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First Test

Resplendent

orchids

in the backyard

The fiery

geometry

of their petals

and the shape

of the silence

which supports them

I bring

a lost heart

and eyes terse

from the brief epiphany

Every flower

buds

at the heart of silence

and to the heart

of silence

it rushes and dissolves

I remember

Hardy

going into

the deep

silence

of the Greeks

Theorems

*as fresh*

*and significant*  
*as when they were discovered*

Two thousand years  
    have not written  
a wrinkle  
    on their pure countenance

(Euclid  
    and the infinity  
    of prime numbers

Pythagoras  
    and the irrational  
square root of two)

*The mathematician's*  
*patterns,*  
*like the poet's must*  
*be beautiful*

Flowers  
    theorems  
faint  
    in sudden  
    gardens  
under    fleeting  
twilights

*Beauty is the first test*  
*of mathematics*

*Translated from the Portuguese by Renato Rezende*

*Author's Note:* Published, untitled, in the book *Meridiano Celeste & Bestiário*, in dialogue with the book of G. Hardy, *A Mathematician's Apology*, from which the quotes in italics were taken.

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