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## Lapsed Meadow

Stanley Plumly

*Grand Valley State University*

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## Lapsed Meadow

Wild has its skills.  
The apple grew so close to the ground  
it seemed the whole tree  
was thicket, crab and root—

by fall it looked  
like brush among burdock and hawkweed;  
looked as if brush had been piled,  
for burning, at the center.

At the edges, blurred,  
like failed fence, the hawthorns, by  
comparison, seemed planted.  
Everywhere else there was broom

grass and timothy  
and wood fern and sometimes a sapling,  
sometimes a run of hazel. In Ohio,  
some people call it

a farmer's field, all fireweed  
and thistle, a waste of nature. And true,  
you could lose yourself  
in the mind of the thing,

especially summer, in the full  
sun or later, after rain and the smell  
of rain—you could lose  
yourself, waist- or head-high,

branch by leaf by branch.  
There could be color, the kind that opens  
and the kind that closes up,  
one for each part

of the light; there might  
be fruit, green or grounded—it was always  
skin-tight, small and hard.  
There would be goldenrod

still young or yellowing  
in season, and wind enough to seed a countryside  
of plows and pasture.  
But I call it crazy

the way that apple,  
in the middle of a field, dug in, part of the year  
bare-knuckled, part of the year  
blossoming.

*for James Wright*