

Sarah Dunphy-Lelii

traveler

From the porch steps I watch a squirrel wrestling a tomato, still blushed green. She throws her arms around it, straining with planted feet; its wee stem holds. Long moments of opaque strategy, and they suddenly tumble free together. Only then, she takes two bites (tiny, the size of a squirrel mouth) and departs. The tomato sits, damaged but dignified, for several hours. We leave and return, leave and return, and in the evening I see it is gone. But no, in the morning here it is again, balanced against a fence post ten feet away. And that afternoon, on a flat rock near the bike shed. Released from its tether, the tomato is now a yard tourist, a roaming gnome. With a punctured flank its days are numbered, but on the bucket list remain the coiled hose, the pebble cairn, the rainbowed puddle beneath the car.

Pinyon Review, Num. 20, Fall 2021