

## OLD APPLE TREES

For me more than any *tour abolie*,  
these bits of broken orchard now surviving  
in unlikely places are my continuity,

a hope time past as yet may be time living.  
Married tree couples now are drowning in woods.  
Or tipped this way and that, they peek and reach like odd misgivings

from the waste places, from ditches by roads,  
in tatters, ancient refugees from orchards  
fractured by improvements. Speaking of much, they encode

another time: left to fight a rearguard  
action, a sunken past by marker buoys  
made manifest, or as if the present had rough holes in its floorworks.

The past is another country, buried like Troy  
beneath a layer of meaning, where we lingered  
oh so long as young and comely with our pretty toys.

It was kind to us; we thrived here, singing:  
in different sunlight, under another starlight, by other seas.