

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY

A FREE COLUMN FOR NEWSPAPERS BY TED KOOSER, THE POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE

Thousands of Americans fret over the appearance of their lawns, spraying, aerating, grooming, but here Grace Bauer finds good reasons to resist the impulse to tame what's wild: the white of clover blossoms under a streetlight, the possibility of finding the hidden, lucky, four-leafed rarity.

Against Lawn

The midnight streetlight illuminating
the white of clover assures me

I am right not to manicure
my patch of grass into a dull

carpet of uniform green, but
to allow whatever will to take over.

Somewhere in that lace lies luck,
though I may never swoop down

to find it. Three, too, is
an auspicious number. And this seeing

a reminder to avoid too much taming
of what, even here, wants to be wild.

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