

From *Myrmecology*

When you have seen one ant, one bird, on tree, you have not seen them all. -E.O. Wilson

Army Ants

Deep in the bivouac the minims moved the brood.
They tried to hold us, we wingless virgin drones.
But from the formicarium we went in the night,
abandoned that humdrum maze with our cunning.
Over the glass gap, we linked a living bridge –
the transient womb a body of bodies.
One by one we weave together easy as twine
and escape within our ever-respiring nest.

Honeypot Ants

From the ceilings of our tiny tunneled chambers, we hang.
Workers bring their parcels – drops of toothsome honeydew
fallen from foreign floral nectaries. Relentlessly, they feed
us until our bellies swell into strange spherical silos and we
cannot be moved. When the rains did not come, we saved
them with our stomached crops, disgorged the hallowed
nectar from our abdomens – we precious repletes. And after
they guzzled us dry, they devoured our brittle bodies, our
sweet corpulence – we mealy martyrs of this lean season.

Jack-Jumper Ants

Marooned by desert winds, she shrank
below my rock – cuddled her slender body
to its crevices. From a distant mound of fire-
ground gravel I pounced, pierced her banded thorax
and met her tremor with my venom. Her legs curled
and she spread her papery wings. I summoned
my scavenging sisters with a sweet, funereal song.

