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?

NELL LUTZ
Berkeley, California

THE PRISONER

NELL LUTZ
Berkeley, California