

# Path Through the Garden

A Mind Wander by Lisa Hering  
April 11, 2020

Written to Music by Healing Vibrations  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gq8snFSEwIU>

I'm sitting on a wooden bench. In it are carved circles and squares, simple designs but talented work. Tall trees shade the garden area. Sunlight spills through the trees making dendritic patterns in than hand laid brick path. The garden is large, but I can see the boundaries surrounded by an old stone fence. I've been sitting on the bench for a long time. I'm just thinking. I'm trying to see what is in my mind. From somewhere far away I hear the sound of singing bowls. They ring slowly and the sound waves vibrate for a long time after each tone. The vibrations enter my ears and resonate. I am caught listening to them carefully, as though they were something of magnificent importance.

These gardens surround an old monastery. It's a place I've wanted to come for a long time. Here I can have quietness and solitude. Here I can read and write to my heart's content. It's peaceful to sit here and do nothing. I lie on the bench. There is no one else around. I can be with my thoughts, but at the moment, I am only listening and doing nothing else. There are no thoughts coming. I wonder about the person who is playing the singing bowls. I would like to follow the sound and go where they are. I might even play them sometime. Their music brings me so much peace.

I stand up and begin to walk along the path. The air is warm. I head towards a sunny area where there is grass and raised garden beds filled with flowers and vegetables. This is real fruit on the vine. Someone has done a good job. I see a red tomato and I touch it. It is smooth and ripe. I feel it and there are no blemishes. I pick the tomato,

lest it be left on the vine too long. I bite into it. Delicious. I hear my teeth cutting through the sections. The tomato seeds drip onto my lips and chin as they escape from my watering mouth. I continue to eat the tomato, and its liquid refreshes me here out in the sun. I am glad for the moisture. I wipe my chin with the sleeve of my white button down shirt. It was clean, but now has the streak of a tomato. I don't mind.

The path goes between several raised beds. Grass grows between the bricks. Rye grass. I look down at my feet. I am in simple open shoes with rubber soles, and so it is easy for me to walk the path. I look at each raised bed to see what is growing there. Cucumbers, squash, bell peppers in an array of colors, and tiny daisy-like wild flowers have popped up here and there. I pick one of the little red peppers shaped like a candy corn. Should I bit into it? Will it be hot? Will I be sorry? I decide to take the chance. Pain be damned. I place it in my mouth whole and slowly close my jaws upon it between my molars. The pepper juice begins to squeeze out. I stop and focus on the taste. At first, it is not hot. I wait and focus with my eyes closed. I begin to feel the heat from the pepper. With my fingers, I pull the pepper from my mouth and await the possible pain. The heat flows from my molars to my tongue and across the top surface of my tongue. The heat begins to burn. I open my mouth for air and breathe in deeply to cool my tongue. I exhale and do this again. The heat is pervasive now all through my mouth. I do not care. I will sustain the pain, as it is not too great. I will experience this pain and savor it. I close my mouth and am quiet with the sensory feelings. It is painful. I wait moment after moment in the experience. Then, I walk back to the tomatoes and pick one. I place it in my mouth and bite down. The liquid from within helps to cool and cleanse the pepper. I eat another tomato and the pain is much diminished. I open my mouth wide and stick my tongue out to feel the breeze and taste the sun. I breathe in and out out for a few moments, and it feels good. I continue walking around the garden, checking out each plant and pulling a few brown leaves.

On the far side are rose bushes, pink, yellow, and red. The roses are in full bloom. I love roses. But I don't particularly like the thorns. I walk over to the roses and place my nose in the middle of the yellow one. I am drawn to that color, although they are all pleasing. A few of the petals fall off. Today is its last day, as its petals are beginning to show a touch of brown. It must be picked to enjoy. But it has so many thorns. I have only my hands to work with as I have no tools with me. Shall I pick it and risk the pain of the thorns? I want to take the flower back with me. Pain be damned. I shall pick the yellow

rose. I place my thumb and index fingers below the rose where there are no thorns. Perhaps I won't pierce my skin, and I'll get the rose unscathed. I break the stem and it jack knifes towards the ground, but it remains attached. I turn it back the other way, hoping to sever it. But it does not sever. It clings to its mother bush. Now I try pushing at a different angle. But still it clings to its life line. With my finer nail I try and cut the stem fibers, but I must press hard. But to get the appropriate grasp, I must use both hands. There is not room between the thorns for both hands, and when I press, one of the thorns scratches me lightly. I jerk and see red blood appearing. But it is not much. I continue to try and dislodge the rose, and one more try does the trick, but upon pulling it out, I receive another scratch from the thorns, telling me they are angry for taking their sister. I put the wound to my lips to stop the bleeding. I taste a drop of blood. It is salty. I pull my hand away and examine the scratch. It is not much, but another tiny drop appears as I watch. I do nothing this time other than watch. I want to see what I am made of. In this drop of red blood is my life. It fills my body and makes me alive. It is me. I am red blood. I press the tiny wound to my white sleeve until it stops bleeding. I will not die today, not in this garden. But I have a flower full of perfume for my troubles, and I sniff the rose again with a deep breath. Ah, it was worth the effort.

