

Claire Scott

This Is The Age

We have dreaded for decades
sliding past seventies, crawling
toward eighties
this age where friends die of cancer
heart attack stroke
Alzheimer's pneumonia diabetes
one by one they drop
like withered leaves
in October's whirled wind
we read obituaries to be sure
those who died were
older overweight errant genes
no exercise two packs a day

Only a certain number selected
by some random god or goddess
rolling dice for the day
when the quota is filled
death moves on
his white eyeballs staring
his collar turned
against the wind
whistling a mournful
tune in F minor
waiting

Does our survival mean others
have died instead
have we murdered our friends
our family our coworkers
by winning in roulette
choosing a straight ten
before the white ball lands
like a gun or a knife
pills or a plastic bag

After all it could have been me
perhaps should have been me
but I stood on a different street
or stopped to buy a bagel
or wore a blue shirt
and now I wait on the corner

of Samson and Sixth
beyond death's long grasp
beyond Lethe's oblivion
watching wilted leaves fall
swirl on the sidewalk
and lie still

The light turns green

I walk across

Claire Scott is an award winning poet who has been nominated twice for the Pushcart Prize. She was also a semi-finalist for the Pangaea Prize and the Atlantis Award. Claire was the grand prize winner of The Maine Review's 2015 White Pine Writing Contest. Her first book of poetry, *Waiting to be Called*, was published in 2015. She is the co-author of *Unfolding in Light: A Sisters' Journey in Photography and Poetry*.