

Nicholas Reiner

Hurricane Watch

The day after the swap meet
the empty Cypress College parking lot

is an expansive sea of trash.
The asphalt filled with ribbon,

crumpled potato chip bags, pennies,
water bottles, receipts,

apple cores, and more.
An old man walks

through the lot with his cane
as if crossing an unsteady bridge.

Cars hum
on Valley View Avenue.

Twice, the man bends down
to pick something up,

his cane rolling
from his left hand to right,

his body's angularity
sharp against the concrete.

Imagine: the old man could be anyone
Say his cane, like his limp,

was once his grandfather's.
See him walk on water,

the black cement frothy,
the pieces of garbage

flowing choppy like waves.
Watch a hurricane come out of him,

the trash now swirling inside it.
Watch the cane

become his paddle,
then vanish, like his limp,

and hear the ocean
rage.