

Kate Belew

23 May 2012

A Seat in Trybal Revival: A Zuihitsu

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A Definition of Community Gardens according to Trybal Revival:

“A community garden uses the same principal of many individuals coming together to create and nurture something bigger than any of us can do on our own—everyone's contribution, no matter how big or how small is necessary to create the whole,” (Trybal).

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Things We Do in the Garden:

1. Watch Tomme cartwheel
2. Hand out plants
3. Water our plants; Indigo pretends she is like rain
4. Make circles around trees with to help them grow
5. Weed, weed, weed
6. Smile

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What We Think About the Bees:

When the bees come we watch them apprehensively at first, and then we become curious and we approach them. We talk about bees when we shouldn't in class. We dream ourselves as beekeepers. Bees with their royalty. The bees that kill the male drones in the winter. They don't need them. Dale thinks this is funny. Dale knows about bees. Dale doesn't wear gloves when she moves in on the hive. She is careful. Kelsey wears a veil, and

a suit, and Morgan does too. Courtney and I watch as they examine the honey. We turn our faces up to the sun. We might as well be orchard trees or bees ourselves.

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The Purpose of Garden:

1. Grow food
2. Cultivate friendships
3. Spill dirt on kitchen floor, listen to folk music, do starter plants
4. Move past bee phobia
5. Learn about decomposing matter
6. Ponder earthworms
7. Wave at people walking by
8. Get dirt under fingernails
9. Dirt everywhere
10. Get a suntan
11. Plant a tree for the first time
12. Learn about our new friends from Denmark

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Community Similes in Haiku (Humorous):

Community is

Grown within the garden here

Like a red pepper

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Why I Am Happy That We Have Been Given A Plot in the Community Garden:

Dale and Tomme gave us the first plot in the permaculture garden to cultivate as ours. Keyhole garden means stay on the path, and plant the seeds from there. We were given starters and seeds. We drew a map in the shape of a peace sign. Kelsey wanted peas. We placed our grandfather snake down in blue plastic glory. We felt accomplished and laughed at the magic in the garden when the spinach grew into our sight line, green, and new.

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When the Woman Steals the Plants:

Open house. Get there at 4. Check people in. Honor system. Woman with bandages writes down the name of a community garden that doesn't exist. Tomme scratches his head wondering why she felt the need to lie about gardening. Tomme also wonders why the man who comes to the open house had to give a whole bunch of money back from a grant because he couldn't get anyone to participate in his nutrition education. I think the woman who wrote cultivating failure is very misguided.

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Things You Can Take At the Open House:

- 1.ten tomato plants
- 2.five tomato plants if it isn't a community garden
- 3.five of everything else
4. (You can take as many herbs as you want though)
- 5.up to twenty packets of seed
6. A common ground sign to put up in your community garden
- 7.A happy gardening greeting from me when you leave

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Danish Friends:

Tomme and Dale get WWOOFers to stay with them. Two guys from Denmark. I will spell their names wrong here for sure. One has glasses and wears a hat; the other has a ponytail. We call them Mel and Mick for short. They smile a lot and we swap opinions. We bring them to Crystal Ball and Eve Ensler and the 100-mile farmer's marker. When I drive them home they can't believe how nice everyone in Kalamazoo is.

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Definition of WWOOF According to WWOOF Website:

"WWOOF is a worldwide network of organizations. We link volunteers with organic farmers, and help people share more sustainable ways of living," (WWOOF).

We make a pinky promise, kiss your thumb pact to be WWOOFers together at some point in our lives.

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Milk As A Catalyst for Conversation:

After the talk over food security which Dale and Tomme attended we all sit in the Adirondack chairs in a circle and talk. We are unsure of how to solve the problems in the garden. We tell Dale and Tomme that we respect that they saw something that needed to change and they did it. Dale asks us if we think that things need to bottom out all the way for people to see the necessity of doing things like this. I hope not. Makes me sad to thin that gardening might only be a means to an end. I've stopped being able to eat processed food without thinking about how it got ground up in a factory. Maybe I am over dramatizing? The sad thing is I am probably not. My Dad makes a point of saying that if you

asked a child now where eggs came from they would say the supermarket. He told me the real answer is a chicken. Thanks Dad.

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What Can Be Considered Metaphorical in the Garden:

1. Everything

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What Can Actually Be Considered Metaphorical in the Garden:

1. The found objects (ourselves)

2. The new trees/and plants symbolizing a new idea

3. The grandfather snake for returning to nature (ironic that he is made of plastic)

4. The shape of our community plot is a circle, which shows how we are connected

5. Starts reminding us of magic

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Green Spirituality:

1. An idea that Dale and Tomme have mentioned, but I must learn more about. So curious.

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Definition of Permaculture According to the Permaculture Institute:

“Permaculture is an ecological design system for sustainability in all aspects of human endeavor. It teaches us how build natural homes, grow our own food, restore diminished landscapes and ecosystems, catch rainwater, build communities and much more.”

