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Storying Ecocenes



Jumpfrog

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Jumpfrog

by Sheri Reda



About the Author

Sheri Reda is a writer, educator, and performer who serves as Executive Director of Flow and Moment, LLC, and as a librarian with Wilmette Public Library. Her most recent publications include stories published in the anthologies *Storytellers True Stories About Love*, *Storytellers Stage to Page*, and *The Healers Burden*. Her poetry chapbook entitled “Stubborn” was published by Lulu Publishing as a Locofo Chap. In addition to certifications in celebrancy, spiritual direction and mediation, Sheri holds an M.A. in Modern Letters, an M.A. in Religions, and an MLIS. She is a member of the Chicago Conservation Corps.

Jumpfrog

Sheri Reda

Cold slaps on again like latex, a blizzard
scours the pigeon-cote sky. Sickroom blue sheds
ashen shivers down from dirty rafters. Particulates
split, drift, sparkle on our kids' extended tongues.
Poison, yes—but how can we confess, this moment
a glimmer of ghost dance for the ripening days
grandma packed us all in a taxi to pick mulberries
growing in the prairie she called her friend's backyard.
Even then, we cabbed it: no skipping, traipsing,
gallivanting in pinafores through knee-high weeds
on pathways nobody had trod before. We were modern.
Took the nighttime shimmer of fireflies for granted.
Hammered ragged nail holes into the lids of mason jars.
Captured frogs and let 'em dry. Say, anyone here
seen a jumpfrog lately? Not the saucy poster frogs
making the circuit of nature museums. Or the catalog
frogs you can order in bulk and slit open, belly to jaw.
Or the five-legged flukes, lunging and falling and lunging
sidelong in burning bogs. Not those, but the hearty bulls
who advertised their longing, who puffed up
and peed in your berry-stained hands. They're gone
so suddenly: who will taste and swallow the night?