

PHILIP C. KOLIN

**Mamie Till's Veil**

*on attending her son Emmett's funeral*

She wore a true icon of suffering  
a mother's shroud sealing  
in her shaded sight  
the mutilated mosaic  
that was Emmett.

Her son had come home;  
they had sewn tares in his eyes  
hers, too, mirroring the Chicago twilight  
and the foul hope that fate was a changeling.

Like a cloistered grill,  
dotted with speaking holes,  
her veil seeped a mother's words  
her lips tried to conceal  
from clicking news flashes.

Black butterflies dirged across her face  
sad comforters keening a son  
who will die before her eyes  
endlessly in the days ahead.