

October Letter to Reno

Melanie Perish

Reno, I walk my life with you
the way October spins out these days.
We are both slow, but
the year and I aren't dying yet.

The tomatoes grow, grow red, grow
big as the hearts of antelope, of wolves,
Ripe, some drop into my hands. Others
tug back the way children do.

I walked the river near sunset
with its delectable green in shadow,
couples walking terriers, a kid
carrying books without a backpack.

The Truckee was growing
shopping carts, in one
a box and canvas bag, tarp covered
a bright blue with no person rooted to it.
Under the Keystone Bridge a boy
stood in river-shallows shouting
to the other side. *God take me.*
If you are God, take me, you fucker.

My friend Andrew would
stop, would say, *Hey man, God is*
a fucker sometime, but can't you
talk with him from here, dry off.
I was not Andrew tonight.
Like the others I passed by,
but when I got to my car, I pulled out
two paper bags of tomatoes meant
for my neighbor. I carried them back
put one on the stony bank under the bridge,
the other on top of the blue tarp.
Reno, this day spins into not enough –
the river, my current.