

Wilderness House Literary Review 12/4

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My Hydrangea

TRUTH BE TOLD, MY HYDRANGEA IS NOT MY HYDRANGEA. It's Sharon's hydrangea. I bought it for her many years ago. It seems to like her well enough...but it only talks to me.

My hydrangea says "Hello" when I come home. You should see the looks on people's faces when this happens. They never mention it, though. That would be admitting they'd just heard a shrub speak. They don't realize that my hydrangea is not talking to them. It's talking to me.

You think that's strange? Well, I don't think it is – not in the grand scheme of things, at any rate. You want strange? How about a boatload of Republican presidential hopefuls vying for the quickest way to turn us into a third-world country in the name of "tax reform?" I don't know about you, but I'll stick with a talking hydrangea.

To be completely candid about it, I have to admit that my hydrangea is actually not all that talkative most of the time. Usually, "Hello" is about it. But what can you expect from a shrub? We had a shrub for a president once. My hydrangea has better diction.

Sometimes my hydrangea will fall into "a mood" and won't talk for days...gets all introspective and antisocial...won't look me in the eye. Nothing seems to help – not watering, not fertilizing, not pruning, not a change in the weather. Then, suddenly, one day, a leafy "Hello!" all chipper and everything, like, "Hey, look at me. I can change sunlight into words."

"Don't get smug," I say.

My hydrangea just smiles.

"And don't be condescending."

I hear a woody chuckle as I walk by.

Soon, now, the last of its yellowed leaves will fall off, and its flowers will turn brown, and then my hydrangea won't say anything for a long, long time.

That's not a mood. That's winter.