

# Ripening

*by* T. M. Upchurch

I am his peach.

I sit, taut, watching him smile as he walks the length of day, and when the light is orange, he comes, swooping in with the promise of plates and pillows. His fingers stroke my skin and I start to melt, softening into the scent of my own juices. Between his palms, I lower, like a breast after a sigh, sinking until my coat becomes comfortable, looser.

Flaccid.

He turns away. I sag. I watch him leave. My face turns to promise more, but my insides are browning. I shrink, I dry, I become powder, dusted with grey. I am shocked to realise that to ripen is to rot.

I wait.

I hear, 'That one, that looks overripe.'

I think, 'Bite me.'

