

The Moth's Serenade from *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman

Porch	Porch	Let's marry for a trice!	Let's marry for a trice!
light,	light,	Porch light!	Porch light!
hear my plight!	hear my plight!	Let's meet	Let's merge
I drink your light		Let's merge	Let's meet
like nectar	like nectar	Let's live for love!	
	Dream of your	For light!	For light!
by day	by day		
Gaze in your eyes			
all night	all night		
Porch light!	Porch light!		
	Bright paradise!		
I am	I am		
your seeking			
circling	seeking		
sighing	circling		
lovesick	sighing		
knight			
You are	You are		
	my soul's		
my soul's	desire		
desire	my prize		
my prize	my eye's		
	delight		
Porch light!	Porch light!		
My shining star!			
	My compass needle's North!		
"Keep back," they say	"Keep back," they say		
I can't!			
"Don't touch," they say	"Don't touch," they say		
	I must!		
Porch light!	Porch light!		
Let's clasp	Let's kiss		
Let's kiss	Let's clasp		

Grasshoppers *from Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices by Paul Fleischman*

Sap's rising

Ground's warming

Grasshoppers are

Grasshoppers are

hatching out

hatching out

Autumn-laid eggs

splitting

Young stepping

into spring

Grasshoppers

Grasshoppers

hopping

hopping

high

Grassjumpers

Grassjumpers

jumping

jumping

far

Vaulting from

leaf to leaf

leaf to leaf

stem to stem

stem to stem

plant to plant

Grass-

bounders

bounders

Grass-

springers

springers

Grass-

soarers

soarers

Leapfrogging

Leapfrogging

longjumping

longjumping

Grasshoppers.

Grasshoppers.

***Fireflies** from *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman*

Light	Light
	is the ink we use
Night	Night
is our parchment	
	We're
	fireflies
fireflies	flickering
flitting	
	flashing
fireflies	
glimmering	fireflies
	gleaming
glowing	
Insect calligraphers	Insect calligraphers
practicing penmanship	
	copying sentences
Six-legged scribblers	Six-legged scribblers
of vanishing messages	
	fleeting graffiti
Fine artists of flight	Fine artists of flight
adding dabs of light	
	bright brush strokes
Signing the June nights	Signing the June nights
as if they were paintings	as if they were paintings
	We're
flickering	fireflies
fireflies	flickering
fireflies.	fireflies.

Cicadas from *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman

Afternoon, mid-August			cadas
Two cicadas singing	Two cicadas singing		whirring
	Air kiln-hot, lead heavy	whir-	
Five cicadas humming	Five cicadas humming	ing	ci-
Thunderheads northwestward			cadas
Twelve cicadas buzzing	Twelve cicadas buzzing		pulsing
	Up and down the street	pulsing	
the mighty choir's	the mighty choir's	chanting from the tree tops	chanting from the tree tops
assembling	assembling	sending	
Shrill cica-		forth their	sending
das	Ci-	booming	forth their
droning	cadas	boisterous	booming
	droning	joyful noise!	joyful noise!
	in the elms		
<i>Three years</i>	<i>Three years</i>		
spent underground			
	among the roots		
in darkness	in darkness		
Now they're breaking ground			
	and climbing up		
	the tree trunks		
splitting skins			
and singing	and singing		
	Jubilant		
rejoicing	cicadas		
	pouring out their		
fervent praise	fervent praise		
	for heat and light		
their hymn	their hymn		
sung to the sun			
Cicadas	Cicadas		
	Whining		
whin-			
ing	ci-		

Honeybees from *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman

Being a bee is a pain. I'm a worker I'll gladly explain. I'm up at dawn, guarding the hive's narrow entrance then I take out the hive's morning trash then I put in an hour making wax, without two minutes' time to sit still and relax. Then I might collect nectar from the field three miles north or perhaps I'm on larva detail feeding the grubs in their cells, wishing that <i>I</i> were still helpless and pale.	Being a bee is a joy. I'm a queen I'll gladly explain. Upon rising, I'm fed by my royal attendants, I'm bathed then I'm groomed. The rest of my day is quite simply set forth: I lay eggs, by the hundred. I'm loved and I'm lauded, I'm outranked by none.	Then I pack combs with pollen – not my idea of fun. Then, weary, I strive to patch up any cracks in the hive. Then I build some new cells, slaving away at enlarging this Hell, dreading the sight of another sunrise, wondering why we don't all unionize. Truly, a bee's is the worst of all lives.	When I've done enough laying I retire For the rest of the day. Truly a bee's is the best of all lives.
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House Crickets *from Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices by Paul Fleischman*

