

Untitled/Sandra McPherson

Storms side to side
crossing the Mississippi
 with light
like raw wood
 (and that word *beam*)
to part them. . . .

A woman stood
 in the movement of the new shadow
with her back to a rainbow.
A rake and apron.
 Wait till she sees it.

The light is like a bucket
 going in and out of a well.
Irradiates the farmyard,
 strikes it up.

We're not anywhere—
on a road commuting to the poles.
Rain overlaps down
 like the heavy arms of a man
drunk with little joy
 but many reasons.

Sleeping on his arms.

Anywhere,
in childhood when
 the dry creeks flash
and we are stranded in orchards
 we are stealing from.
Only steal

by crossing water, always steal
the fruit alive.

But a shoe has no strength
to pull out of the mud
and stays there in long lines of trees
while the fruit mounts up
and rains down.

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Preoccupied as last year's matted nests,
we are writing in our journals
morning of the 15th, trying
to keep the youngest quiet.

Flustered by tappings, gasps,
rattlings, snappings, chewings;
contemplation so denatured
it just documents:

"And the calves gallop with stiff rearends . . ."
etc.

We are like nests,
we should be soft lodging.
Matted.
Empty.

Oh, it's lead to look at tired people.
That's why our smart pencils
keep moving.