

Every morning the redwoods rain down on themselves

Each circle of children

The geometry of loss

A onetime mother now gone

The middle empty

But still

The symbology of success

The sprouts

All grown up, standing together

Having captured the fog in their tangled branches

The air is wet with possibilities

Another form of genealogy

A burl, a small curl of cancer

Waiting patiently for the fall

The shallow-rooted elders provide

Each now-downed tree a perfect germination

--If only human illness worked this way--

But despite the sprout and the burl

What the redwoods really need is fire

Each seed blooms in the intense heat

Space made on the forest floor--the flames

Clearing all the underbrush

The redwoods will be spared

Mostly fireproof they say

Unless their skin is broken

The incessant pecking of the birds and bees

The disappointment of their progeny

The question remains though: how can the trees

Stand it, why is the forest not filled with the sound of screams?

Every morning the redwoods rain down upon themselves

Hopefully only enough to feed the shallow roots

So that when the fire comes, they will not boil

The steam within bursting out