


2015

Autobiography 2

Cleopatra Mathis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/bpr>

 Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#), and the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mathis, Cleopatra (2015) "Autobiography 2," *Birmingham Poetry Review*. Vol. 42, Article 61.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/bpr/vol42/iss2015/61>

This content has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the UAB Digital Commons, and is provided as a free open access item. All inquiries regarding this item or the UAB Digital Commons should be directed to the [UAB Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication](#).

Cleopatra Mathis

Autobiography 2

You'll laugh when I say
I didn't know the color of my skin,
so much the child in that northern city.
I thought they would know me, anyone
dark could see my dark
in a place taking over white—
the Italians in their little enclave, the Jews
long departed for the suburbs.
I thought they'd love me for loving them,
their talk, their food,
my yes sir, no ma'am.
And when I fell there, shoved to the floor,
my students trampling over my body
like nothing in their path,
I was still homesick for my blackness, for the one
who would pull me into her lap, saying *Here girl,*
stop your crying, Sister Cle. And I
slept there: for years she let me sleep.