

To an old farmer

Under the cover of late
autumn dusk I walked

into your fields
and broke the stems

of six yellow apples
off a single bough.

I tried to leave all
the leaves. But so much

has already fallen,
too many of your apples

are lying to rot back
to the roots, half-eaten

by animals that know
safety only in darkness.

I saw the light on
in the kitchen

and wondered
if you sat watching

through the night-opaque pane
or were already asleep.

Each day a bit of strength
seeps away, back to the roots.

...

I stole your apples,
six sweet from the tree.

Forgive me – I knew
then as I know now

the fruit is not ours to reap.

- Eleanor Goodman