

This Woman Is Full

This woman is full, a pantry
stocked against winter: acorns,
red apples, roots; a grainsack

stretched at the seams. This woman
has been ripe since September, patient,
biding her time turning bottles

in the cellar. Her children
are wrapped in corn husks.
Her robe is purple: she

has sewn leaves on the hem;
the sleeves are lined with mink
and the pockets are swollen: raisins,

almonds, pears. This woman keeps
the coals hot in her white belly;
she has named the winds and calls

the wild, albino ones to her
and conceals them beneath
her pale blue skirts

where they spin, waiting;
and here there be the thin
wolves and the land be gripped

with a terrible leanness—this woman
is full, and she greets
the first snowfall with laughter.

—Jennie Rae Leishman

“This Woman Is Full” received first place in the 1995 BYU Studies Poetry Contest.