

From *A Tiny Hunger* by Laura Ross

The End of October

In the morning we pass ponies behind white painted fences
and tangelo orchards where the migrant workers have come
to gather the last of October in ripe orange globes.

It is all in reach—what they pull down with their palms
and shoulder in their satchels. Beyond heat and thorns,
and the brevity of seasons, the fruit provokes, pearls
golden with daylight, and burns like fire in hands
that are never still and always climbing.

Tonight their children come to our doors, drawn
through darkness by the flame we have lit inside
our own orange globes— the ones carved into masks
and sedentary on front porch steps. Tonight

they are warriors and princesses in this tall, strange land.
Fortunes foretold beneath face paint,
and bearing salutations in eager practiced English.

They will offer their emptied hollows for us to fill
with sugar paste trinkets, sucking their fingers
as their parents look over our shoulders, faces pressed
into our living rooms, and against the picture windows beyond
where the moon floating whole in our swimming pools
is broken by wind on the surface into so many seeds of fire.