

## Bruise

She'd wait it out, my mother, and buy bruised  
fruit off the stand for a few bucks cheaper,  
sometimes two dollars for an entire crate.

"A black plum is just as sweet as a white,"  
the vendor would say as he packed our trunk  
and looked down the highway for salvation.

On our drives back home mom would ten-and-two  
as air conditioning cooled our faces  
and she hummed along to Elvis Presley.

"Pain is proof that God is in the body,"  
I read in a hospital waiting room  
years on, and I began to understand

the lessons learned in her laconic ways,  
that we should bring antique chairs back to life  
and only buy used books and stop at each

yard sale not for the bargain but to lodge  
in the wounded things, to consume that bruised  
fruit, to taste its mealy weight flecked with light.