

**MITCHELL UNTCH**

**Harvest**

Apples prepare.  
Windows lie open.  
He grooms the strands of my hair,  
does not know me,  
or hear the pain inside my body, the slow tear.  
Our faces, close in the dimness.  
It is pleasure and pain and I do not know the difference.  
I am fourteen, a boy, and the bed is a square of ripped moonlight.  
Afterward, the wing-tipped blades of his shoulders rise,  
the bathroom door opens slowly inward.  
I see my relief in the mirror,  
turn to the windows—  
a field of tall grass, the orchard's breeze, and stars.  
A fin alters the mood of the lake.  
The moon becomes a loose stitch on the water.  
I close my eyes. Imagine my body buckle  
inside the rim of reeds.  
My nerves ripple like the hooked jaw of a fish.  
What is lies flat on the tongue:  
*A bruised apple is worthless.*  
*A drop of blood ruins sheets.*  
I count backward until he falls asleep,  
draws the covers, his back to me.  
Moths bang the screen.  
Moisture they cannot shake clings to them.  
In the morning, they break in my hand.  
I brush them off the sill, ride my bicycle home.