

Woman on a Cool Concrete Porch

I wish I lived in a house with a big front porch.
I long to sit outside
on blue-faded concrete that is always a little cool
even when summer blows inferno
over a mirage of sticky days
and nights, leaving me
wilted and soggy, breathing in the earthy smell of life.

I want to revel in sweet-green grass
freshly cut, looking trim and neat
ready to show off its new hairdo to each
and every rowdy dog and haughty cat that pads by.
I want to sit idly and watch cars saunter past.
I would create a different destination for each driver – sending one man
to a secret bedroom that has been cooled
with lavender and tightly drawn curtains.
I would wave slowly at a woman in wrinkled yellow, knowing
that she's on her way to a popcorn afternoon
where she'll lose herself
in a dark, chilly movie theatre, forgetting
for a few moments
that this is her loneliest season.

I dream of swatting flies away
from a lukewarm glass of lemonade that sits
next to me, knowing I should get up
before my rear end starts to ache
but refusing to move, listening to the shrieks
of kids happy to be out of school
remembering younger-year days when the heat tickled
me with whispers of something exotic
and far away, and I saw a future me – a woman
who was unafraid – who would show up to dinner, wearing only
a black slip and red toenail polish.

Ellen Black, 2013