

Apples

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Instead of reading for tomorrow's classes—
The Forest People, Dante, a chapter
on supply and demand, another
on 18th century Christian practice—
we fourth floor girls climbed to the dorm roof

to curse the noise of low-flying airplanes
from Cleveland Hopkins International
and the war: brothers and friends sent cards
with small jokes and yearning, too much unsaid.
We crunched into apples when conversation

paused. Their tartness lingered like worry
as we digested that Joyce was pregnant.
Todd's deferment would end if he quit
college to marry and support her. We
saved our apple seeds, wove them with out

anxiety into necklaces, circles
of bitter odor seeped from threaded kernels.
Joyce wore them like prayer beads to the clinic
in New York; back in Cleveland, she draped
the brown wreaths around an airport trashcan.