WHO WE ARE WHEN AUGUST COMES

Seventeen years you and I were eight inches below ground, waiting for summer in the northeast like cicadas sucking roots and staying close to radicle. It was what everyone did, back then: find provisions that would last
  the reproductive years
  the growing seasons
  the gradual peeling apart
feed
buy a split-level with an island in the kitchen
swim around sex and the children
slap photos on the fridge – Lake June in Winter – with magnets that leave scratches
Are we there yet? How much longer? I don’t want to share a bedroom with her, can’t we go home?
wonder who is speaking at the end of the day, if anyone.

So now we come upon emergence
crawling out from our hibernation and cable bill, our parent-teacher confirmations, our Friday night sliders at Applebee’s, our hours of survival and sing – a burgeoning buzz in ears
that rings of age like cut trees. We are too old to mate now, but I call, listen for your skin hardening, attend to your response.

--Michelle Lee