It was as if we were thrown into a smelting furnace. My friend had skin hanging down like the meltings of a candle. Many ran to the cool of any water they could find, hurled themselves into sewers or headed for the River Ota which soon was thick with the dead and dying. Some died on the river bank, their heads in the water having used their last surge of earthly energy for a drink.

OTHER APRILS

my father coming
came at lunch to
watch As The World
Turns as Otter Creek
got higher logs
slammed in the
whirlpool blue
wool got tighter
as I ate white
brownies, curled
into dreams on my
lilac bed after
Robin Senecal,
skinny as a
weasel, said he
wouldn't go with
me to the Junior
Women's Club dance
Only fingers in books
seemed warm or real

CICADA

hogwood area
a continuous ring
underground for 17 or
13 years you can't
hear anything else
the male makes
the noise he wants
a woman they shed
their casings coming
out after 17 years
make a strange crunch
walking over what
they've left like
a president kept
underground from his
birth they
sound like water
or machines

PREJUDICE

he wore it like
a badge that
scratched the
clothes of
whatever woman
he held, snagged
lips skin
trees polished
till it glowed
then passed
down like a
family heirloom

— Lyn Lifshin

Niskayuna NY