

Making It Last (A Mustard Seed Pantoum*)

Lee Francis IV



There are gardens everywhere we look and they are green and they are golden.
We must be careful to let them tangle and twist in the sunshine
unafraid to step into the unknown stories that wrap around each leaf and stem.
and unafraid of hard times, always unfinished, always reaching to the sky.

We must be careful to let them tangle and twist in the sunshine
these mustard seeds. They will grow tall and joyous from strong soil
and unafraid of hard times. Always unfinished and always reaching to the sky,
they will blossom and grow in ways we are not even able to imagine.

These mustard seeds. They will grow tall and joyous. From strong soil,
they emerge with prayers on their leaves which we will eat and form stories;
they will blossom and grow in ways we are not even able to imagine
from months ago when we first pressed our hands into the earth.

They emerge. With prayers on their leaves (which we will eat and form stories)
these ancient plant dreams remind us that we are also mustard seeds
from months ago when we first pressed our hands into the earth
and began a journey of growing. And now we understand:

these ancient plant dreams remind us that we are also mustard seeds
unafraid to step into the unknown stories, that wrap around each leaf and stem,
and begin a journey of growing. And now we understand
there are gardens everywhere we look and they are green. And they are golden.

* The **pantoum** is a form of poetry similar to a villanelle in that there are repeating lines throughout the poem. It is composed of a series of quatrains; the second and fourth lines of each stanza are repeated as the first and third lines of the next.