Untitled Poem No. 1

Barbara Robbins
Grand Valley State University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/amaranthus

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/amaranthus/vol1972/iss2/4
UNCLE BILLY
By David Olson

Uncle Billy went down then from the house that looked with jaundiced eyes on the night so hot it choked the sky black. He went past the hissing sewers and the whining street lamps and out of the town along the blackened artery called Larson Road.

Uncle Billy stared up at the star pimpled sky, the dark sky, the dead sky, the sky that looked like an open mouth that would shriek if it could breathe. Uncle Billy’s scalp prickled with maddening itches of sweat, he wiped his beaded face and stepped out into the meadow so spongy it seemed he walked on flesh. He walked on through the quaking field and down into the forest.

The half naked pines jutted up sharply as though nailed through the earth from underground. A faint breeze made the trees gasp and Uncle Billy heard the drooling of a distant brook. Stepping on branches that cracked like dried bones, Uncle Billy to a clearing. There was a woman pale and still lying naked on the cancerous moss. Hot as it was, butter wouldn’t have melted in Uncle Billy’s mouth as he went to her.

1.
Walking across these pale fields
I called back my hunger
while words crawled darkly,
stillborn cryptic arabesques
on the sterile page.
Voices choking up in me
I fell clumsy into the space
Left where you stood
wrapped coldly in the meager cloak
my knowledge of other worlds.
Your eyes are masked in emptiness
and look over my shoulder
to beyond.
Daylight soon.
Outside these walls the dancers
move in patterns
silently
slowly
singular
cautious not to touch
or see into another’s face.

— Barbara Robbins