

Two Poems by Nancy Haskett

As If Black Lung Disease Isn't Enough

Deplorable conditions,
unenforced safety measures,
corporate greed,
lethal methane levels
explosion
Upper Big Branch South Mine
West Virginia,
twenty-nine miners dead.

Six years later,
former CEO indicted,
one year in prison,
\$250,000 fine,
which works out to
twelve and a half days
of confinement,
and about \$8,600
for each man's life.

Jury members,
lift your pick axes,
heft the weight,
swing the axe over your shoulders,
chip away at the blackness,
dig deeper,
deeper,
down to the
core
of this injustice.

Snippets

I.

The woman walks into the meeting
radiating Estée Lauder Youth Dew,
and all I want
is to sit down next to her,
close my eyes,
breathe her scent,
have my mother back with me
for just an hour

II.

In the Napa wine bar,
the waiter tells us about the disheveled man
who paid \$2500 for a bottled vintage;
we discuss this indulgence
for a few minutes,
calculate the price per glass,
per sip

III.

As I sweep the driveway,
a white Camaro pulls to the curb
a block away;
the driver emerges, sobs loudly,
walks toward me down the sidewalk,
falls suddenly to his knees, still sobbing,
eventually gains control, returns to his car,
drives away,
as I keep sweeping,
question his actions,
question my apathy

An educator for over 30 years, **Nancy Haskett** retired in 2011 and is an active member of the poetry community

in Modesto, CA. She is a member of the Ina Coolbrith Circle, MoSt (Modesto Stanislaus Poetry Center), National League of American Penwomen and other local writing groups. Nancy has presented her poetry at the Carnegie Arts Center in Turlock, CA and has been published in many places, including the anthology *More than Soil, More than Sky*; *Stanislaus Connections*; *Penumbra*; *Homestead Review*; *Iodine Press*; *Song of the San Joaquin*; *Medusa's Kitchen website*; *The Pen Woman*, and more. In her spare time, Nancy enjoys reading, traveling, and spending time with her family.