

## Footprints

Every morning, I come here at the Tuileries garden. Don't ask me why. I wouldn't know what to answer. Nothing in this garden pleases me. Too many people to begin with. It seems like a river of human beings is flowing lengthwise between place de la Concorde and the Louvre.

a river that never dries up. Tourists, students, loafers, office workers, walking and seeing nothing, holding their briefcase joggers and.... God knows what. There is nothing secret in this place where everything is shown, free to be seen, offered to cameras and to admiring gazes. No tight corners where one can hide to daydream in peace, no path wandering behind bushes or in a shadowy grove. And for someone who hates lines that are too straight this garden, with its perfectly circular basins, its lineup of identical chestnut and lime trees, its impeccable symmetry that suffers no flaw, this garden is somewhat tragic and is not designed for humans.

In other words, it's not the ideal place to wander about when one feels a little too lonely.

Nevertheless, every morning, before I begin the day, I leave my home rue Rousseau and I come here. Just seeing the garden gates from a distance as I walk along the rue de Rivoli makes me feel more secure. Then as the garden's gate closes behind me I am again somewhere in a real place, a place with a center where winds and History blow without ever touching it.

Then I hear the voices. The voices of tourists and strollers, and mostly the others, whispering, even chewing their words, that are impossible to locate exactly, but always very clear.

