

the queen of our block

massive weeds and wild ferns
hid all the front windows and porch

often a cat could be seen
disappearing into the high brush

someone once said that a valuable old
model-T was hidden in the queen's garage
which had never been driven

she was an idle old woman
as the reports sifted down to us
and she never really bothered a soul
and she was said to have a good heart
idle yes but good natured

no one ever saw the queen except
when she ventured to scoop cat food onto
an old automobile hood
for the cats that gathered on
the white picket fence

she would snigger and lift her red caftan
returning to her house
peeling back the overgrown weeds
and stepping with long masculine strides

one day someone heard a scream
and in a matter of minutes the queen's
sanctuary was surrounded by deputies

they found a twelve year old girl
boarded up in the back bedroom
and took her to the hospital

we all felt sorry for the little thing
but there was no community consternation
nor threat to the queen from the neighbors

the queen of our block was idle
was crazy
but never spoke to no one
and was easy for us to live with