

## Choosing the fairy spud

once this land was forest. then farm. now a city and suburbs.  
but we can still walk through the woods.

out there in the woods  
is a three hundred year-old oak tree white oak age unheard of in this area this place  
with  
a booming forestry industry trees just don't get old  
and yet She exists, the grandmother of the land

in early spring the first flowers sprout out of the forest floor  
one inch high with white petals  
like a star  
fairy spuds they are called, or you can call them spring beauty, or claytonia virginia

did you know you can eat their roots like potatoes

did you know that the dandelion  
which grows everywhere which is the bane of  
housewives who want a perfectly green lawn  
– did you know that chinese herbalists use their juice to cure liver problems  
and speedwell speedwell!  
have you ever seen it  
smaller than your pinkie nail almost need a magnifying  
glass miniature violet with irregular petals

and that is what the farmer's plow digs up when it churns and turns the earth  
The Speedwell. The Dandelion. The Fairy Spud.

after the woodcutter eats up the beech, red oak, white oak, white ash, green ash, sycamore  
and sweet gum  
and the last to fall is the grandmother of the land

and after the plow came the tractor and after the tractor the bulldozer and after the  
bulldozer the houses and roads and cars and SUVs and people who use antibacterial soap  
and office buildings and universities and airports and people who don't own baseball  
caps advertising seed companies and people who can't identify a white ash from an oak  
tree and swimming pools instead of swimming holes like Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer  
used to swim in and it's all leading up to  
the invention of the iPhone

and so I ask you the last of my questions  
what is the line between you and the fairy spud  
what is the line  
where do you place yourself

do you at least recycle  
do you need air conditioning  
do you walk in the woods on purpose

what is the line

choose

because someone, out there, someone *has* to choose the fairy spud

what do you