

*Karla Brundage***e-co-dependent**

Things we think of killing but cannot, children  
lovers, our lover's other lovers,  
for me, a particular tree.

I want to kill you, but cannot because  
I love how you grow—  
how I have grown to love your

shade from the neighbors' glance.  
Plumbs that punish yearly  
stain my pavement  
gardens, leave potted plants in ruins.

Tempted to murderous ideations, but resisted,  
*You want to kill it,*  
tree pruner asked.  
*Yes, I said, meaning no.*

II

I can murder this morning glory, I planted

under my gate. She is in full bloom.

Creepers crisscrossing my patio

satin forest green leaves shaped like baby hands,

faces of the blossom, searching for the sun.

She is not so innocent to me.

Her tentacles run deep, creating chaos

in basement bowels,

destroying intricate workings within.

Strong, ropelike, she creeps unwanted,

stunning most to silence with her beauty.

**Malignant**

From a small seed she grows  
purple glory in tangle or mourning  
producing dangerous blooms.

Into dark spaces she crawls  
creates hidden cavities  
weaves her way into plumbing,  
arteries of our house and home.

Found unobtrusively in  
home and garden section  
no warning sign  
telling of dangers.

Strong tentacles unfurl unnoticed  
rip and tear down fences,  
cover entire buildings  
grow out of control in purple glory.

**Beauty**

She crawls into dark spaces and

Into hidden cavities

Weaving her way into

Plumbing and arteries of the house and home

**Tumors**

I bought her at home depot

There was no warning sign

About the dangers

**Benign**

How strong the tentacles are

How the rip and tear down fences

Cover entire building

Grow out of control in Purple glory

**Karla Brundage** (<http://karlabrundage.com>) is author of two books of poetry, including *Swallowing Watermelons*, and co-author of *Mulatta–Not so Tragic*. Her work as editor and publisher for *Pacific Raven Press* has included authors in the Bay Area, Hawaii, Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya in the following anthologies: *Sisters Across Oceans*, *Our Spirits Carry Our Voices* , and *Black Rootedness: 54 Poets from Africa to America*. Media credits include Sister Power on ThinkTech Hawaii, C-SPAN, LitSeen, Wanda's Picks and Chills at Will Podcast. Her poetry, essays and short stories can be found in *Konch*, *Literary Magazine*, *sPARKLE & bLINK*, *MiGoZine*, *Black Fire This Time*, *Essential Truths*, and *A Gathering of Tribes: Black Lives Matter Issue* amongst others. A graduate of Vassar College, Mills College MFA Program, and San Francisco State Clinical Schools Project, Karla is curator for the 2023 LitQuake Poetic Tuesday reading series and founder of *West Oakland to West Africa Poetry Exchange*. Her newest collection *Blood Lies: Race Trait(or)* will be published in 2024 by Finishing Line Press.