

Dudley Saunders, Shotgun

riding shotgun on the riverboat
watching eddies watching trees
in the water something floats
turns a drowning face to see
puts its rotting stare on me
and then he sleeps on by the bough

and there's a man who points his rifle out at me
between the branches his barrel
aiming through the reeds
the brambles on the bank
is the hair that's on his chest
hold my face against his belly
and I will get to rest

moonlight on my rifle glows
I am sweating in my clothes
or maybe just starting to bleed
gunpowder in my throat
I've been poised since I don't know
I still feel his spit on me

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