**Fallen Fruit**

Lorrie Ness

You tell me mangos

are burning in hell, then cup your ear

& listen to the drumbeat

in the grass. Fruits are falling

inside the drip line. Red bellies bloat

in the shade. Mango after mango

splits with rain, splits in the vice

grip of one palm pulling away from the other.

One half in each hand, your fingernails

are slick with juice—cut to the quick.

Even blunt ends have the power to poke

right through. A ripe skin’s blush

offers only invitation. Its tendril of flesh

dangles from your thumb & you stretch it

across my lips to prove that the taste of plunder

is sweet. After the fruit is spent,

seeds & crumpled skins skirt our feet,

Green mangos huddle among the leaves,

clinging to their limbs until peak—

when there’s nowhere left to go

but down.