

THE CRICKETS

moved their waterworld
under the piano. All fall I came down at 5 A.M.
to their sweet mad hundreds, the whole house
drowning. But each dawn ended the mindless
pull of that water, one oar and one oar and one oar—
B flat maybe if I had any sort of ear.
(My brother with perfect pitch would have turned his head,
listened like a screw to wood . . .)
Oh, it's hard how human they were, their bravado boring, eternal,
not like a clock though, more ingenious than that.
Or so I heard once—
if you counted how many per minute, every whirl
and wire, halved or quartered it, minus fifteen, you'd know
love like a thick drink or death's
exact reach or which angels wait with their catapult
for the brain to go dark
as sleep is dark, as years are.
But it's always night in there surely, the body
of the cricket a brief, high explosive.
Hardly any light
but that.