

Pears

Maeve Quinn

---

with small bruises the size of fingertips  
under their skin, spread beneath the vendor's tent.  
Passerby press to feel the stick of dried syrup.  
If I count each speckle, connect them, I  
imagine the trail would wind across taut flesh  
like the maps of ancient Rome, roving walls  
punctuated by fortresses and temples.

Only part of the Colosseum wall is still standing. What  
makes sense now, as I stare at the crumbled stone,  
is the way you used your hands: intent, and angry.  
I fall asleep with my hotel door locked, murmuring  
soles in the hall. I dream of floating at the bottom  
of the Trevi fountain, raking coins through my toes  
and fingers, their slimy coats loosening, freeing.