

## The Rains Begin in Western Kenya

All through the dry season,  
I swallow my tears.  
I don't sleep,

eat without tasting,  
wander the house  
without seeing my children.

Across the Atlantic,  
my mother has died.

Melodies from Mozart's *Requiem*  
wind through my brain.

One morning, the air  
tastes different—  
a rustle of wind.

On the flame tree,  
scarlet blossoms ignite  
as if to burn the branches to ash.

Out of nowhere, giant toads  
appear like stones,

stick out their tongues  
to the sky.

Night. Thunder.  
A waterfall  
of rain.

From the lake,  
columns of flying ants  
rise into the streaming sky,

fly over marshes,  
villages, drop  
into the mouths

of toads, dogs, children,  
fill everything that is empty.