



1984

## Forecast

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Forecast

The snail moves slowly  
up the trunk  
of our sugar maple,  
leaving a sticky rainbow trail  
for early-morning explorers  
to follow with their fingers:  
a phosphorescent alphabet of horrors  
done in braille.

The fireflies  
have been alive  
for two weeks now,  
flashing their lanterns  
in the summer air,  
tiny mobile lighthouses.

And I have seen dark ladies  
walking west in twilight,  
gathering foxfire.  
I have smelled their musky odor  
as they passed.

And the sun,  
going down  
has lately seemed  
a funeral pyre.  
Each night the flames lick higher.  
No vaccination will save us from  
consumption.

*Carla Thomas*