

# A SOUR SOUR ORANGE

by PHIA ELSASS

*"If love was a fruit, neglect would be its bitter orange peel."*

*-a fictional quote created by ChatGPT in the voice of the renowned food critic, Anton Ego, from the movie Ratatouille, (2023.)*

Night I:

Your fingers tore under my skin, and I fell, tumbling under your pillow. Tonight, you do not notice me as you toss and turn. Tossing and turning. Turning and Tossing.

Night II:

Juicy and wet, I *squnch squatch squat*. Seeping into the sheets, you do not notice the smell as you stare at the stars you drew on the ceiling. You get juice in your hair.

Night III:

I am rancid, mush, moldy. I'm a mess. Is your love truly so blind you fail to notice me? You stare at photos under moonlight. Unblinking. Tear-stained cheeks. *Sniff sniff*.

Night IV:

My smell is unbearable. Acidic vomit and I are kin. Perhaps your nose loses its nerves as you lose your nerve. You pace about the room. *Tapping tapping*.

Night V:

A toxic waste under your pillow. Obsessive thoughts soaked up by my juices. You hold the pillow too tight—a replacement for something else. You reveal me,  
*"a midnight snack"*

