

**Nine Months, at 34**

Flat on my back in a field: the ewes are fat with lamb. A March hare flips and leaps; tumbles over itself with precision. I hold my stomach with both hands, don't push away the farm dog when it licks my face. I am stupid with glee. When I return

to the city, the shops explode with glitter. Under the pink, there is a promise: bulky women wobbling in the aisles; prams blocking the footpath, milk, milk, milk. I count the trolleys holding life: mouse-eared onesies in leopard print, knitted

socks the size of plums, purple with anticipation. The fat women are everywhere. In summer, I empty the bathroom bin into my pockets and carry out another test: if she floats, then she is not. Clear water breaks against my fingers; I am left empty-

handed. Cut-up turnips bare their teeth in well-kept gardens, laugh at the tiny feet of witches and nurses and ghosts. At night, I cover my ears and weep. In November, a plastic snake is pushed inside. I watch my womb on a screen. *I had hoped for more,*

someone says. *A little on the low side.* I am a blanket of translucent goo: the curtain is a paper towel. My legs are still / above my head

## Hunger

He puts my foot in his mouth and feeds me a grape.  
I swallow the seeds whole, turn up the volume on the telly  
where a man is riding his wife without looking at the camera.

*I might be perfectly something.* I don't normally let anyone  
suck my toes on a third date.

Outside, the end of autumn is howling at the single panes:  
glass stained with wine, a mouth full of red. I bite into fruit  
with brandy-slick teeth. Hand him another foot.

This is an exercise in abundance. *Does he know  
what it means to give someone an apple?*

In between fruits, he holds out his coat. It's too cold  
to decline. I climb a tree in Seville and pick an orange  
like a promise.

Blueberries grow stronger hearts. He keeps them in a glass.  
*Press pause on all of this.* Preserve time in a jar.

Tracy Flick will win the election. I wish the wife  
would ride someone else too. Her husband is washing  
his bits in the bath between chores. I curl into the man.