

Below the Surface of Things

by Carl Santoro

I discovered it
as a low moan
layered under the
rattle of an
air-conditioner's fan.

If I aimed
my brain to
aim my hearing
I could select
only the hum

I will keep it
as an invisible
pet of sorts
I deem it white
it is everywhere

I will beckon it
to come to me
when things
get rough
when times are hard

I will float
with it to
places safe
free from
dangerous thoughts

The hum is soothing
only I can hear it
I can hear it
when I want to
it masks that other sound

The other is dark
it takes my hum
and lowers it
if I cannot hear it
I will lose control

I need it now
I can't hear it
I can't see it
I will be lost
I am on my own

But wait
the cricket
the heartbeat,
the pulse of
the darkened earth

Replaces the soft hum
with its sad cry
of loneliness
I breathe to
its rhythm

The white hum
leaves and waits
til morn and for now
the shrill black hum

rules the mind

The early summer
morning comes
and with it the
cicadas, crickets and birds
a new hum emerges

But not of them
it is the highway
like a river humming through
to places of toil
a multi-colored hum of hopes and dreams

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