

On the Sudden Appearance of Grace

by [Lisa Bellamy](#) in the [November 2023](#) issue

Finally, a day without rain—breezy relief—I have walked for hours through this cool garden. Finally, I miss my mother. A surprise, but a good surprise—

really. Why did my heart soften as I walked under cherry trees?

Why did my heart crack open when I peered over the rose garden gate?

The roses are hooded; unsightly. They will not bloom for at least two more months.

No, you didn't love me, did you? There is no answer, is there,

for anything—no answer for why, right now, I can say yes to you. Yes,

dear adversary, you would have loved this Star Magnolia:

feisty bark; pale, tenacious buds; gnarled claws digging into the earth.