

Toxic Survival

Pest-

moth, maggot
beetle, blight
rot and scab
stain the apple's shining surface
into a mottled minefield of tainted flesh,
ruined.
worthless.
the next season must be different, they say,
they are desperate.
and so It arrives
shielding the fruit of their labor
from the scourge of nature:
the rot, the maggots, the blight,
and all that causes grief and panic and hunger.
then the treasure is safe, all is well
but It remains.
there It resides, invisible to them.
they know It is there
but they cannot see how it lurks
under the paragon of success,
ever watchful,
they cannot see how It drifts and gathers, following
friends, family, neighbors.
It haunts the trees, the soil, the very air they breathe
sees all, stalks all,
a shadow the sun cannot drive away.
the invasion has already begun.
It slinks along their footsteps,
slipping through cracks,
clinging to their breath
under the illusion of good fortune.
they fall ill
and yet
they have no choice but to let It stay.
don't you see?
but of course you don't, because
you don't realise that

It follows you too,
slinking along your footsteps,
slipping through the cracks of your home
clinging to your breath
It lingers,
and gradually
year by year
crop by crop
they are successful
but It has won.
It killed (for) them.
and we all pay the price.
you should not be under any illusions:
our home
should never be
It's home
-icide

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