



The Invitation

for anyone who has forgotten to trust



A Note Before You Begin

Most of us spend an extraordinary amount of time trying to get somewhere.

Become better. Feel better. Get organised. Sort out the finances. Heal the thing. Start exercising. Finish the thing. Manifest the other thing.

Some of these things are probably excellent ideas.

But this little book isn't going to ask you to do any of them.

There is nowhere you need to arrive before you enter.

No progress to show.

No morning routine required.

Just a garden.

A bench.

And you.

Welcome.



The Garden Gate

Imagine.

You're standing outside a garden gate.

On the other side, you can see a beautiful garden bathed in warm golden sunlight.

The flowers are wild. The trees are old and wise. Birds are chirping. Bees are buzzing. Butterflies flutter between the flowers. Somewhere, an earthworm is having an extremely productive afternoon.

The garden is busy.

Things are growing.

Things are dying.

Old things are becoming soil.

New things are pushing through it.

And rather wonderfully, none of it appears particularly concerned about whether it's doing a good job.

You open the gate.

As you walk in, notice how little the garden requires from you.

There's no version of yourself you need to arrive as.

No progress to show.

No mess to explain.

You don't even need to understand what's happening here.

The garden certainly doesn't.

It's simply alive.

Take one slow breath as you walk in.

Or not.

The garden gate is open either way.



The Bench

You've walked far enough.

Here's a bench.

Sit down.

There is no timer here.

No next thing waiting to happen the moment you're finished.

For a second, you notice your body.

Are you holding your breath?

Are your shoulders somewhere near your ears?

Let them drop.

Let your back find the bench.

Let your hands rest in your lap, or in the air, or wave them around like you just don't care.

The garden won't mind.

For a long time, many of us have believed that rest comes after.

After the work.

After the deadline.

After everyone else is okay.

After we've finally sorted out that one thing that has somehow been one thing for approximately seven years.

Except the work is never really finished.

Look around.

The garden isn't finished either.

Something is always growing, falling, flowering, composting, beginning again.

And yet here you are.

Sitting in it.

Maybe rest was never supposed to come at the end.

Maybe it belongs somewhere in the middle.

Perhaps you needed it all along.

The Sunlight

You didn't make the sun come up today. It just arrived, the way it always does, warming everything it touches.

The bench is warm now.

So is your arm.

You didn't need to earn that.

It's just what sunlight does.

For a moment, stop trying to produce anything.

Just receive.

Feel whatever warmth is reaching you right now.

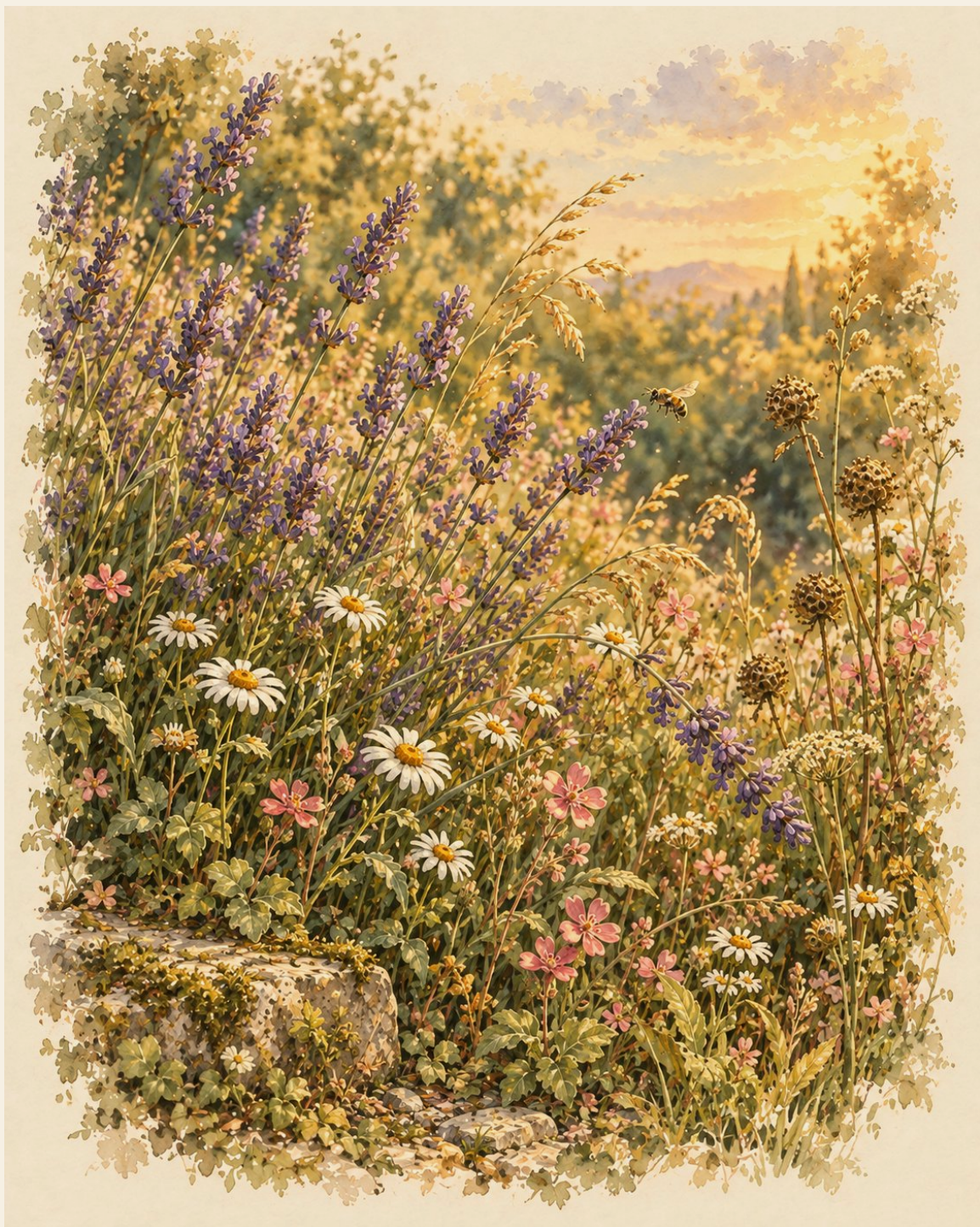
The sun on the bench.

