

Fear

Marilyn Windau

Fear takes small jelly jars,
empties out the sweetness of fruit,
fits himself in,
fills himself to the brim,
even dons a convex cap,
just to gain your attention,
just so you know he's fully capable
of overflowing, of flooding,
of saturating.

Fear goes unmasked.
Contrary to popular belief,
he needs no ghostly pallor,
no bloodshot eye.
He needs no knife to sever calm.
Fear is a hawker
of "make your own scar,"
"do it yourself shakes,"
"shiver your own timbers."

Fear doesn't sleep.
He lurks in the hallways
of night dreams.
His mares whinny at 2, at 3.

Flannel sheets,
binky comforts,
are no match for fear.
Only silent outbursts of “No”
can wax-seal and shelve him.

Marilyn Zelke-Windau is a former elementary school art teacher and a Wisconsin poet who enjoys painting with words. Her work has appeared in printed and online venues including *Verse Wisconsin*, *Stoneboat*, *qarrtsiluni*, *Your Daily Poem*, and several anthologies. A member of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets, her first chapbook *Adventures in Paradise*, was published in 2014 by Finishing Line Press. *Momentary Ordinary*, a full length, illustrated manuscript, is forthcoming from Pebblebrook Press.