

# The Passing of Eden: Pomona, California

*Catherine Davis*

*To Glen Epstein*

There are foxes on this hill,  
friend, and rattlesnakes. But deer  
also wander dreamily  
among the palms, persimmons,  
and cypresses and appear  
at Kellogg mansion to browse  
on the lawn and even come  
down at night when no one's near  
to the dreamless beds below  
where, filling the night air, bloom  
roses on roses, all year  
long, but which, for some time past,  
thieves, or perhaps vandals, not  
prizing the long stems—from mere  
meanness was the common view—  
have been ripping off. I read  
today it's becoming clear  
who the culprits are. But oh  
the deer—I saw one close by  
but fugitive, without peer  
for remoteness—know nothing  
of the passing of Eden  
or the price of roses here.  
Still, whenever I linger  
absently in the garden  
now, I wonder, will I hear  
the whispers of hooves, as light  
as sighs, among the roses?  
What can we do when the deer,  
half-visions all day, steal down  
at night from the hill and eat  
the roses and disappear?