An Ode To This

The cherished apple of the book's eye was red as the child's nose, as she swam oceans to find it. She felt the molten lava water as the rain tinkled on the tin roof like piano keys and made wild flowers' scent bum her nostrils, while listing and twisting collided inside her brain. The book witnessed the child's fear and heroism with loose-leaf ears wide open and the taste of dreamy sweat on its spine. Abraham Lincoln took her by the hand to show her Rome burning for the first time, while the oceans were nearly drowned for their ignorance. And that apple only Mark Twain could surmise got away and started growing sporadically among poplar trees. Oh, Dickens! Thou dost have swagger! But this time the machine took her the wrong way and the child got too close to Shakespeare, no longer separated from life by pen and ink, mad statues clutching her hair and clothes. To all, she replied, "That's just not my kind of applesauce," as she strolled gingerly through the cosmos making friends and foes with gods and clouds. Meanwhile, the superfluous dog of silliness howled at the squeaking door that blocked its passage to the lily fields. But they were dull, like diamonds against stars that hide behind the child's blanket at night with flashlight in hand for protection against the ghosts. The child stole away this time and that for her own undeclared happiness so much that she could be joyful forever.

She soared with thunderous silence through sparse forests and green cities while becoming insanely normal and anxiously calm. Because in her world of vacuum cleaners and dinner menus, too much depended upon grammatical reasoning. But the British were coming in droves and decagons to take her diamond-lit lily fields and squeaking, rambling apple trees. Just then, the apple grinned thoughtlessly, and the book welcomed it back with open covers, never to feel betrayed again. Now the child, grown to a woman, will swim evermore with diamonds and piano keys and laughing dogs through mountains and eras and Jane Austen's goodnight kisses, like pure emotion always trapped between closed

pages.

— Taryn Korody



-Hollis Juday, "Claire"