

Untitled

(For Wilson Harris)

I gather it in with dead arms, like harvest time
We trooped into the fields at first light
The lame, the crooked and frail, young men
Snorting like oxen, women trailing stiff
Cold children through mist that seeps
From mysterious wounds in the land.
We float like ghosts to fields of corn.
All day I am a small boy
Nibbling at whatever grain falls from my mother's breast
As she bends and weaves before the crop
Hugging a huge bundle of cobs to her body
Which flames in the sun,
Which blinds me as I look up from her skirt,
Which makes me reach like a drowning man
Gropes at the white crest of waves
Thinking it rope. I can no longer see her face
In the blackness. The sun has reaped my eyes.
I struggle to find her
In the blackness at the bottom of the sea
Where the brightest sunken treasure
Barely keeps its glow.

DAVID DABYDEEN