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Red-Bellied Woodpecker

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Red-Bellied Woodpecker

But it is the back of the head you notice,
the quick flame of the red flap.
Conspicuously it sneaks and swoops
between the snow ground and snow light.
The dry trees crackle in their ice
as the little darting target stops,
kisses the green steel feeder once,
where the flocks have ceased to fight,
have decamped; the distracted Broad Wing
is flaying a squirrel upon a branch.
Today is a catch-as-you-go thing
when brown is camouflaged white.

Francis Blessington

FRANCIS BLESSINGTON'S poems have appeared in *Arion*, *Arizona Quarterly*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Harvard Magazine*, *The Sewanee Review*, *Yale Literary Review*, and *Yankee*, among many others. His new book of poems, *Poems from Underground*, published in 2017 by Deerbrook Editions.