

What pleasure a question,

By Angie Macri

not an answer. She leaned
into the apple tree, which then
was evergreen, to the snake's
hands, sweet flesh, no need
to be ashamed. We share

and share alike, the peel
not loose like night on day,
but tight. She took the snake's
hands, diamondbacked,
and opened its question.

It was the first time she had
something to give, what
the man couldn't take, the first time
the man said please:
please let me have a bite.

He found the iron ore
and brought it home.
He found the coal under
the forest and lit it on fire
to watch it go

so the snake couldn't catch her
if she fell and she couldn't
hold anything but its tongue.
Never let the fire go out or else,
he warned, and she held on.

Source: *Poetry* (December 2017)