

## AMBER'S GARDEN

By Dave Haney

There once was a Garden.  
Showered with light.  
Filled with beautiful flowers. Lovely and bright.

Daisies and Dandelions. Begonias and Babies' Breath. Carnations and Chrysanthemums. Violets and Tulips. Snapdragons and Sunflowers.  
And most of all, Roses. Yellow, pink, white, dark and light.

In the middle of the garden. In the middle of the Roses. Two Roses grew together.  
One named Amber. The other named Heather.

Amber and Heather knew all the others.  
They knew the names of all the flowers.  
The sunflowers, Lars and Bjorn,  
were big and strong.  
They followed the sun all day long.

The Pansies and the Babies' Breath  
were always complaining.  
It didn't matter if the sun was shining  
or if it was raining.

The Violets were purple and proud.  
The Daffodils were yellow and loud.  
The Daisies were always having fun.  
The Carnations just chilled and soaked up the sun.

Heather and Amber knew them all.  
Each one unique. Small or tall.

Then one day some new flowers grew.  
Not like the others. These were mean and rude.  
They were nasty and cruel and said mean stuff.  
They popped up all over and they really were rough.

All of the flowers were really scared.  
These so called weeds. They were everywhere.  
"We're weeds and we're mean."  
They started to shout.  
Just then The Gardner stepped in.  
And started pulling them out.

He threw them in a bucket.  
Big and black.  
He yanked them right out of the ground.  
They weren't coming back.

Heather and Amber  
cheered for The Gardner.  
All the flowers loved The Good Gardener.

After a storm, He cared for His flowers.  
When the soil grew hard,  
He would till it for hours.  
Broken in storms or faded by heat  
He lifted them up,  
when the flowers grew weak.

Then one day, He came with a basket of blue.  
As He went through the garden Heather and Amber  
had no idea what He was about to do.  
He began filling His basket with all of their friends.  
He pulled out their roots and cut off their stems.

Then the gardener reached for the Roses. Heather did not understand.  
"No!" she shouted as He reached out His hand.  
His hand reached for Amber. And He took her away.  
"Why?" Heather screamed.  
The Gardener didn't say.

When the Gardener came back, everything had changed. Black bucket, or blue basket, it didn't matter.  
It wasn't the same.  
"I don't understand", Heather would say.  
Every time the Gardener came by her way.

Heather never forgot. The Daffodils that were so loud.  
The giant Sunflowers who were so proud.  
The violets that were so shy.  
Or Amber. It made her cry.

As the lonely days passed, the winds blew harder.  
The weeds seemed meaner.  
The rains turned colder. And Heather grew older.  
Then one day, His hand was on Heather's stem. He placed her in the basket where Amber had been.

On The Gardner's hands were scars and dirt.  
Once in His hands Heather didn't hurt.

In the Gardener's hands, Heather heard Him say.  
"Don't be afraid. I'm taking you home today."  
The home of The Gardener was shiny and bright.  
It stood above the garden, filling it with light.

Inside His home was a room filled with flowers.  
None of them broken, all standing tall.  
Not one of them weak. Heather recognized them all.

Violets smiling. Pansies laughing. Babies' Breath giggling. Daffodils singing. Carnations just chilling.  
Sunflowers standing.

"Hello Heather," Lars gave a shout. "Isn't this great!" Bjorn called out.  
Here in the Gardener's home, they all lived together.  
They looked so alive, they never looked better.  
"And no weeds, ever!"

"Where is Amber?" Heather thought to herself.  
"She has to be here. In that vase. On that shelf."  
Then Heather was placed in that vase  
on that shelf.

With Amber beside her. Better than new.  
"Welcome home." Amber whispered.  
"I've been waiting for you."

And they lived there together.  
Amber and Heather.  
With all their friends.  
Alive and better than ever.

In the home of The Good Gardner.  
Happily. Forever After. - Dave Haney