

To Iowa from Brooklyn

We drove to Iowa from Brooklyn,
swooping down through
West Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri,
spending the night with our
sticky bodies pressed together
in the middle of a sagging motel bed.

When we got there I stopped the car
and you got out to pick flowers
growing next to the blacktop of the interstate,
weeds with tiny white blooms
that left their dandruff
sprinkled on the passenger seat.

I took you to the orchard first
because that's what I remember best—
the leather-skinned apples,
covered in warts
with fleshy pink insides.

And standing there I remembered
lying in the frosted grass
to watch a meteor shower,
when I swam naked
in the creek and I had chigger bites
for the rest of the summer,
when I took someone else there
years ago
I loved,
but he didn't know it.

But all you see are the branches
kissing the earth, heavy with their fruit;
all you remember
is hiking up the grassy hill
and I can see in your face
the beauty of this place
yet untouched,
and for us, made new.