

An Evanescent Garden

After *Horse's Skull with Pink Rose* by Georgia O'Keeffe, 1931

This bone has become an Eden. Picked clean
of unnecessary flesh, it is spared the tangling of thought,
the seeing of what cannot be unseen. Petals flush
upon its hollow skull—settle above its vanished life,
soften its truth with gentle bloom. Perfume fills the barren cave—
attar where eyes once turned like patient wheels,
marrow of scent replacing scarlet cells. And yet,

the head is plucked and without root, cannot keep its perfect skin,
will parch and dwindle, wither like a dead mare's pelt.
The forehead, smooth as a psalter's page is wreathed
by wings of green. The horse has forgotten its glorious self.
Instead of memory, an oubliette.
Instead of worry, light.
Instead of knowledge, air.