

LESSONS

For Rich and Corinne

Nothing to learn from cicadas,

nothing from their rare returnings?

Is it shyness that keeps them deep so long,

and longing that brings them up?

Does leaving their root sap lead to

worry about their debut?

Are they dying to be mature imagos,

squeezing out of the old, strutting into the new,

something with wings?

Birds love these drunken flyers, these red-eyed beauties,

defenseless, delicious, smelling of dirt,

time, and gratification delayed.

During their synchronized arthropod abundance they

chant nightly thanks for their short lives,

jumping into sex and carousing.

Should I then conclude that louder is better; that if not *now*,

then *when*?

Altogether mysterious, unforeseeable, unexpected,

they are much too deep to fathom.

Only once every 17 years, but then all at once, they emerge

and, by their multitudinousness, survive.

Should I learn to be more like them, living mostly

in the dark, waiting for my half day of hell raising?

If I molted now and then, abandoning my

old bones to the bark of a tree,

would it be good for my soul?