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With All the World Beneath

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Gretl Eating the Earth

The world spins itself, a giant blue apple—blue because it was so cold the apple bushes turned to blueberry bushes.

The world spins itself, peeling against a long, slender blade like a face too near a razor blade, a shave so close the pink pales before it bleeds, hesitates to mix with cream to make a very cherry milkshake in the sink. Blue apple’s cherry juice swirls down the open drain (as the world spins itself) — clockwise, in the northern hemisphere. Counter- in Australia, as they say the toilets do, and Antarctica where no apple bushes grow, nor blueberries nor cherries — none of these, either.

The world spins itself, on or off the apple’s stem, with or without worms, or pits to poison birds. And the cherry stems the man tried to scrape from his face are tongue-tied by virgins, whose upturned smiles, stained cherry-red, mock the maggot man as his own mouth fills with worms bred in the apple’s juice.