

The Persimmon

by

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One would point at you two in the back,
orange roses, on a platter of red daisies.
You stand out like ugly ducklings, though
with stalks lofty, as if you're swans already.

Together, you look like a pair
of uneven coat buttons.
Not rickety. Rocket-y.
Any coat would rather fall off of you.

Odysseus warned me of your yarn ball looks.
Untangling you can only ever get one lost,
and not out of the maze. It's all Greek.
One bite and the way home fades away.

I think I'm pulling closer
towards your flexed skin,
so young and tender it almost glows—
What's with the smirk?

I bet you taste like a spiced sweet potato.
To bite or maybe not to? The smirk's broader.
If you were as big as a pumpkin,
you'd be a Jack-o'-lantern.

You're so close to my teeth
it makes your pores like a honeycomb,
sunset dipped and dripping,
about to have the gold removed

—I did it. Devoured you like quicksand.

Turns out you are no fiery *Lotos*,
as your Greek name lied. Neither legendary nor cursed.
Who would have known,

your flashy flesh would be mild like butter
and your name a mythic prank,
both still entitling you,
to make one think they know their history?

Poet's Note

The Persimmon is a descriptive poem about that juicy orange fruit we might come across at the market. The one I am specifically referring to initiated as a voyage into Greek culture, but then to my surprise ended up being about a linguistic misunderstanding. The fact that in Greek a persimmon is called “lotòs,” appears to be enough evidence for a significant majority of Greeks (including myself) to mistake it for the mythical lotus plant of Homer's *Odyssey*. Writing this poem was a great opportunity for me to go through several sources about mythology and history, only to come once more to the conclusion that language is so irretrievably subjective. And such a comical misunderstanding would of course be worth writing about.