

The She

Made to fit in,
 Accommodating in every fashion.
 Manners and places -
 Half-hidden faces.
 In saving them she loses herself
 Until her fragile mask turns to dust.
 Pots and pans
 And frantic hands
 Babies wail in the boardroom.

Deeds...
 She should not enact
 Truths...
 She should not utter
 Feelings...
 She should closet in her heart

Cowering under the tirade of angry words
 She is trapped in a tempestuous thunderstorm
 With no shelter in sight
 Soaked and cold, and alone
 Beyond broken, bereft of feeling

Insults meant to demean
 Enraged eyes intended to instil fear
 Flaring nostrils and swinging hands
 Only stop when the victory flag is signalled
 By the quiet tear that trickles down her cheek.

"That time is long gone - Equality is here!"
 But is it?

It's not in the conference rooms
 Where hidden agendas
 And malevolent manipulations
 Overshadow her successes.

Not in the lost eyes of the
 Physically and emotionally abused
 Clinging to the children
 They protect.

Nor in the hands of the seekers
 Of justice in the man's war
 Joining the fight with bombs
 And terror campaigns.

It's not in the heart of an aging woman
 Whose future has caught up with her
 Devoid of the promise
 That had filled her youth.

Filigree facades crumble
 Things she should not be
 Words she must not utter
 Pain she cannot feel.

Melanie Flores