

# Tumbleweed Suite

*by* Dennis Mahagin

The tumbleweed  
resembles  
some humans I have known,  
none without  
substance— only blown

—*blown*

*blown.*

\* \* \*

Because a tumbleweed  
will kill to have its dust, it spits out  
the cotton,  
and fills its stickery  
lungs /

with another gust.

\* \* \*

There are a few  
fevers  
in the Astrodome,  
those tumbleweeds that got it  
going on, get along  
fine, anywhere  
there in Texas  
“little doggies”  
they really are,  
but none out dodging  
Alpha Romeo cars,

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or clinging  
to the undercarriage  
of the finest  
Fiat car,  
cum brio, in late  
fall, Rome,  
sans wind,  
sans rancor,  
sans sand  
or rain,  
sans hate, ah  
mio, there ain't  
no Italian  
tumbleweeds  
at all.

\* \* \*

Then a poor tumbleweed must scrounge up  
a week's worth of half-assed  
work again  
on the set of a Hollywood  
western,  
with no idea  
of transcendence,  
female leads, Chef Boy  
Ardee, Amsterdam,  
nuclear  
family . . .  
the tumbleweed  
makes itself scarce, heroin skinny  
in winter.

\* \* \*

When a tumbleweed stumbles  
onto Twitter, the peeps roll

their eyes, point,  
and snicker.

\* \* \*

And I have known tumbleweeds to fly  
standby  
with Gordon's gin and gasoline at high school reunion  
bonfires . . .  
but they're all terrified of the ocean.

\* \* \*

A tumbleweed that lands on Facebook spontaneously  
combusts.

\* \* \*

The tumbleweed has its own Wikipedia  
page— one scratch  
of the screen, and you blissfully sniff  
the sage.

\* \* \*

A mountain is a pretty good

ice maker  
but the tumbleweed  
often times believes  
it's a whisk broom.

\* \* \*

Two tumbleweeds  
block in a bar, its splintered door frame  
boarded up, long since blown out,  
abandoned.  
"We're the owners now," cackles  
the one.

"Yes, we are," the other one hums.  
Yes, we are.

\* \* \*

Whenever Conscience speaks  
with a divided, uncertain, and disputed voice  
several dozen of them congregate, flying by  
your basic traffic  
Yield sign,  
attack formation,  
slap happy acrobats  
whipping this way  
and that

terrible  
sirocco wind  
of Burns, Oregon, hell  
bent, don't have to prove  
they're anthropomorphic,  
and tell all your friends, when one of them  
tumbleweeds hits dead center  
the little triangle of cadmium within the rust  
red of Yield first sort of cracks, then sighs,  
ecstatically  
dead again, and flattened  
out at last ( for now )  
definitive, or at least

congealed.

