

Insect Country (A)

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A trail of anything – insects, hamburgers, bicycles,

popsicles, miniature lightening bolts, road maps – anything, all of it, all

lined up insidiously, all imagining the smell of my back, envisioning it,

bare, exposed to the light, sunlight, moonlight, halogen, fluorescent,

all of it – seeing it, wanting it, nearing, fighting for, quietly, no – silently,

crowding, my small, and –

Ladybug

for Takako Arai

I am looking for my friend who promised to meet me on this street at a time that's right about now, except we failed to specify exactly at which part of the block we would meet, and even then it should not be a problem because I know exactly what my friend looks like and I am not seeing

her at all anywhere on the block. I ask around, to the local shopkeepers, but they haven't seen her either and I look around some more and I still don't see her but fortunately everyone has cell phones and so right then she calls and says to look behind me, and I do and I still don't see her, and she says look down, and I do and I still can't find her, and she says she is under that pile of swarming ladybugs right there and I am horrified but she says she is having a good time and that I should come

and join her and I walk away and that was
the sad end of our friendship.

Couch

for Maggie Siegel

After countless days and nights of living together, a couple decides to get divorced. It takes a little over a few hours of negotiating over their material possessions before they give up and decide to call the ants. She gets on the phone and calls up her ants, he gets up and calls his ants from

his cell phone. The ants arrive at 8am on the following Monday, and quickly set to work. Around 4pm, the two return and enter gingerly, wondering if any progress has been made. While questions still fly about the room as to what will happen to the refrigerator, the records, and the television, they find that the couch has been broken down into small chunks, neat little couch chunks, all thanks to the his and her ant set they had received as a wedding gift.

Parade

from Chris Martin

Today is a unique holiday, commemorated by a parade of black, four-legged stools going down the closed-off street. All the neighborhood ants come out to take a look, most of whom take a very critical stance.

The Cannibal

from Jack McLean

has made his latest killing, he sits down with his fork and special knife, all excited about digging into the flesh, the chewy stomach, the long intestines. When he bites into an intestine, he is startled to find it stuffed with live, undigested ants, and has no idea what to make of this new and bewildering situation.

Girl Talk

We are sitting around the table eating and drinking and exchanging stories about flashers, gropers, underwear thieves, your general assortment of urban perverts. When I tell the story about the man who came up to me and opened up his bag and offered me one of a teeming million wig-

gling ants in his bag, the whole table goes
silent and I am reminded all over again
how hard it is to get along with the women
in this country.

These poems have been published in the following publications:

“A trail of anything” Columbia Poetry Review, 2005

“Ladybugs”: Onion Union, June 2006

(“Parade”: Conduit)

“The Cannibal”: Twaddle

“Girl Talk”: RealPoetik, March 2006

This book is dedicated to Yu and Susumu and Kenjiro, and Kyong-Mi and Naoki and and and Chris, Chris, and and and Che, and and and Adrienne and John.

Cover art: Chris Martin

This book is number ___ of 50.