
CALLALOO

UNDER THE VIADUCT, 1932

He avoided the empty millyards,
the households towering
next to the curb. It was dark
where he walked, although above him
the traffic was hissing.

He poked a trail in the mud
with his tin-capped stick.
If he had a son this time
he would teach him how to step
between his family and the police,
the mob bellowing
as a kettle of communal soup
spills over a gray bank of clothes.

The pavement wobbled, loosened
by rain. He liked it down here
where the luck of the mighty
had tumbled,

black suit and collarbone.
He could smell the worms in their holes.
He could watch the white sheet settle
while all across the North Hill Viaduct

tires slithered to a halt.