

Dear Adam

I like the heft and handfeel of it, the lean, whir,
And twist from twining branch before the balance drops
Into my cupped palm, the shaky after-whisper
Of thickly green unfurled leaves, the supple thumb-stops
As I curve my fingers across its tempting crown,
And the delicate crackle when my teeth incise
Its sealed skin, the juice slipping into runnels down
My wrist in long, sticky tendrils, the ripe surprise
Against my tongue of slightly tart, piercing nectar
Until I hit the rough-textured center, the fat,
Fertile seed—resolving my qualms so that I'm sure,
Like the measured sun plunging and ascending, that
The shadowed path that snakes out past this garden's view
Opens to life and death and earth and sky and you.

—Cristie Cowles Charles

This poem won first place in the 2025 BYU Studies Poetry Contest.