

Creation

Just outside the door of the hermitage where I am staying lies a small, charming garden. It bears the unmistakable touch of someone who tends it with loving care.

There is a plant whose silvery leaves look as though they have been delicately sprayed with silver paint. Nearby are blossoms even larger than Hawaiian hibiscus flowers, they open in the freshness of the morning, only to wither by midday, just as the Psalmist reminds us that all flesh is like the grass of the field.

Tiny flowers, each no larger than a grain of rice, are formed by five delicate petals. Countless of these miniature blossoms cluster together to create what appears to be a single flower. What amazes me is that every one of those tiny blossoms contains several threadlike stamens, each one complete and lacking nothing.



The fig tree, taller than I am, is covered with healthy young fruit. Though the figs are still green, they continue to grow a little more each day.

Spread across the ground, broad zucchini leaves quietly claim their space. The bright yellow blossoms that once bloomed so beautifully now seem to know that their time has passed. Having given way to the zucchinis they bore, they slowly fade from sight.

Just beyond the little gate, there are countless tiny buds, each no larger than the tip of my little finger. Sensing that their own season has come, they already reveal a hint of yellow, as if ready to burst into bloom at any moment, patiently waiting for the day when they, too, will blossom.



Leaving the gate behind, I once again walk along the river today. Usually, I walk briskly for exercise, but today I slow my pace so that I may contemplate God's creation.

Someone must have mowed the grass not long ago, for the fresh scent of newly cut grass still lingers in the air. The trees, standing faithfully in the same place day after day, quietly offer oxygen to all who live. I find myself grateful for their silent generosity. The gentle breeze felt on my face is soft.

The river below appears calm and still, yet its gentle ripples reveal that it is quietly making its way onward. On the hillside between the river and the trail, I notice flowers that I had not seen yesterday. Wildflowers—the very kind I used to gather as a child to make tiny flower rings—now bloom in cheerful clusters. The brilliant orange lilies that once stood in full splendor seem to have entered the twilight of their season.

Scattered among them are tiny yellow flowers, so small that one could easily pass them by without noticing. Yet they bloom beautifully in their own place, whether anyone sees them or not.

Birds whose names I do not know dart swiftly around me, each singing its own unique song. Across the river, the mountains are blanketed with deep green forests. I remember a little child once saying that the trees of West Virginia look like broccoli. The comparison seems surprisingly true. Countless treetops, like heads of broccoli, cover the mountains so completely that no empty space can be seen.

As I take in the beauty of this world around me, I continue walking the same trail today. Stretching endlessly before me and behind me, the long path winds through this magnificent landscape. Embraced by such beauty, I never grow weary, no matter how far I walk.

This beauty, this grandeur of nature, is not merely a story of God's creation in the beginning. It is the living masterpiece unfolding before my eyes at this very moment. God is the source of all creation. It is His handiwork—something no human hands could ever imitate. And I, too, walking through this beauty, am one of His works, one of His beloved creatures.

Lord,

You are the One who has led me to this path and invited me to walk it.

You are the One who has given me eyes to behold the beauty of Your creation and a heart that stands in wonder before it.

Together, your creation and I become one harmony, offering you our praise.

When I become so busy that I no longer have the leisure to notice the beauty of your creation, remind me of what I have seen today. Help me to remember that all your creatures remain faithfully in the place you have given them, praising you without haste or anxiety, but with quiet peace.

May I come to realize that I, creation, and the whole world are all your handiwork, and that we are gifts to one another. Then may all of us, together, praise You forever and ever.

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