A Failure

Wendell Berry

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.1028

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.
Two Poems by Wendell Berry

The Illumination of the Kentucky Mountain Craftsman, Chester Cornett

Alone, he has come to the end of the handing down of his art, the time having little use for such skill as his, his land seeded with lies and scars. So much has he suffered in his flesh that the end of time, the signs being fulfilled, the unsealing of the seals, seems only to be borne as he has borne the rest. On the mountain top, stunning him like the glance of God, the lightning struck him. Entering at the big tendons of his wrists, it has stayed in his body so that the insects no longer bite him, and in the night he is not afraid any more.

A Failure

They are gone, the wild lilies that stood here in the years past. For the loss of meeting them again, I am less. Will they return next year? Will I? I needed to find them here, unfailing, in balanced, tensed, mottled, airy, proud vibrance of ash.