As a child I painted the inside
of a box, hung Styrofoam balls
from fishing line: one, two, three,
until the solar system formed
in a fury around the sun, yellow
as dandelions buried face up,
this galaxy imagined behind
an orbit without moons.
When Pluto was a planet, little
ice cube held in the universe’s palm,
my elbows and knees gave way
to felled bikes, the stars a brush tip
on an infinite coat of black.
To define what was different
in my body, the weightless fumble
from girlhood into god, would strip
the paint from Venus’s blue dress,
interrogate the constellations
that have never been named.
I want to love that girl into myth,
girl who holds aggregates
of galactic dust, feels her fingers
tie suspension for every known globe.
I want her to be real in ways
I’m not, call the night sky down
over sediments of grief,
show us how light we all could be.

How Gods Are Made
Imagine How They Sound

You told me about ghost apples
in Michigan, how freezing rain cocoons
the rotting fruit before it turns to pulp
then slips through the ice, leaving behind
a frozen skin still clinging to the trees.
Translucent globes catching light below
the stem where the living thing once was,
perfect shell shaped as Jonagolds.
My grandmother’s ghost eats apples
from my fridge, licks the sugar from her
fingertips one two three so I’ll hear her
coming clean, little sounds in the dark,
her robe still hanging in the closet
keeping shape where a body used to be.
Imagine how the apples sound when they fall,
thump on the snow as hard as baby birds.
Hard as a woman’s head against the floor.
I know they taste like the memory: cold at first,
nowhere left to bruise.