

### **What is the apricot saying?**

*“What is the apricot saying? In what language?” Yoko Tawada, from ‘The last break at a poetry festival’*

Brimming over the tarmac, winding with the bends  
and creaking to a halt at every traffic light  
the bus runs commentary on the shape of the road.

Passengers talk silently to themselves, or in a language  
I don’t understand to each other, while the driver  
is using hands and feet, to which the motor replies with wheels.

I’m listening to the sight of a picket fence. Between the panels  
my eyes can hear glimpses of a sounding garden.  
What is the apricot saying? In what language

does it connect with the ears of my mouth?  
There is a vegetable plot here, the homestead is too far distant.  
I call out to the runner beans, who look the other way.

I say, “Are you potatoes?” and they laugh their earthy laughter,  
while my tongue turns to sackcloth and ashes. These are plants  
that whirr their sibilants and float their vowels beyond me.

The bus cries out in an electronic dialect close to my own,  
“The next stop is...” something I suddenly remember.  
I rise and smile, and a smile answers.

Rosemary Drescher  
[rosemarydrescher@gmail.com](mailto:rosemarydrescher@gmail.com)