



Have you ever lost track of a friend? Or become alienated from a close family member? Such losses come with a haunting sorrow. Grief is love's tutor. The intensity of grief measuring the strength of our loves.

Many in the West live without awareness of our belonging to nature. Severed from intimacy with plants and animals, we stand alienated from creation. But the gift of grief, triggered by climate crisis, reawakens us to that kinship. We mourn because places we know and love are no longer the same. Our grief reminds us of our love for creation.

Genesis 2 affirms that God placed human beings in Eden to till and to keep it. Gardening is our first created calling. Sadly, much Christian theology, especially after Newton, sees nature as dead mechanism rather than as living organism. Salvation becomes an evacuation operation, rather than a healing of our broken relationship with nature.

Near the end of the Gospel of John we encounter Mary Magdalene at Jesus's tomb. When Jesus appears she does not, at first, recognize him. When he sees her beloved teacher, she supposes him to be the gardener. What if Magdalene was not wrong? Remember how John's Gospel begins; "All things came into being through him and without him not one thing came into being." The cosmic gardener creates and sustains creation in all its loveliness. Then, surprise, the gardener enters the garden by becoming flesh.

Forgive us Earth maker for wounding the garden even as we claim to love the gardener. Rekindle in us our ancient love for creation, so that we might once again be the caretakers you have called and created us to be. Amen.