

Cold Moon: On Life, Love, and Responsibility

Roger Rosenblatt

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Every author launches their book into the world with a prayer. Please, powers that be, let this humble collection of words make teenaged girls laugh uncontrollably, or provoke men to schedule a prostate exam, as the case may be. Some authors ask little, others ask much, and very occasionally, an author seeks to change the world.

In *Cold Moon*, eighty-year-old Roger Rosenblatt devotes his transcendent storytelling and prose skills to the “three important lessons I have learned over the many years: an appreciation of being alive, the gift and power of love, and the necessity of exercising responsibility toward one another.” What follows is a dreamlike collage of memories—tearfilled, joyful, ponderous, and unfailingly hopeful. He writes of movie scenes from childhood, experiences with the Lost Boys of Sudan, Hans Christian Andersen fairy tales, selkies, Poseidonians, and, repeatedly, his love for the ocean: “One thing you can say about the sea. It resists resolution. ... It does not wish to take a position. To the contrary, it clearly, actively wishes to take no position or to take every position at once, which makes the sea like poetry. Like art in general. ... Everything resolved by nothing resolved.”

Rosenblatt’s prayer is that present circumstances not influence our thinking about the things that matter most. But he is no mollycoddler. “Remember what Brecht said when asked what to sing about in dark times. He said sing about the dark times. Loud, lusty singing.”

Set yourself singing.

MATT SUTHERLAND (November / December 2020)

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