

“Split Peach,” published by CleanSheets.com in 2008, apparently went through 7 drafts before I was satisfied with it. Unfortunately, I can’t seem to find the first 3 drafts, but here are the last 4. Notice that although I was experimenting a little bit with imagery, it was the meter that needed most attention. Sometimes all it took was a syllable here and there to smooth everything out.

Rafeeq O. McGiveron

(Draft 4)

Velvet split peach,
juicy, overripe,
liquid and fragrant
in the sighing night.

Sticky-soft flesh
that yields to a tongue
 [yielding to a tongue]
worshipfully striving
 [worshipful, writhing]
in its wordless song.
 [in ecstatic song.]

Could any other fruit [What
other fruit]
gratify like this? [could satisfy
like this?]

Ah, love—
to devour thee is bliss!

(Draft 5)

Velvet split peach,
so juicy,
overripe,
liquid and fragrant
in the soft-sighing night.

Plucked-open fruit-bowl
to wallow within.
Slippery nectars
smear lips, nose, and chin

as sticky-soft flesh
slides 'neath a tongue
wordlessly writhing
in worshipful song.

What other night-treat
could satisfy like this?

Ah, love—
to devour thee is bliss!

(Draft 6)

Velvet split peach,
so juicy,
overripe,
liquid and fragrant
in the soft-sighing night,

a plucked-open fruit-bowl
to wallow within
as slippery nectars
smear lips, nose, and chin.

A mouth most adoring,
its reverent kiss
is given
so slowly
to the sweetest of flesh

as warm sticky softness
slides 'neath a tongue
wordlessly writhing
in worshipful song.

What other night-treat
could satisfy like this?

Ah, love—
to devour thee is bliss!

(Draft 7, Final)

Velvet split peach,
so juicy,
overripe,
liquid and fragrant
in the soft, sighing night,

a plucked-open fruit-bowl
to wallow within
as slippery nectars
smear lips, nose, and chin

and sticky-soft flesh
slides 'neath a tongue
wordlessly writhing
in worshipful song.

What other night-treat
could satisfy like this?

Ah, love—
to devour thee is bliss!