

Strange Fruit

By Lewis Allen (Abel Meeropol)

As sung by Billie Holiday in 1939 (Frankie Newton, trumpet; John Lewis, piano)

Southern trees bear strange fruit

Blood on the leaves and blood at the root

Black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze

Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

Pastoral scene of the gallant South

The bulging eyes and the twisted mouths

Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh

Then the sudden smell of burning flesh

Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck

For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck

For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop

Here is a strange and bitter crop