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Late July

1.

The crimson breeze slipped over my skin
as you pulled the cotton dress over my head.
You propped my legs upon your shoulders
and I held part of you,
there,
beneath the darkening trees.
The orchard did not disapprove.
Their branches hung heavy
with the weight of neglect.

2.

The peach trees did not produce this year;
a mid-May frost rendered barren the entire orchard.
I watched alone, willing them to bear fruit.
Now your return makes no difference.
I stand with you this time,
enclosed in the orchard fence,
and hear a ceaseless whispering
in the grass of the orchard,
over the fallen peaches.

Catherine Mehta, 2008