**Waiting Out the Storm**

Cheryl Slover-Linett

Mud hugged the soles of her charcoal

gray Lowas, hiker’s companions

in afternoon umbra. Clouds curved

the mountains like the leather skirt

she used to wear that held her hips

in unwavering suspension

above red high-heeled boots,

leg swinging on a barstool as she kissed

whichever guy her eye gripped. One

might say she ought not ruin

the night with her sharp tongue

against his bruise, a bite on his throat

more desirable. Surprise

is a tough mistress, seeking

heat enough to fry a frog

on slickrock. Under the meager shelter

of single tamarack she’s a pomegranate

seed in her shrieky slicker—

caught between two worlds,

lured by neither.