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Feral Children:

We ask Tomme if kids ever came to play in the garden. He told us they did for a while, but they were like feral children. This makes me see the need for gardens everywhere. I imagine *Lord of the Flies* taking place on East Michigan Avenue. I am glad Peace House is just up the street. We will be sharing chickens with them soon.

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What Dale and Tomme Let Us Do Instead of Cleaning Up:

1. Courtney teaches us break dancing moves in the permaculture garden
2. Mel and Mick play music on speakers
3. We tell Mel and Mick American college stories
4. Tomme shows us his cartwheels
5. I pirouette
6. We relish the sunshine
7. We play with grass in between our fingertips

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A City Bountiful/All About the View:

It is easy to see Trybal Revival from the street, and I am beginning to see this as a benefit. Two men from the Occupy Movement come talk to Tomme about Gardens as they're walking by. People smile at hunched over shoulders bearing shovels. They stare out windows as we water plants. They pull up wanting to rent tools from the community garden shed, and so we let them. They can't want to garden if they don't know it's there.

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Secret Garden Healing:

Mary and Colin go into the garden broken, and come out less yellow, fatter. I come out tan, with arm muscles.

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Tomme and Dale Appear:

Tomme once mentioned to be he served in the army. My boyfriend is in the marines. He shook his head a lot, and says he doesn't understand much of it. I wonder if that's how he ended up in the garden. Dale is from New Jersey. She didn't seem to want to talk about how she got here either. Maybe that's *The Secret Garden* point.

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Grandfather Snake:

In *Gardens in the Dunes* there is the grandfather snake that protects the garden in the dunes, and the watering hole. We were walking along the sidewalk on our way to the community garden when I noticed a snake in the grassy plants. His nose was peeking out just enough. My heart sank, I hate snakes, but then I realized he was plastic. We dubbed him our grandfather snake, and placed him in our community plot to be our protector. So far, so good.

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Hope for Sunflowers:

When I moved to Marshall into the house down the street from my grandparents I was thrilled. I was also five. My grandma Lucy was an avid gardener. We planted sunflowers for

miles. It was a sunflower forest to a five year old. I can never escape that feeling when I am gardening now.

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Farm City/Our Trips to the Farmer's Market:

Every Wednesday after we garden we stop at the 100-mile market on our way home. We usually eat dinner here with our friends. We share our haul. Ginger snaps. Papaya spears. Olives. We meet new people including Erica. I think about *Farm City*, and a Farmer's market, and I wonder why before I never thought of all of these people as anything but a stereotype in my head. They draw chalk on the parking lot. They make their own honey. They smile with us. It is restorative. I know what Malik meant when he said the food is alive.

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Things We've Found in the Garden:

- 1.Small blue eggshell
- 2.Peace of mind
- 3.Friendships
- 4.A reason to be in a new community
- 5.New skills (how to plant trees)
- 6.A blue plastic snake
- 7.Kelsey's love of gardening (A new life goal)
8. A shared love of tea, and the food co-op
9. A dog named Olive
- 10.Rocks

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Things That Make Gardening Hard:

1. When it's fifth week
2. When the garden is two miles away
3. When you think you would rather nap

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A Seat in Trybal Revival:

If you build it they will come,
and we did.

3 hours a week, or more.

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What Dale and Tomme Say:

"Take your shoes off, and swap thoughts." –Dale and Tomme

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Defiant Gardens:

Definition of defiance according to New Oxford American Dictionary:

"Open resistance; bold disobedience," (New Oxford).

Definition of defiance according to Trybal Revival Garden:

Showing up when it is sleeting outside to start starters inside, and unload orchard plants from a kind person's truck

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Kittens:

We heard the mewing of baby kittens next to the community garden while we were mulching. Dale led the expedition into the thick underbrush searching for the sound. We will rescue them if their mother doesn't come. Three black and one orange. Do you know anyone that wants a kitten other than me?

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Here Is What I Know Now:

1. Comfrey is a dynamic accumulator, and can be used to mulch or compost other plants.
2. That there are few better things than sitting outside in the spring in Michigan
3. That there is always more work to do, but sometimes it is best to talk and take a break.
4. Eggshells take a long time to break down
5. There are few better dogs than Olive
6. Bees will fly in three miles all directions to find food.
7. I will be working all summer in Trybal Revival.

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Works Cited

"Defiance." New Oxford American Dictionary. Web.

Trybal Revival Gardens. Trybal Revival. Web. 22 May 2012.

WWOOF. World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms. 27 January 2012. Web.

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