

## **Ode to Autumn**

Clouds darken as they roll west  
like a slow wave of the heavens.  
Shades of silver shift to darker charcoal  
in just one deep breath.

Sheltered under this canopy of old growth trees,  
doubt makes way for confidence on these  
crooked pathways.  
And long-ago tombstones sing of lives gone by  
in this cloud of today.

Peeking from behind brambles  
persimmons hang ripe, and plentiful  
from a hilltop tree.  
Their saturated orange flesh is calming.  
Flesh robust and sure,  
just like these pioneers buried here,  
and Kalapuyans before.

Early winter air nips at my face,  
announcing this time  
of bare branches  
draped in grays and browns,  
with an invitation...

“Say there,  
you, walking and kicking up the leaves,  
Welcome  
to the darkness, to the deep quiet.”

“Welcome to this place  
where silhouette and shadow  
uncover what has been waiting.”

Be it love or loneliness, or dreams  
hidden in the stone.

N.L. Reynolds

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