

The Garden

It was a picture of perfection -
green lawns mown and rolled,
A neat path carving a way
through beds of flowers,
dahlias standing like sentinels
in regimental colours
while delicate pink roses
filled the air with fragrance.
Ripening fruit carefully climbed
the warm brick walls.



A gardener, gloved and booted
leaning over his spade,
paused to mop his brow,
his face as wrinkled
as a walnut shell.
A glove fell to the ground.
I bent to pick it up –
nothing but leaves,
brown and brittle.
Bewildered I looked around.

The lawns were languishing
in tangles of tall weeds.
The path had lost itself
in wasteland where dandelions
and thistles thrived.
The roses were running wild
with brambles and bindweed,
the garden walls crumbling
into piles of blood-red dust.
The gardener was gone.



Margaret Hardy, 2021

With thanks to Meg Peacocke: The Gardener