

Wellspring

By Ellaraine Lockie

She collected waterfalls
Circulated them from the ground
to river to ocean to sky inside her
Five hundred six at final count
Her Blue Ribbon cascading 1450 feet
down Hi'ilawe Falls

The hydro-electric power supplying fuel
for ninety-four years of farm working
square dance calling, accordion playing, art creation
And car tripping with the mannequin Sylvester
napping in the backseat in her dead husband's suit
Hat tilted over imposter eyes

Until she couldn't travel anymore
And the waterfalls plunged
under fingertips on photographs
She scratched off the honey rhubarb
scent of wild calendula
The used litter box fetor of French marigolds
rendered faint by disinfectant of cypress
and ponderosa pines
All of it better than the attic smell of old skin
or urined air in an Alzheimer's ward

Until she couldn't see or smell anymore
But some days the splash and roar of water
still play like old movies
across the cracked walls in her mind
Launching her up and out of the wheelchair
To show her friends in the TV room
how she can still hula
If she holds on tight to the handles
and listens hard for the music