

## GHOST

*Nicholas Reiner*

Before the 405 overpass  
going east on Santa Monica Blvd  
the homeless man  
walks between cars  
a sign anything helps  
& we all look  
at the machine  
in front of us  
look away from his face  
to the machine in front of us  
until he is a lumbering ghost  
next to our cars  
a wraith along the rows  
smell of exhaust and sun  
he glides near my machine  
a slight wind /  
white t-shirt  
billows like a tree branch  
off its trunk  
& I don't look at his face  
my tinted window up  
I look in the side mirror  
& don't see

his face walking / no longer see his back  
walking the light not green  
machines still / low hum low hum  
in the presence of  
anything helps  
the wraith among the rows

## SUMMER FRUIT

*Nicholas Reiner*

All these years she still wakes up  
to Granny Smith apples,  
bananas straight out of brown boxes,  
nectarines – it's summer –  
to plums, apricots, to pluots,  
seeded watermelon, to clementines,  
packaged starfruit & kumquat  
near the register, to a chronic cough  
& a worsening limp, to peaches,  
the painkillers in the back room,  
strawberries & cantaloupe,  
to hello from Maria, Hawaiian  
papaya, to where does this go? from Pablo,  
to bags of cherries  
& you look good today from Janet,  
Pink Ladies, to Red Delicious,  
plantains, with a bad back,  
to blueberries, a worse prognosis,  
to honeydew, for another day  
among fruit, always fresh, ever new.