

Paul Robeson at Stratford Station

King Paul sounds haemophilic east europe royal
 but sits Homburg on his throne at Stratford
 railway's curved iron bench trellises from
 the empire at its height before its blood wires blew
 stares at the twin silver ribbon lines how much
 confetti for a buck nigger started being a toy
 for El Supremos 'yes m' black pages
 restoration ladies big glistening smiles whilst
 they hide their fallen teeth behind fans painted Canton
 mighty lak a rose is mighty gloomy toted
 give us mighty lak a rose again and again and again
 taken to Moscow stares at them Bahzintine Spires
 speaks at Comyounist rallies clap nisk
 nisk Pravda Pravda or whatever you comyounists
 say he says will you please finito singing mighty
 lak a rose next step big new ruby for his turban
 scimitar special for the harem door uncastrated
 seasons don't exhaust negroes that's for Cowards
 them thar primitive drive so uninhibited like we're not
 oh clap clap clap strangles Desdemona
 but white rose deflorated
 blooms again at curtain up time tallow
 candles only burn strangled from Canada to Montana
 and Stratford where black hulks hamlet's green bronze
 feeble spurts fountains threw bread at the swans'
 petal hose like necks but here not seen
 drinks brown coffee sits at the ungimmick bench
 stares with eye blood red with fine sharp pencils'
 drawings wonders how a man 7 foot tall becomes
 a toy with neck in ruffs cathedral town choir boy.

Colin Style