We don't live in meadows
crick-et
or in groves

crick-et
Others may worry
crick-et
about fall

crick-et
Spring, to house crickets,
crick-et
means no more

crick-et
Summer's the season
crick-et
for pie crumbs:

crick-et
Pumpkin seeds tell us
crick-et
fall's arrived

crick-et

We're house crickets
living beneath
this gas stove
crick-et

crick-et

We're scarcely aware
of the seasons at all
crick-et

crick-et

crick-et

than the time
when fresh greens
once again grace the floor
crick-et

crick-et

peach, pear, boysenberry
quince, apricot, plum
crick-et

crick-et

while hot chocolate spills
hint that it's
winter outside.

No matter the month
we stay well fed and warm

For while others are ruled
By the sun in the heavens,

brings

we live in a world
of fixed Fahrenheit
crick-et

our unchanging

steadfast and stable
bright blue
pilot light.

No matter the month

unconcerned about cold fronts
and wind chill and storms.
For while others are ruled

whose varying height

the season's procession,
we live in a world

crick-et
thanks to *our* sun:

reliable

bright blue
pilot light.

Chrysalis Diary from *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman

November 13:

Cold told me
to fasten my feet
to this branch,

to shed my skin,

and I have obeyed.

to dangle upside down
from my perch,

to cease being a caterpillar
and I have obeyed.

December 6:

the color of leaved and life,
has vanished!

lies in ruins!
I study the
Brown new world around me.

Green,
has vanished!
The empire of leaves
lies in ruins!

I fear the future.

I hear few sounds.

Have others of my kind
surveyed this cataclysm?

Swinging back and forth
in the wind,
I feel immeasurable alone.

January 4:

I can make out snow falling.

For five days and nights
it's been drifting down.

I find I never tire of
watching the flakes
in their multitudes
passing my window.

The world is now white.

Astounding.

Astounding.

I enter these
wondrous events
in my chronicle

knowing no reader
would believe me.

February 12:

Unable to see out
at all this morning.

and branches falling.

ponder their import,

and wait for more. and wait for more.

I wonder whether
I am the same being
who started this diary.

like the weather without.

my legs are dissolving,

my body's not mine.

This morning,
a breeze from the south,
strangely fragrant,

a faint glimpse of green
in the branches.

An ice storm last night.

Yet I hear boughs cracking

Hungry for sounds
in this silent world,
I cherish these,

miser them away
in my memory,

March 28:

I've felt stormy inside

My mouth is reshaping,

wings are growing
my body's not mine.

a red-winged blackbird's
call in the distance,

And now I recall
that last night
I dreamt of flying.

Water Striders from *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman

Whenever we're asked
if we walk upon water
we answer

To be sure.

Whenever we're asked
if we walk on it often
we answer
Quite often.

All day through.

Should we be questioned
on whether it's easy
we answer

A snap.

Should we be told
that it's surely a miracle
we reply
Balderdash!

Nonsense!

Whenever we're asked
for instructions
we always say
and do as we do.

Whenever we're asked
if we walk upon water
we answer

Of course.

It's quite true.

Whenever we're asked
if we walk on it often
we answer

Each day.

Should we be questioned
on whether it's easy
we answer
Quite easy.

It's a cinch.

Should we be told
that it's surely a miracle
we reply

Rubbish!

Whenever we're asked
for instructions
we always say
Come to the pond's edge

and then put down another,

Believe me, there's no call
at all to be nervous

But by that time our student
no matter how prudent
has usually

sunk from view.

Put down one foot
resting upon the thin film
on the surface.

as long as you're reasonably
mindful that you –

But by that time our student

has usually
don't ask me why
sunk from view.