

WILDA MORRIS

The Sun

conspicuous
inexhaustible
the circus-running sun
carries not one grain of soil

a spectacle of singular
aggregation
beheld through bluish haze

It seemed formed
of vapors, rising and falling
hot
infernally

thoughts like these trouble few

But still
under the influence of
light
a delirious throb

not a bit daunted
we gazed
entranced
tormented to madness
flailing and tossing

the margin
vanished

ABOUT THE POEM

“The Sun” was created from *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville (1851). About the poem and the process of composing it, Wilda Morris writes:

I selected *Moby-Dick* as my text because I am fascinated by Melville’s novel. I have written a whole book of poems responding to it. I narrowed my source down to Chapter 87, “The Grand Armada,” because that was the chapter I was assigned for a *Moby-Dick* marathon honoring Melville’s 200th birthday. I read through the chapter, marking words and phrases that interested me. When I came to the phrase “the circus-running sun,” I felt intuitively that I had found my focus. All the words in this poem occur in the order they appear in my source text. After I settled on the sun as theme, I reread the words and phrases I had marked before getting to that part of the chapter, and came up with the first two lines. Then I read what followed “the circus-running sun” to find the rest of the poem.

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