

Adam went a-picking Apples

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Adam stared out the window. He saw the apple tree in full season and ran to the door.

“Where are you going?” called Mother Terra.

“To the apple tree,” cried Adam, leaving the house. “Its time has come!”

“Only one,” shouted Mother after him, but Adam didn’t hear; he was too intent on running. He gazed into the tree. It was green leaved and large. The red fruit hung ripe and glistening. He mounted the branches and picked an apple. Perfect it was, no blemish or bruise, the ripe skin taut and shining. Cradling its roundness he opened his mouth.

“There’s a better one,” he thought, dropping the perfect apple. “I’m sure of it.”

Higher he climbed, plucking fruit left and right—but each one had a blemish, a worm hole, a bird peck, a scar where the wind had rubbed it against a branch. The more he looked the worse the apples became: unripe, split, diseased and rotten. The tree was useless.

From the window Mother watched Adam search the branches. Her face was calm, her eyes sad, and lightning flickered across her brow.

Adam gave up and climbed down. He searched the ground for the first apple, the perfect one. He found it in the long grass, bleeding from its fall.