

Prayer

You must arrive and open, welcome seismic flux from inside the fault lines of your palms. In Londonderry, New Hampshire, Jesus prays under an apple tree not to die, or for Judas

to stop smelling his neck, or not to be melted down into Sunday School volcanoes and zipped into that suspicious usher's linty wool pants. He prays that he exists. Under the same tree, you must

let your hair grow heavy with the cling of blossoms, fill your arms with apples not suited to sky living, dotted with the careful divots of moving through space, falling without falling. You should be

in good company then, in your margins and your bruised appleflesh poems, the voice answering a voice. Orlando drank her seawater, drowned with a belly bloated from holding long dictionary words like

ubiquitous or transcendentalist or polyphonic or love, but you, you must pray, the sticky ring of a Mack's strawberry ice cream cone running down your bitten knuckle— you must be still. You can make nothing move

under the flinty thrash of your voice until that hollow just below your third rib can hold a very tall, orange flame, and then put out the same, sharply, with intent.

