

The Sound of Night

Maxine Kumin

And now the dark comes on, all full of chitter noise.

Birds huggermugger crowd the trees,
the air thick with their vesper cries,
and bats, snub seven-pointed kites,
skitter across the lake, swing out,
squeak, chirp, dip, and skim on skates
of air, and the fat frogs wake and prink
wide-lipped, noisy as ducks, drunk
on the bloozy black, gloating chink-chunk.

And now on the narrow beach we defend ourselves from dark.
The cooking done, we build our firework
bright and hot and less for outlook
than for magic, and lie in our blankets
while night nickers around us. Crickets
chorus hallelujahs; paws, quiet
and quick as raindrops, play on the stones
expertly soft, run past and are gone;
fish pulse in the lake; the frogs hoarsen.



Now every voice of the hour -- the known, the supposed, the strange,
the mindless, the witted, the never seen --
sing, thrum, impinge, and rearrange
endlessly; and debarred from sleep we wait
for the birds, importantly silent,
for the crease of first eye-licking light,
for the sun, lost long ago and sweet.
By the lake, locked black away and tight,
we lie, day creatures, overhearing night.

http://moodle2.berea.k12.oh.us/pluginfile.php/45537/mod_resource/content/1/Teasdales%20There%20Will%20Come%20Soft%20Rains.pdf