch her take all the sun  
she needs to mock us and to cackle  
on her man-made mountaintop

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**Susan Shea** is a retired school psychologist who was raised in New York City, and is now living in a forest in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. Since she has returned to writing poetry this year, her poetry has been accepted in a few dozen publications, including *Feminine Collective*, *Ekstasis*, *Persimmon Tree Literary Magazine*, and *The Avalon Literary Review*.

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