

The Crab Apple Tree

Everything happened there
Next to the ancient crab apple tree
By the pond on the knoll
The singular tree rooted by homesteaders.
Perhaps that's true, only guessing you know.
So the new house, built in spring with the trees purpose in mind,
Its dancing canopy to hold life swirling beneath it
Carpenters gently measured in rhythmic motion
Protecting the twisted trunk, its stubborn will of life
and the mossy bark held its pulse
inside its morrow for no one to see.
Those men measured
with thoughts of growth
of breadth
and width
And the girth of it all
Not taking into account how storms
Take down branches, or in seasons of sadness, the tart coral apples
Lay rotting on the ground unpicked.
And still after sadness,
everything happened next to the crab apple tree
Where a young girl lay in the green grass next to its trunk
Gazing upward
Seeing promiscuous clouds floating over the arms and legs
Of its neighbor in the sky

Like she wanted to do too
Under the apple tree
Where children danced with Old English Sheep Dogs
Where the mother rested on the ground
Beneath the white blooms and, told stories of the muskrats
Pulling the baby ducklings down
Into the water from the pond nearby
Until they drowned.
Under the old growth of the crab apple tree
The life pulse of the family lived.
Fists were pumped high in the air
Laughter was snorted towards the lichen branches,
Children held their breaths and whispered
And sometimes chins trembled.