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The Apples of Maine: A Compilation of the Historical, Physical and Cultural Characteristics of Apples Known to Have Been Grown in the State of Maine

ENVY

Its taste seems false at first but by degrees
is revealed.

NORTHERN SPY

Three skinned apples set to dry in the mouth
of a moonlit house.

WOLF RIVER

Moonlight on skin, midnight
swimming. Crayfish caught
on a sharpened twig.

GINGERGOLD

Rain came
as you beat
a long thin path
through the cornfield.
Thunder of apples
off the owner's roof.

EMPIRE

While people on H-2As pick apples in Maine,
you're given imported apples in a paper bag
in a conference room in Guatemala

as a US embassy 'immigration specialist' says
not to tell kids about the possibility of asylum or
special immigrant juvenile status

when they ask
about crossing the border.

FORTUNE

No one has eaten
a bite of each
variety of apple
though some
have tried.

And still,
no one believes themselves
to be truly evil.

Though the possibility can't be
dismissed entirely: we might be
our worst selves every day.
We worst self our way
into Hannaford, worst self a bag
of cherry tomatoes into the cart,
worst self two 12-packs of Coke
into the back of the car.

WESTFIELD SEEK NO FURTHER

Except on those rare occasions
when you're driven in an unmarked van
for seven hours until the side door slides
open. You're delivered to a desert sky so
full of stars it's almost white.
The driver sneaks up behind
and bludgeons the back of your skull
with a palm sized rock.
Without pointing the way north,
he leaves you with no water.
The water is your hope,
he says as he goes,
Lay down the burden
of your water.