

Ellaraine Lockie

***Assault and Rape* the City Crime Report Says**

Every morning a weight like the downward drop
on a bench press stops me when I walk by the house
that is home to two teenage daughters
This cul-de-sac that serves as small town
in the midst of metropolitan madness
How we party the holidays, barbeques, birthdays
Deliver food and comfort for death, accidents
surgeries, the flu, miscarriage, divorce

Yet we know how success of neighborliness
also hides under a certain cloak of discretion
Police abide by discretion too and bestow
only time, date, address and status of *minor*

Not one of us has a clue the right thing to do
Even the ex-child social worker who digs up
from her past the shame in young girls
when their most private part becomes public
Nor the woman among us who was once victimized
and couldn't talk about it for months
So we say nothing, do nothing
out of respect for the innocent

That weight each morning has become
a clenched fist of anger
Has become a dagger under the cloak of conscience
For continuing the cycle of stigma
that has penetrated societies since the Rape of Lucretia

and this counterfeit light that flickers from ceiling panels
Where nothing grows but muscles, bacteria
and longing to hear the mother tongue of the
neighborhood

That commands every sense to attention
The kinesthesia of feet touching common ground
Lungs filling with trees' gift of oxygen
The mind with reflections of past and present rights and
wrongs
And jotted notes with images that flourish
like the morning glory that claims a neighbor's yard
The white flowers as pure and free as forgiveness

In 2018 **Ellaraine Lockie** received the Kay Snow Award in Poetry from Willamette Writers, the Juanita Torrence Thompson International Poetry Award and First Place Award in the Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center Festival Competition. *Tripping with the Top Down* is her thirteenth chapbook. Earlier collections have won Poetry Forum's Chapbook Contest Prize, San Gabriel Valley Poetry Festival Chapbook Competition, Encircle Publications Chapbook Contest, Best Individual Poetry Collection Award from *Purple Patch* magazine in England, and *The Aurorean's* Chapbook Choice Award. She also teaches writing workshops and serves as Poetry Editor for the lifestyles magazine, *Lilipoh*.