

In the Garden

Dead Reckoning

YOUR palette, Lord, paints every hue
That in my garden glows:
The red, the green, the gold, the blue,
The saffron and the rose.

This is Your creation, Lord,
It's one each year You make –
But have You, Lord, somehow ignored
Your only big mistake?

I ask in hesitating mode.
I mean You no offence,
But every year, while garden's glowed,
It's seemed to make no sense.

Penstemons, gladioli, stocks;
Of course, delphiniums, too;
Kaleidoscopic colour shocks
With every high-rise hue.

But clearly, Lord, You've not rehearsed
The way in which they bloom.
It always happens bottom-first
And gives me needless gloom.

The early flowers fade and die
While top ones bloom. I frown –
For this, frustratingly, is why
I can't cut dead ones down.

If the top ones flowered first,
There'd be no need to show

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The dead ones at their very worst:
A snip, and off they'd go.

No more to wither on the vine,
Distracting from the new:
I'd see them always looking fine,
Not ruining the view.

Hollyhocks, sidalcea
And other fine tall plants
Would not in future have to fear
Distaste in every glance.

Perhaps You'd meant, that seventh day,
A system not yet tested
To be cross-checked – but sad to say,
The seventh day, You rested.

I'm sure you have a reason, Lord,
Though everything seems odd.
But if one day You're feeling bored,
Please use the hand of God.
