

George Held – Five Poems Feature



Jubilation

After Robert Frost

At 50 you could say, “In 20 years . . . ,” but at 80 only a fool would say that. At 80 you can only hopefully say, “Next year I’ll plant calendula,” and pray that your back or knees won’t revolt in the act and deny your pleasure at putting in the seed and looking forward to the thrill of the green shoots splitting the crumbling earth and the stems budding in May and then the glorious yellow petals making a starburst salute to the sun and the sky and the jubilant gardener.

Initiation

I walked into the woods
with you, sensing
an initiation, but you were
younger so would I be
the initiator?

But no, you lay down
and drew me down
to you and soon
into you and after
we’d come, you said,
“Welcome,”

and I’ve never
since encountered
the idea of “initiation”
without thinking of that
time in the woods
with you.

The Moon Is

“The moon is no door,”*
Just blank face without mouth,

No entrance, though it entrance,
No gateway to sacred space,
Just hard rock
For the moonstruck.

*Sylvia Plath, “The Moon and the Yew Tree”

Blood Moon, September 28, 2015

*A sequence of four consecutive total lunar eclipses --
a lunar tetrad -- is also known as the "Blood Moons."*

At 45 degrees
in the 10 PM
southeast sky,
the full red moon,
to the pleasure
of astronomers
and the indifference
of the universe,

accepts the earth's shadow
for more than an hour,
concluding the Blood Moons
that won't recur
till 2032,
when you and I
might still be
waiting below.

Indifferent

“The slow, waning tide
Laps the pebbled shore” –
a voice from
the Victorian past,

imagery irrelevant
to our taxing times –
yet the tide waxes
and the tide wanes,

gulls hop over
the inch-high wavelets
to keep tail
feathers dry

so they can fly
instantly away
should I approach,
which I won't;

I'm a nature lover
who understands
nature won't requite,
will as likely

cause a sunset
as a Sandy,
"invite" awe
or show "malice."

Nature is the there
there. Love it
or loathe it,
Nature doesn't care.

An eight-time Pushcart Prize nominee, **George Held** publishes both online and in print. Garrison Keillor read one of Held's poems on "A Writer's Almanac." His recent books include *Neighbors: The Water Critters* (2015), animal poems for children, illustrated by Joungh Un Kim, and the poetry chapbook *Bleak Splendor* (Muddy River Books, 2016).