

The Cut in Her Stomach

bare trees
the sound of spades
across tarmac

we huddle
by a green tractor
how to plant a tree

cold rain
it's at least a two man job
a tree like this

the English undergrad
asks everyone
'what's nepotism?'

a twinge
from the cut in her stomach
she digs deep

no not cold
just wet
and getting heavier

the lost referee
asks for directions to
the all weather pitch

hazel whips
we find a seam
of hard core

'with the hedge' he says
'plant three for one
just in case'

she'll need
a stepladder now
to see the runners' legs

Paul Conneally

written on 18 Febr, 2012 the first day of planting the new Fruit Route at Loughborough University