

Home Brew

Father's wine had its own lexicon
of awfulness: mousy, ropy, goaty...
his proud but uncontested claim:
you can make wine from anything.
And to prove it would hoard unwanted produce:
parsnips, pears, beetroot, marrows, peas,
brambles and crabs and sloes from the hedgerows,
and douse them in a filthy bucket
with boiling water laced with sugar
to let the errant air-borne yeasts
that hung about the nether regions of our house
perform their alchemy.

And yet to go with Sunday roast
he'd find a dusty bottleful
of pink, sparkling fruitfulness
that made us chatter and laugh, and once
made mother throw her empty glass
over her shoulder as if she didn't care.