

## PURPLE

*After Carl Phillips' "Blue"*

As in the skin of plums,  
purple black falling from the tree  
in our backyard. Teardrops  
heavy with ripeness,  
branches like lashes  
letting go. Theirs is the midnight  
glow of the cosmos. A swirling of dark  
that signals history, or destiny.  
Inside, a red purple that matched my blood,  
and I ate greedily.

This is the blue purple  
of violets, the same as those suede  
cowboy boots my aunt gave me  
at seven. That fabric still  
the luscious embodiment  
of little girl dreams.  
A duplicate mood  
found in the geometric middle  
of a geode that sat on my shelf  
and sparkled; a reminder  
to break yourself open and sparkle.

And yet, in that same room, a painting  
with a purple the color of kings  
and forgiveness,  
a likely combination.  
This is the man-made purple  
that leans no closer  
to red than to blue;  
the one I avoid in favor  
of deep purple daydreams  
of plums and the cosmos.