

## *Lying Awake with the Windows Open*

MAIRÉAD BYRNE

After you left I heard car doors closing  
across the river in Lafayette.  
I heard crickets like ratchets. I heard  
footsteps coming softly up the street  
and down the street and through all  
the alleyways. I heard shiny green  
leaves load with raindrops and spill.  
I heard the town grumble deep in its throat.  
I heard darkness congregating in clumps  
like infantry at ease, the nervous gear-  
shifts of drivers circling for cigarettes.  
I heard email arriving like an elevator  
at the right floor. I heard insects  
colliding against furniture, the din  
of the drowsing house. I heard  
my own careful breathing, the sky  
opening out above Fort Ouiatenon,  
the scraping of trees against air.

*To Mark*