

The Summer of Wild Plums

Thin-skinned globes
Dots of jeweled colour
twist amongst the leaves.
A berry lands in my outstretched palm.
A peace offering perhaps.
It is warm against my cheek
I bite and it stings
gently
Tingling the tongue
but its bittersweet flesh is meaty, satisfying
a need I didn't know I had.
The first harvest ever
In twenty years
in my yard
but it is my yard no longer.
It never was.
Fat chipmunks abound
tormenting my cat
who does his best
bringing me the occasional tail
for the coonskin cap I'll never wear.
Mother Nature is on the rebound.
Storms of mosquitoes pepper my arms
as I stretch to pick the remaining crop
working from home in my nightgown
barefoot, unpedicured toes
dance on the uncut grass
grinding the overripe, fallen fruit

into the ground which drinks it in.

No wine for me.

The dying crabapple tree is reborn

And the birds rejoice

breaking the strained silence

of fortunes reversed

kicked off our pedestal,

at the top of the food chain no more.

The remaining crabapples are out of reach

picked over by the urban deer

I will leave them to fall

for the odd bear who tires of KFC.

I could capture this summer in a jam jar

preserving it for the winter to come but

Jam and jelly are too stickily permanent

and

I have hibernated enough.

Not sour grapes, not sugar-coated

just wild plums.