

Chillán Fruit Basket for Pablo

*Full woman, carnal apple, warm moon,
thick smell of seaweed –
and you, Neruda, what primal fruit are you hiding?*

Come on, women are *Mississippis of apples*,
not *ancient nights*. Your affairs scorched,
a flash in the dark. Mine strike taproots,
unfurl the years till their branches fill continents.

My man sleeps, curled alone in his den of dusk.
I kiss a faltering path through soft animal smells
to the citrus tang of his mouth.
He's awkward as a *scruffy chestnut*

so I steal your inkwell, your trick of writing in green,
and he rouses to the feel of feeling skin.
Flesh smelts to flesh, skin welds to tongue –
till the sun ignites its dawn peach.

When its singed core cools
I'll let it sprout and root an orchard.
We'll bicker as our gnarled hands prune and pick
but we'll wreathe close as a pleached thicket.

Keep your *cellular grapes, submarine figs*,

rotten *carnal apples*. Leave me some pips.

Names for the Standgale

She's Windfucker when she elbows a breeze
that sizzles in her feathers.

She's Stonegall hunched in a hard-frozen sycamore.
Face to the wind, she's Standgale.

In the sparrow's eye she's Staniel, poised
to stoop, accelerate, clutch and gripe –

she whirls in wingovers, overmasters winnowing winds,
she swirls on a creance.

The crinkling bells on each bewit
call her Crécerelle.

When her talons clutch my gauntlet, she's Kestrel,
fine-boned and weightless on my wrist.

