

1971

Late November, Madison

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SEEN ON A COUNTRY ROAD

An abandoned all-you-can-drink cider stand
that a man and woman once ran—

traffic from the city dried up, so also the apples.
No one could drink any at all.

Boys chase girls inside, and girls chase them out.
Among a broken cider jug lie rat-bones that some cat spit out.

The man and woman are at play in the hollow
of a huge tree. Both are young and wealthy now.

The huge tree rains apples upon the busy city—
large, costly apples, hard and dry, that kill when they hit.

LATE NOVEMBER, MADISON

Across the lake the lights
of the rich people
signal a code *warm money*.
We stand in a room
where a dog is yawning, and a boy
is reading his poems
written, he murmurs, from the bottom
of a pit of acute paranoia.

A mile of late November
to those stars across the pit
of water. Farm income will fall
again this year. Massive layoffs
from the second biggest
payroll in town. And
the poetry is poor,
is terrible, and we applaud.