

Jenine Marsh

*In a world of weeds, all roses are wild*

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A formal garden is planted deep in the reptile bits of the brain, not in the head, but in the base of the neck. Between the lungs and the mouth, between the stomach and the teeth. Where the vocal chords and the tongue took root is where we learned to taste, to name, to repeat, and to choose. Sweet or bitter. Good or bad. The rose or the weed. But in a rose garden, even a lily is a weed.

Imagine landing on Venus to find uncultivated plants creeping and unnamed blossoms opening and closing like mouths. In a world without gardeners, which is the rose, and which is the weed? Or go to the city's train tracks, where goldenrod and dandelion and the many other unknown species tangle. A weed is not planted; it flies in on a seed, taking no work of the gardener to grow. In a world of weeds, all roses are wild.