Christianne Balk

This evening, down By the river road I found a shell, A cicada dead. His eyes were coral, And frozen wide, Bright orange eyes Stared right at me. I picked him up, So the insect sat Poised on my palm, As if alive With olive armour Hard as bone-But he was light, Light as a leaf.

His amber wings Had two brown spots Like leaded glass Stained by smoke. All black and green The insect sat All green with a black Mask on his face. And because of the mask He seemed like one Who hid his head. A creature grown old, Never tired of disguise. And because of the moon He seemed to glow With phosphor inside.