

LEONORE WILSON

The Monarchs

The creek bed, near-brittle rock
Of bone, and yet the butterflies ripple,
Rush over the ferment of sludge;
Step-queens of canticles,
They will not die of thirst.
And the sun moves back as they clot
The patch, striving, shuddering
Like those in melancholy not
Sleeping, captured by images
Of those lost to death and fetching
Their images like water, as if
Saying: I dare be you in the darkened
Earth, I will drink you back to me
Through every crack that rises
In the world, I will be the wine
On your invisible lips, I will be
The small god coming to your rescue.
So in the curve of a million lights
We will fly up the bare banks
To pleasure's consummation: one
Above the full-foliage colored shore.