

**Squirrel (squirm)**  
**by Tanya Korigan**

heavenly host of dead flies fallen  
after hours of fury, battling at screens

– or minutes: what is the length  
of a fight to the death for a fly? –

lifting feet to sky in the grooves of window  
where in darker seasons the storm windows go

like so many small pets  
waiting an eternity  
to have their bellies rubbed.

also here, in the house shuttered up four years  
a single mouse caught in a trap

a tollund man, voodoo mummy,  
a babe blackened as though burnt

or in desiccation  
shrunk to a second infancy

only scat shows that once a family or tribe  
scurried these baseboards –

now the best and worst of his or her kind  
a curled black cashew creature.

no living thing's passing simple since a death  
so tenuous it may not have occurred:

newly-birthing squirrel, scald-pink, light-blind,  
its spine reaching and retracting like coral

for a mother and nest which  
may never  
be retrieved

the baffled unknowing, the bitter  
blessing of not knowing,

the seed scattered to an uncertain end.