

Two Poems

by [Thomas Banks](#) (November 2020)



St Augustine, Peter Paul Rubens, 1620

Saint Augustine in the Garden

“Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, quaerabam quid amarem, amans amare.”

When in myself I hid from you,

Your hand and eye still sounded me,
And where I sought escape, still you
With your own self surrounded me.

With peaceless soul and restless mind
Upon a thousand ways I went;
So was my soul estranged from you
To seek a separate continent.

Nothing I loved except love's self,
So thought and strong desiring drove
Me searching restlessly and long
To find and rest at last in love.

Unseen one whom I did not know,
From you to you I ran in blindness;
Unknown one whom I did not see,
Renew me in your lovingkindness.

Rizpah

“And the king said, ‘I will give them.’”

–I Samuel 21:6

On two cold hands he counted
And ended by decree
The lives kings purchase peace with,
Spent where kings need not see.
With none to care or question,
They carried out his commands
Because he said peace cost the lives
He counted on his hands.
To none the peace he purchased
Seemed bought at cost too dear-
Except to me whose eyes must see
My dead sons hanging here.

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