

Charlie Gracie

Three things about growing fruit

When a gooseberry bush suffers
poor soil
disease
weather-threat
young berries begin to waste
or tumble
to the hard earth.

When a young gooseberry
clings to a withered stalk
it too will shrivel
from lack of sustenance.

If a young gooseberry falls
the fall itself makes the flesh hurt:
rain pounds
beasties nibble
rots begin.

And we
we bring young berries in
place them in sunlight
on soft surfaces.
We give time for flesh to sweeten
give love for skin to heal.

And what to do for
poor soil
disease
weather-threat
so gooseberries can thrive?

About the poet

Charlie Gracie grew up in Baillieston, Glasgow. His first poetry collection, *Good Morning*, was published in 2010 by diehard, who will also publish his second collection in autumn 2019. His first novel, *To Live With What You Are*, was published in 2019 by Postbox Press. Charlie has been a social worker for over 30 years and is a CELCIS Associate. He now lives on the edge of the Trossachs.

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