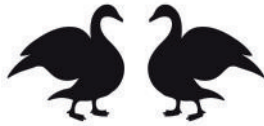


WOODPECKERS



Their flight paths are hardly known
but they first alight on the house wall,
then the wooden railing, and one by one
step up to the outer door of my father's
room; knock, knock, knock.
One of them turns around, flies back
up the wall. The other one,
just the same restless stripe—
a warm brown, gray, black-white;
gets back the same tapping sound
from the shut door—ticktock peck,
skilling patience to flying
an angle of possible sight.
The third watches
through the rush of this moment
set deep in the wall,
his eye amused, his feathers aflutter.
Meanwhile, these two look at each other
and the door with no one in view,
fly into the next guava tree
by the look-alike house door,
its answering silence, or perhaps more.