

The Message

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*And pluck till time and times are done
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.*

W.B. Yeats

The solid leaf wall
of this tree is towering
injunction to a man
without nerves, mute,
violently silent except
for the tiny electric
sound of his skin
twitching in the shadows
where fallen fruit
stinks like overwrought
wine...but this too
 is a message
from the earth
even he can understand.

Love, the tree speaks
with its involute tongues,
can grow sad as metaphor,
turn, fall forever toward
the humus that begat it,
recede until all but madness
is equivocal, until
a man must turn inward
like the multifold whorls
of this cambial heart,
 or die.

The man stares upward
at the impenetrable
exchange of shadow and light
and tries to imagine a soul,
mysterious and flammable,
at centre, maybe, already aflame.