

11/20/09 - Fruit in Season

That spring after my brother's death

I worked in an orchard. Young, good

with a ladder, I pruned apple trees,

lopped crossed limbs, nipped spurs,

and comforted myself with the notion
my brother was busy underground
carefully disentangling the long roots,
season after season, tree by tree;

but now I know there are people
who tread the earth like water
because below them their dead
are trying to grasp their ankles

and pull them under, so I know

how lucky I am and how grateful

I ought to be: sick for long years

my brother begrudged me nothing.

for R.J.H. 1950-1972

