

Apple-Picking for the First Time When You Were Three

October in Upstate
the air crisp and tangy
the Helderbergs decked out in
their show-off red and gold.

We peeled off our jackets
ran down the hill, following a well-worn path
through the rows and rows of apple orchard
past the lookout and the shed, past the tractor, past the sheep

You held the bag open, while I reached high above
and passed them to you, one by one. When we rounded the corner,
you could reach the ones closer to the ground
so we changed places, you passing them to me, one by one
each pick a triumph, until the bag was full
while your sister stood rooted, eating one ripened apple down to the
core
the sweet apple juice running down her chin, the birds circling high
overhead,
the sun warming this day into memory.

####