

**Andrew Goodison**

**The Strangest Fruit**

The ocean bears the strangest fruit,  
oil slicked blood on a migrant route,  
floating flesh on southern seas,  
drifting in the evening breeze.

Fleeing from a sunburnt south,  
with bulging eyes and twisted mouth,  
the scent of sea salt, saline fresh,  
cuts the smell of fetid flesh.

Floating fruit for gulls to pluck,  
for wind to gather and rain to suck,  
for the sun to rot on surface chop,  
here is a strange and bitter crop.

The ocean bears the strangest fruit,  
oil slicked blood on migrant route,  
black bodies floating on the southern seas,  
black bodies drifting in the evening breeze.

After Abel Meeropol

Strange Fruit

1936