

# 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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