“Bitter Fruit”

Southern trees bear a strange fruit,

(Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,)

Black body swinging in the Southern breeze,

Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

*5* Pastoral scene of the gallant South,

(The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,)

Scent of magnolia sweet and fresh.

(And the sudden smell of burning flesh.)

Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck,

*10* For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,

For the sun to rot, for a tree to drop,

Here is a strange and bitter crop.

—Abel Meeropol

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