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.