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# Letter with a Black Border

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## LETTER WITH A BLACK BORDER

Black centipedal bugs  
round the corner of a feather,  
turning their bodies like silverfish—  
otherwise they might be buses  
disappearing down a dark street.  
To them it is crow city,  
pinions that may last as long as a building.

I could mail this letter there.

I was going to send you the green trees  
but they were shaking.  
I wanted to give you the wheat fields of Washington  
but the Whitmans were massacred.  
And the rattlers took everyone  
the long way home.  
And the squirrels ran down  
like snow in spring.  
All of the rivers had battles;  
I wanted to send you the trees  
that hid the heroes.

The wild mint sends its own purple message  
on runners.

Along an elegant white rib one vermin goes  
like a hearse over the bridge  
in the city.

Its lights are on  
but you do not know  
a single one of the mourners.