

The Apple Tree Telling

(i.m. Boaden Lyne 1924-2015)

Midsummer: a day much like today
 on this far-flung headland
 blue and still
the cows in Parc Venton
 with their calves
 cornfields toasting in the sun
my brothers around me
 dozing in the heat
 their parched leaves outstretched
when your thin cry
 reached out
 and I felt the pricking
 of my sap rising
and clenching my roots
 deep in the sun-baked earth
 I rustled my leaves
 stirring my brothers
who joined me in welcoming you
 and the swallows
 who were nesting
carried the message
 as a banner
 about the farm
so that soon the whole world
 was welcoming you
and the very earth was singing
 singing your name.

Tilted to the sun

I was the first to see you

 your mother carried you out

while your father fetched a chair
and all that languorous summer
 bound by sea and endless sky
she would sit
 below my branches
 and feed you
and as my apples swelled with juice
 I was oh-so-careful
 not to let any of them
 fall
and as the sky changed pewter
 night currents stirred
while you slept in your cradle
 and I discovered just how
 to blow on my greenest shoots
 that they might whistle
 in a gentle way
a way that maybe you'd remember
 from before.