

Hood Lemons

I have heard tell of them
coming right off trees,
as pluckable as the lungs of any boy
my mother could have held hands with.

Brown, speckled with scars,
sometimes teeming with overripe;
too mature for their age.

My grandmother says
no matter how bad they may seem
They still good
inside

They
can't help being so ugly,
carrying all that irony.
It is my first unsupervised summer time when I traverse to the neighborhood park,
liberate the ugliest, most browbeaten one.
The flesh of it is a gleaming golden yellow,
sweet, and calming to my young tongue.
It tastes like first love.

I run home,
with an armful of speckled piss brown,
proud to show my mother I understand her
roots. I have found where she grows.
She makes me throw them out.

"We'll buy fresher ones. Firmer. Lighter.
Less ugly."
she says
I go to bed wondering who she held hands
with
Before my father