SHRIVELED
AFTER ESTER HERNANDEZ, SUN MAD
POETRY

Emmett Frank

Sun mad, red lament with a golden ring
Polluted waters and pesticides' sting.
Agribusiness' mask in a cunning disguise,
Skeletal figure, take purchase of this guise.

Unnatural growth, a haunting sight,
San Joaquin Valley raisins, now a fright.
1982 was not long ago– they can remember,
Poison that spewed from the water dispenser.

Insecti, miti, herbi, fungi, all sides—
Contributing factors to those who died.
Goul wearing devil, an ivory grin,
Basket of grapes, arms full of sin.

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The poem is best read alongside Ester Hernandez’s Sun Mad, a 1982 screenprint on paper.
Original artwork can be viewed on the artist’s website: esterhernandez.com