The hot sun is making me tired. It's taking my strength. I have little motivation today to do anything. I am going no where. I am only here to do exactly that, nothing. I am slow, and the sun is making me slower. I see a hammock in the distance. I head in that direction, hoping to rest in its rocking motion. But before I arrive, a young girl with straight black hair comes up to it. She is laughing, at what I do not know. She gets into the hammock and begins to sway in its comforting ropes. The pain of disappointment. It looked so inviting. But I am not the only person here. And this garden is for everyone. I watch the girl swing back and forth, and then the hammock finally comes to rest. She turns a bit this way and that. She has a book with her, and begins to read. She sees me watching her, and she smiles and waves. I wave back. She looks again at her book, but slowly lets it fall to her chest. I think she has fallen asleep. I wanted to fall asleep there. It is the only hammock. I turn away and go back to the hard wooden bench I had left earlier. I had enjoyed the bench before, but now it seemed much harder and not so inviting. I decide to examine my feelings. It is a feeling of loss, nothing more. I sit with that feeling. My father saw only blessings in his life, but I see much loss. Why do I feel this way? Did he not give me everything I wanted? Did he not love me with all his heart? Yes, he did. But I

still feel loss, and I must sit with the feeling and feel it until it goes away. I feel the loss in my throat. There is a lump. Then the feeling goes into my chest and my head from there, radiating out equally in both directions. My chest feels heavy and it is hard to breathe. So I take deep breaths as I consider the pain I feel. It migrates into my sinus, to my eyes and under the skin on my head. It creates shivers within my brain and it pushes water to my eyes where a tear grows. It reaches my stomach and I feel butterflies waking. I place my hand over the sensation, and I think of butterflies in all their amazing colors. They are bright blue, and some are golden. Others have an iridescence. My thoughts become focused on the beautiful colors of the insects, and my head begins to calm and be still. I look up and there is a blue and black butterfly above a flowering bush only a few feet away. I watch his movements. He touches several of the flowers as I watch. Then he comes in my direction. I watch him intently. He comes up to my head, and flies around my face. Then he floats towards the rose I am still holding on to. He smells the heavy smell of the fading rose. He smells the blood on my finger. He smells the tomato on my sleeve. He lands on my sleeve and seems to investigate. There are so many smells for him to experience. I watch intently, focused on his every move. He seems interested, and walks to my hand and then onto my finger. I raise my finger to my face where I can be eye to eye with him. He flashes a look at me and then drifts off elsewhere, flying slowly in a crooked pattern. This is a place for butterflies and flowers, a butterflorium. The singing bowls continue to play for me, as they are originating close by. I did not hear them as well near the hammock, so I am lucky to be here.

A bold ring awakens me from my own personal thoughts. It is a high bell on the singing bowl. I decide to look for the person playing them. I stand and walk towards the sound, and eventually see a man sitting in front of six frosted glass bowls. He holds a felt covered hammer and taps each bowl lightly to produce a beautiful vibrating sound. I walk over to him and watch. He nods his head at my presence. I watch him for a while. Then he motions to me and offers me the hammer. I take it from him and begin tapping the bowls. I am producing the most amazing sounds. They resonate within me. I am feeling joy at these comforting sounds. I play and play in the shade of the trees on the hand laid brick patio where I can see the vegetable plants and the flowers and the butterflies. And I have peace. It is this that I have been looking for. The path that I have taken has not been the path I wanted, but I can see now that all the steps were necessary to get me here, surrounded by trees, butterflies, flowers, and the beautiful singing bowls. That is what is

in my mind. I have found what I was looking for, not by my own device, but by chance, the chance that life devises.

And now I am in a place of purpose. And my purpose is to enjoy life. And I walk away from the bowls, but the memory stays with me. I have seen that life is full of good and bad, and I must experience both, for they are all along the path I must follow in order to find the joy I seek. And only once I experience everything can I know if I am blessed or not. In the end, we get the life that life gives us, and we take that path. And at the end of the path, there are singing bowls. And the music rings in my ear, and the butterfly absolves my wound, and the air cools my tongue, and I arrive at an unexpected place of peace and joy. And that is the story of life. I shall keep it within me.