The flowers, turning toward it without being asked.

The whole garden, quietly taking what's offered.

How glorious that you don't have to do anything right now
but be soaked in it.

You let it bathe you.



The Wildflowers

There are flowers growing near the bench.

Maybe lavender.

Maybe daisies.

Maybe one of those tiny little flowers you've walked past a thousand times because nobody put it in a vase and charged a fortune for it.

Look at it.

Somewhere between growing up and growing tired, many of us stopped noticing small, unnecessary beauty.

But flowers don't seem particularly worried about being productive.

They just grow.

Wild and fragrant and occasionally in completely inconvenient places.

And something in you still knows how to be in awe of that.

This flower has no lesson in it.

No deeper meaning to uncover.

No meditation practice.

No Gratitude™.

Just an invitation to enjoy something for
absolutely no reason.

Smell something.

Taste something.

Notice a colour you like.

Listen for a bird.

Drink the coffee while it's hot.

Savour the sandwich.

Enjoy the ordinary without turning it into a spiritual practice.



The Weeds

Every garden has weeds.

Even this one.

Nobody has ever pulled the last one. Not once, not anywhere, not even in the gardens on social media.

There's a wheelbarrow tipped over near the fence. It's been there a while.

The garden doesn't seem bothered by it.

Most weeds are busy doing something useful you might never notice — feeding soil, holding it together, making room for something else to happen underground.

You don't have to pull them all today.

You don't have to pull any of them today.

Look closer, and the garden is somehow even busier for it — bees moving between the wild patches, a worm turning the soil nobody's tidied in months.

The weeds can be here.

So can the flowers.

You don't have to wait for one to disappear
before you enjoy the other.

And still, somehow, a gloriously beautiful garden.

Weeds and all.

The Seasons

Nothing in the garden blooms all year.

Not even the parts you love most.

Right now, something is in full bloom.

Something else is bare.

Something underground hasn't decided yet whether it's coming up this year.

The garden holds all three at once and doesn't seem to think any of them is behind.

Winter isn't a failed spring.

It's just winter.

It doesn't need to produce flowers to prove that something worthwhile is happening.

And perhaps we don't always need to know what's happening underground.

Some seasons are for blooming.

Some are not.

Neither needs to become the other.

The season will change.

It always has.

And it always will.



The Seeds

You've been sitting here for a while when you notice a little bag of seeds beside you.

Some have already spilled out.

Some will grow.

Some won't.

A seed never worries about becoming a tree.

It doesn't lie awake wondering whether it has wasted its potential.

It doesn't look over at the seed beside it and think, Well. She's certainly got her life together.

It's a seed.

And that's enough.

Gardens are wonderful places for ridiculous ideas.

Plant things.

Dream things.

Try things.

Want things.

The little seed in your hand isn't inadequate because it isn't a forest yet.

There is already something rather extraordinary happening inside...

Maybe you have a seed you've been carrying around.

A hope.

Something small you'd like to try.

Plant it if you'd like.

And then resist the urge to dig it up tomorrow morning to check whether it's growing.



The Path

The garden is full of paths.

You wander around a bit. There isn't a right order to walk a garden in.

Some paths cut straight through the wildflowers. Some go the long way round, past the weeds, past a whole season of nothing much happening.

They look like different paths.

They're not.

They all come back to the same one.

You can't take a wrong turn.

There are no wrong turns and no dead ends here.

Even the parts that felt like wandering — the bit where you got distracted, or skipped ahead, or got lost — you were still on the path.

You are still in the garden.

The Gate Is Always Open

Sometimes we'll forget we're in the garden.

We'll feel like we've left. But the gate never closes behind us.

The bench will still be here tomorrow.

So will the flowers.

So will the weeds.

There's no version of this we can do wrong.

There's no falling behind in a garden that was never keeping score.

We will probably forget all this.

We all do.

We'll get busy. Worried. Distracted. We'll decide something urgently needs fixing. We might even discover a new morning routine that changes our lives.

We'll get angry at ourselves.

We'll go looking for something to blame, and believe it completely.

The garden doesn't mind any of it.
It's still right here where we left it.
We come back whenever we remember.
That's all this is.
Not somewhere else to get to.
Just somewhere to return to.



A garden.

A bench.

And, perhaps...

a little rest.

The Sage Garden is Growing

The Sage Garden is still growing.

There will be stories here.

Reflections.

Books for little people and books for bigger ones.

Some things are already growing above the soil.

Others are enjoying their time underground.

We're leaving them alone for now.

Mostly.

If you'd like to visit again from time to time, you're welcome.

Stay updated on what's growing in the garden

Know someone who needs a bench? Send them The Invitation.

The gate is always open.