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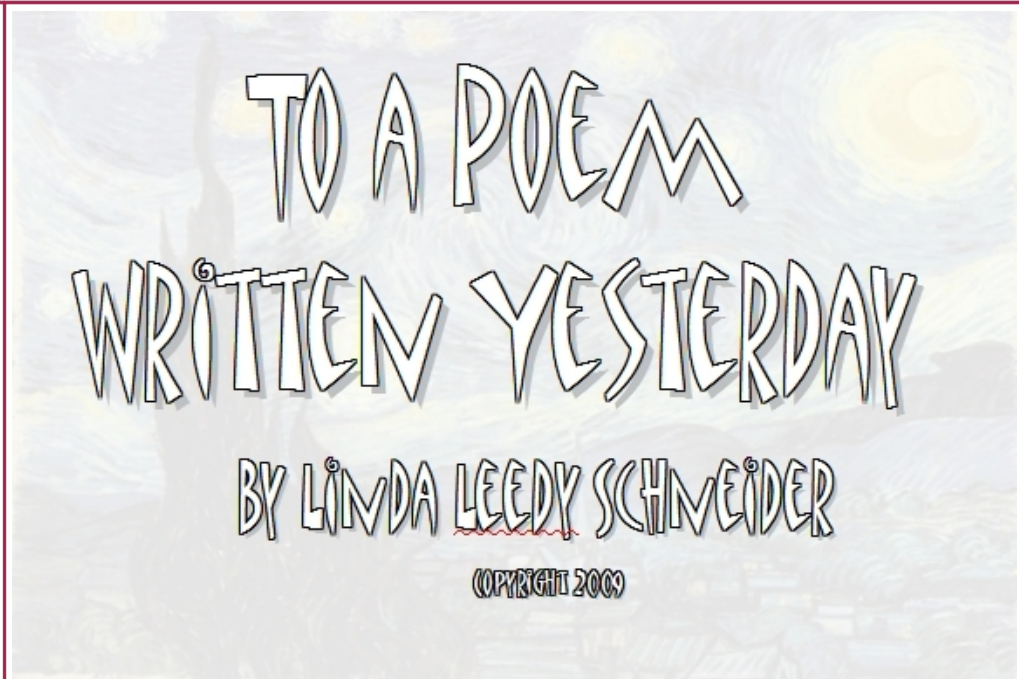
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To a Poem Written Yesterday

*I was working on the proof one of my poems all morning,
and took out a comma. In the afternoon, I put it back in again.*
Oscar Wilde

You incubated in darkness,
were born in a yellow notebook,
loved like any fantasy child.

Then the rearranging began.
Was one line too long?
I amputated.
Did you need more color?
I gave you the fuchsia of peonies,
the fresh green of new growth

Then attached the amputation to a short sibling.
Your song began to sound listless
I added some liquid alliteration.

Your rhythm seems off.
I tapped my fingers.
beat a drum, marched
and again added
and subtracted
parts

until you didn't resemble the poem I loved
yesterday....

~

So now after seven versions,
singing, amputating, drumming, and reading into a recorder,
I return to the original pushed out on the page—
and find I still love it unconditionally.

It's uneven edges,
the yellow and fuchsia dance between green reattached lines.
One line seems to sing to another, a heart beats--
Yesterday's poem has decided to stay.

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Linda Leedy Schneider is a faculty member at Aquinas College, Ferris State University and Kendall College of Art and Design. Linda received a Readers' Choice Award from *Pedestal* magazine, was honored by the Dyer-Ives Poetry Competition and was recently nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She leads workshops nationally and internationally including a weeklong session annually at Skidmore College for *The International Women's Writing Guild*. Her work has been published in numerous literary magazines including *Rattle Magazine*, *The Spoon River Poetry Review*, *The Pedestal Magazine*, *The Sow's Ear*, *The Other Voices International Project*, and *The Ambassador Poetry Project*. She has written five collections of poetry including *Through the Lattice: Poetry of a Psychotherapist*, Argonne House Press, 2002, and *Through My Window: Poetry of a Psychotherapist*, Pudding House Publications, 2007. Her poetry was published in the international women's anthology, *Not A Muse*, Haven Books, 2009.