

Linda M. Fischer – Two Poems

The Incident

As I write,
the seething wind
brings it home:
how words can crack
you open like the lash
of a whip—heart's
blood the tears
of a child at the unexpected
freshness of pain—
never again—
so long as I can front
casual cruelty
with a few choice
words of my own.

What She Fears

She said she is afraid she's dying. I want
to tell her we are all dying, but how
do you say it to someone pushing 100,
the sheer weight of that number
enough to make her breathless and faint?
She fears the pain, she insists, not
the dying: *people shouldn't live
to be this old and have to wake up
to dead legs, cold as a corpse.*
This is what she means—the dread.
Still, she won't accept help—
her neck just as stiff as her legs—
refusing to chance another aide:
*lazy and rude, they sit around
and don't do a damned thing!*
Digging in for the end—no
longer spared uncertainty—she has only
to wait for the central event of her life.

Twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize, **Linda M. Fischer** has poems published or forthcoming in *Atlanta Review*, *the Aurorean*, *BoomerLitMag*, *Ibbetson Street*, *Iodine Poetry Journal*, *Josephine Quarterly*, *Poetry Porch*, *Potomac Review*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal*, *Valparaiso Poetry Review*, *Verse-Virtual*, *Wilderness House Literary Review* and elsewhere. She was a winner in *Atlanta Review's* Poetry 2010 International Competition, received merit awards in 2013 & 2015, and was a finalist in 2014 & 2016. For more of her work and information about her chapbooks, go to her website: lindamfischer.com