

Hackberry House

Boots of leather, buckles shining
crush fall fruit like broken vials,
leaking paint upon the pavement,
flood of nuisance
my mother hates so much.
I forgot to make a tourniquet
to keep their blood from staining carpets,
trailing berries through the house.

Candles burn, reflecting warped windows
painted shut winters ago
with stripes of rustic varnish
as old as the fireplace flue.
Place your hands in golden heat;
melting mold of fingertips,
wax print casings, still warm,
left to dry on the library table.
My sister and I
bridge the gap between auburn days;
we just came back to warm our hands.

Remember the summer we left the claw-footed
bathtub sprawling in the yard for months?
Every moth in town took a drink,
while I slipped lower.
Water rose to the rim and exhaled;
sliding green glass fountains
spilled into the yard,
and laughed at the heat hanging in the air.

We don't live by the sea,
with water ripe for the taking.
The tomatoes were fed what little left there was,
That year, like vegetables,
we had a summer conquest.
Our hair grew long and our legs grew tall.
Thresholds waited for almost-winter's haste.
Before seasons changed,
newspapers rustled in the wind on the floor,
three-week-old stories no one ever read.