

first born in the new millennium

1.
dimly visible
through the outer walls
of the dust-colored ootheca
 twenty fetal cockroaches begin
 to move: blattarian eyes,
 mouthparts, antennae
 and legs

they have pushed themselves
into the narrow
seam of the egg capsule –
 gulping air –
and, yes, they inflate!
nearly doubling their size –
 expanding –
until they spill out

2.
they were abandoned
by their mother on some dark
edge of the universe –
 in the crevice between
 floorboards and a leaky pipe

with spasmodic twists and turns
 they must tear themselves
 free from thin, membranous pellicles

3.
the new millennium begins
and within the first
minute of the official clock on 3rd Street
 the cockroaches emerge
 like a gang of young teens
 having crawled out of their bedroom
 windows to meet in the park –

an embryotic molt

4.
and they will molt again
and again – bloating their bodies
to slip out and eat
replicas of their former selves –

until they have wings

cockroaches have been doing this
millions of years
before the age of dinosaurs
and little has changed

they are creatures with a brain that travels
from one end of their bodies to the other –

they know
survival

5.
the cockroaches do not care
about the city's 3rd street clock

they do not keep count
of hours or days

they do not know
who was born first

they have no use
for calendars

unless there is nothing
left to eat

from *blue crow*