

Ardis L. Stewart

Autumn Orchids

The phone message was: Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, I can spare this afternoon, the summer is almost over and gone, the orchids appear on the earth; the time of permission is come, and the voice of the red-tail is heard in our land.

Had I been Eve
we'd be in the Garden still
I fail to see adventure in eating toxic fruit.

Yet...

say
two words
Come. Orchids.
and I quickly transgress
my serpentine spine flexes
next to you
whorling your breath
and grace
looking up from below
dried scrub grass
cream with swirls of honey dripping
off lower tongues
smelling like linden in love
with white pine
cooing duets
with hidden brown-eyed owls
in cedar branches
we position the sun
on spires radiating
light laterally
in backlit opalescent
cleistogamy
ruffling lips together
against the cold.