

# Poetry Porch: Poetry

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## **A Garden of Devotion**

By Beth Brown Preston

In summer the garden was all she knew,  
and the blossoming flowers of her several griefs:  
skyblue Shiryuko Iris, Ki-ren Jyaku, the double flowering hosta.  
She looked them all up in his encyclopedia of lonely days.  
Love and despair were all she had but for the garden.  
She walked among the daylilies, Heaven and Nature Sings,  
singing those mournful Sunday hymns passed on down  
by her grandmother. And taught by that woman's holy care,  
a generation of long agos, she learned to cherish those seeds,  
the time of planting and rain and love. Hers was the First Blush  
as he took her careless among the hosta. Her brown nakedness  
held tight against the moist earth in summer rain.  
His was not a gentle hand, but the voice of kisses and promises:  
Onyx and Pearls she would possess if only she would remain  
inside his kingdom. So, she let down her hair.  
And now in his absence, she strolls among the green memories  
down the garden path. Her womanly duty recalled  
as the titles of books on his shelves. As the daylilies sway  
in the breeze, her grandmother's legacy of love.