yaya Yao

turned

with thanks to Langston Hughes

in this place where the girl was loved into soft laziness her Ahma's dreams are the transluscent shells of deep fried fava beans crashing around her feet.

immigrant nightmares come to teeth, at Ahma's throat the granddaughter has become them wanting a job she's never heard of a lover with no standing an apartment.

keep warm and eat more are how she loves the flesh the girl is open to it, grateful

whispering yesterday she weaves a fine net of her disappointment. the girl is to cast it into Ahma's ambitions, the possibilities of this promiseplace the glistening of this frozen path.

to struggle so long and far, the absurdity of her obstacles now make her laugh, almost the granddaughter's desires: space, voice, mannish clothing they slice up her sleep

yaya Yao

she confronts them with prayer

realised in the girl's monthly fever is a current of words nothing seems able to press back more betrayal it is all in english even in the unconscious, it is all

it is simply confirmation the girl is a browning fruit, nestled in the humid folds of her weaving smooth skin bursts with liquid apology too heavy to fly from turning dreams

in these moments when the girl is lying with the sun out Ahma pauses to examine the shades of her turning, browns and yelllows, the patterns mold flowers to embrace her legacy will be jewelled with no stone she honours

for her fever, she feeds the child soup feeds herself and in ginger heat, they sweat.

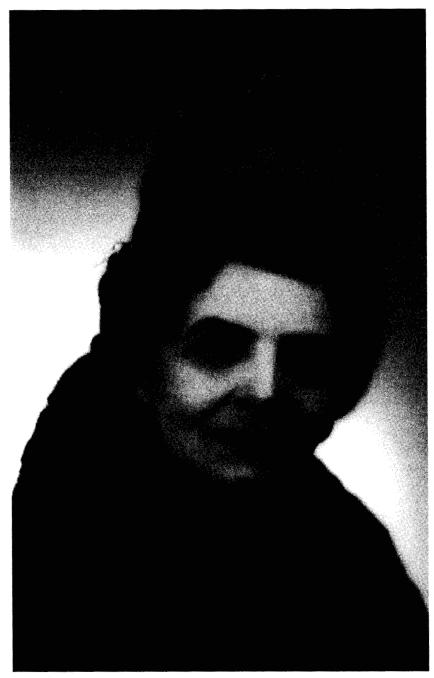


Photo of Wilhelmina Cullen, circa 1949. From the collection of K. Krasny.