

Jim C. Wilson

*Flowering Late*

She was in her autumn when he came, bearing love, and a yucca plant. It stood guard at her bedroom window; the panicles, seedful and pendent, quivered. It was hard

for her to ignore the burst of long leaves, that fountain of green; had it been a child or a grave it would not have been better tended. That yucca entirely beguiled

and involved her and yet it did not flower until, years after, some soft lilacious blooms broke out, hanging like snow on the green daggers. And again she grew vivacious,

knew a pang of warmth, remembering how his love took root when she believed her fate was to pass her quiet years in brittle endurance; then at last it flowered, late.

from *The Loutra Hotel* (1988)