

# 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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