1977

Untitled

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Storms side to side
crossing the Mississippi
    with light
like raw wood
    (and that word beam)
to part them....

A woman stood
    in the movement of the new shadow
with her back to a rainbow.
A rake and apron.
    Wait till she sees it.

The light is like a bucket
    going in and out of a well.
Irradiates the farmyard,
    strikes it up.

We’re not anywhere—
on a road commuting to the poles.
Rain overlaps down
    like the heavy arms of a man
drunk with little joy
    but many reasons.

Sleeping on his arms.

Anywhere,
in childhood when
    the dry creeks flash
and we are stranded in orchards
    we are stealing from.
Only steal

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by crossing water, always steal
the fruit alive.

But a shoe has no strength
to pull out of the mud
and stays there in long lines of trees
while the fruit mounts up
and rains down.

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Preoccupied as last year’s matted nests,
we are writing in our journals
morning of the 15th, trying
to keep the youngest quiet.
  Flustered by tappings, gasps,
rattlings, snappings, chewings;
  contemplation so denatured
it just documents:

"And the calves gallop with stiff rearends . . ."
  etc.

We are like nests,
we should be soft lodging.
Matted.
Empty.
  Oh, it’s lead to look at tired people.
That’s why our smart pencils
  keep moving.