

## MY LIFE AS AN APPLE, A PEAR

It's survived a hundred years  
and more, the red glass platter  
my Czech grandmother carried aboard

the ship and wagon that got her, pregnant,  
to the house in green Ohio where  
she became Bohunk, despised. Four

children, all playing piano, matching  
candlesticks of the same red glass  
on shawls that protected polished wood

above ivory and ebony keys. She  
heaped that platter, I'm sure, when she could  
with fruit for holidays, and thick-shelled nuts

before she boiled the chicken and dumplings  
that called for fresh mushrooms, good dill.  
I never knew her and yet I still

polish the glass from Bohemia.  
I can only wish that when I die  
my only son or daughter will.