

On a still day  
a man sits on a hill above  
a black pond. In one corner of the pond  
a cluster of small white stones surrounds  
itself with fine white concentric hoops,  
as though the stones are humming, maybe  
humming out the last of the sun's heat, a pulse  
only the water can hear, the hoops a little  
amphitheater of applause.

He thinks the stones also resemble  
a cluster of spider eggs, the embryonic spiders  
already envisioning webs, stitched  
in the shape of sound waves,  
an idea they have caught from the air,  
from the humming of stones, an idea  
more nutritious than any mosquito.

The man thinks one needs to  
conjure and taste the flavor of a barely  
heard idea, the idea, say, of a maple seed,  
that one-winged angel who can only whirl  
downward, whose sole intent is not  
to escape heaven or visit earth on a  
mission of comfort or warning  
but to bury itself in darkness, flutter there  
imperceptible as a small tongue,  
like the tongue of a brook trout or a child  
after four months' gestation, a tongue  
wanting only to speak by slow acting,  
humming to itself politely,  
saying, excuse me, pardon me,  
excuse me, becoming a little trowel to  
lever and wedge a conduit,  
imagining being pierced  
to the xylem and phloem by a cardinal's call,  
and tasting rain in April in its splitting buds.