

HARRIET TARLO / Pears: a short sequence of poems after H.D.

1.

found words
shunting sound
learning to
long and longer

over
leaf
hesitate
ivy

space list
dust under
leave it
over-creepage

2.

stream is trampled
heel . . . cut deep
show dark purple
dead leaf-spine
root snapped
clutched larch
bent back . . . clear
no trace

3.

these fallen hazel-nuts

scabbed apples, small pears

stripped lately of their green sheaths

leeks sweet folded greens

grapes, red-purple

dark to light, light to dark

their berries

hidden purples of beet

pomegranates already broken
and shrunken figs

potatoes, white stone
bent in autumn earth

and quinces untouched

4.

Slightly knobbly and gnarled apples, pears, pineapples, straight bananas and grapes went into the smoothies. Oddly sized potatoes, split carrots, celery millimetres off plumb straightness, tomatoes with the odd greenish splotch, went into the curry—which came with a slice of fresh bread, from a baker who supplies a sandwich chain, and has to throw away the irregularly sized slices at the ends of every loaf.

“Wonky apples, step this way!” a volunteer bellowed.

5.

waiting necessity
 why not let
 the pears cling
 protected
 to the empty
 branch ripen of themselves
 re-write themselves
 beauty without strength
 chokes out life
 in some terrible
 wind-tortured place.

6.

another life holds what this lacks
unmoving, quiet

dissatisfaction
madness upon madness
posed against movement of
(to) crowd

to crowd

no garden beyond