

## Marianne Moore – “Nevertheless” (1944)

you've seen a strawberry  
that's had a struggle; yet  
was, where the fragments met,

a hedgehog or a star-  
fish for the multitude  
of seeds. What better food

than apple seeds - the fruit  
within the fruit - locked in  
like counter-curved twin

hazelnuts? Frost that kills  
the little rubber-plant -  
leaves of kok-sagyyz-stalks, can't

harm the roots; they still grow  
in frozen ground. Once where  
there was a prickley-pear -

leaf clinging to a barbed wire,  
a root shot down to grow  
in earth two feet below;

as carrots from mandrakes  
or a ram's-horn root some-  
times. Victory won't come

to me unless I go  
to it; a grape tendril  
ties a knot in knots till

knotted thirty times - so  
the bound twig that's under-  
gone and over-gone, can't stir.

The weak overcomes its  
menace, the strong over-  
comes itself. What is there

like fortitude! What sap  
went through that little thread  
to make the cherry red!