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Serenity Prayer

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How far should I chase you?

The air is
heavy with heat.
Tender geranium leaves

dry becoming bitter
brown, discarding
scarlet petals.

I identify this
as a waste
of water.

But I can't

stop tending
the soil, can't
make myself stop.

Six weeks
silence
to follow.

Patch of green,
spot of red,
three buds

turned nine
turned twenty,
backdrop – my greed.

She lives
one week
longer.

Should we discontinue our letting go?

Our tomato tree
grown tall
as this shelter,

survived all three
storms, all three
amputations.

I find her folded,
limp against herself
and cry.

Fray of yarn
my crutch, my
prayer.

Another week's
gentle abandon
as ants

claim
jaundiced trunk,
strip her away

and yet

upper branches bear
pale blooms, birth
three pear-shaped fruits.

Are we never without hope?

Today you lope
as a deer,
white tail

dissolving
into cactus
and mulberry.

I watch you go –
my feet
tangled in sage.

Melissa Cofer is a student of physical therapy living in Austin, Texas. She is a recipient of the Poetry at Round Top Scholar Award and *The Medulla Review's* Oblongata Prize for Poetry. Her work has been published in the Austin International Poetry Festival and *Solo Novo*.