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## If Eden Were a Public Garden

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# If Eden Were a Public Garden

by Suzanne Rindell

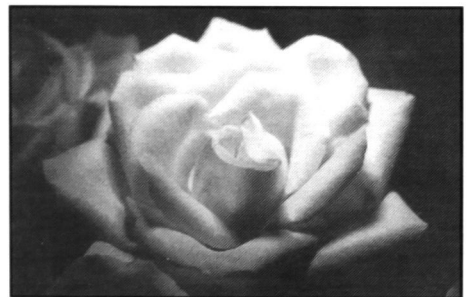
There exists a  
Natural reverence  
In the hushed sound of two people entering a public garden;  
Instinctive, unspoken, understood,  
Their subconscious slowing steps and pious eyes  
Betraying new repletion.

I have seen it; I have watched  
Couples become topiary statues  
Transfixed by lily-ponds  
Spouting Spenser, Shakespeare, and Blake with  
Smooth rippled tongues.

I have heard the holy haunting echoes  
Of the glasshouse, I have watched the near-sighted  
Botanist performing first-rites  
Over a bed of cuttings.

I have studied the faces of the lackadaisical  
Their limp bodies strewn on park benches, eyes rolled upward  
While wafting herb gardens weave spicy  
Images, breathing life into salivary words like olfactory,  
Onomatopoeia, opiate, oolong, orange blossom.

Gone now, their vagary loiters still.  
I sit among empty benches and listen to the rattle of  
The wind-bleached bones of winter, so sacrificial.  
I wait for spring to creep into the gnarled fingers of cherry trees  
And with primitive sign language, whisper the genesis  
Of this gospel into the eyes and ears  
Of innocent pedestrians.



*Photo by Emily Montgomery*

