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The Lost Garden

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I spoke to her as one child to another,
 as the child I was to the child she is,
 as the child I remember, who is, remembering,
 still here.
 And, in part, she understood me.
 As I, in part only,
 understand.
 I spoke to the child she still is,
 and also, perhaps, to the woman she'll soon become.
 I spoke to the child who plays in the garden I grew up in,
 am not, now, allowed to enter;
 can still – still –
 watch.
 Oh I spoke to the sweet-natured girl who can play there
 to her heart's content,
 for a while yet.
 I spoke to the child,
 in the mind only.

31 July 1983