

Jim Harter, Animals: 1449
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THE PRISONER

In the night a baby bat
brown flittermouse with wings
carried in unknowingly
with evening firewood
prisoner in the house.

Seeking an exit, little bat flies
in a jump-flight with echo-soundings
climbs door, clings upside down

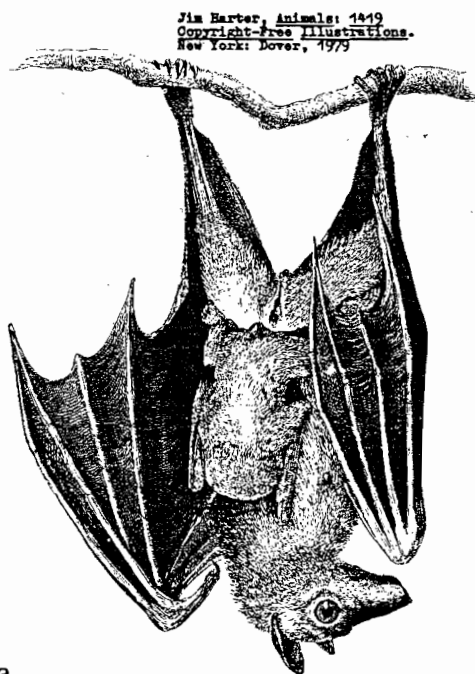
Dependent on milk, baby screams ultra-sonically for its mother
Outside, mother from bat colony
in our attic
screams ultra-sonic instructions
to her hungry baby

With folded wings
it could squeeze through
three-quarter inch hole in screen.
But the door is closed.

Night-long we sleep undisturbed
in charged silence
deaf to mute cries
unaware of our prisoner.

Next morning
I start to sweep out a brown crumpled leaf
on doorsill
it is baby bat
starved to death

Baby bat
brown flittermouse with wings
of what use are wings
when the door is closed?



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