Dear Sue, upon arriving in Manoa, Hawai‘i

Your sister in Alaska
  tried to make herself
  feel less jealous
  about my going
  and her staying
  by giving me big warnings
    about the cockroaches and geckos.

Testosteroaches a foot tall
  standing on their hind legs
  boxing like kangaroos
 Not just sourcelessly appearing in awkward places
  scurrying without the speed of sound
 but flying on semi waveless wings
  in the face of things
  and hapless renters.

The Geckos were Gone
  leaving small evidence
  of an earlier presence
   - maybe gone south
 Even the tropic has a winter.

Cockroaches
  with no thought of the new millennium
 scuttled with their shoes off
   searching for whisky and peanut jam
 Unrespectable, no giants these
 puny microaches
 smaller than a respectable ant
 Hoping to irritate and control
 with their speed and persistence
 they looked foolish
 in their tiny scuttle.

At my dinner now
  I stuff small scraps in the garbage disposal.
     And leave them there.
Evening is bliss.
   All the cockroaches and cockhumans
throughout the islands
quietly, shoelessly sliding about

Bedtime is quieter still
Even when rain dashes
and wind whirrs the treetops, before they stop.

At midnight
just before the witch hoots
I soundlessly slink down the stairs.

Pausing, on the kitchen floor
I listen to them
make very small chat
among themselves
They whisper and giggle and chomp and burp
I open the door beneath the sink
it makes the tiniest squeak
Sudden silence now inside the disposal machine
as roach ears stretch
to locate the enemy -

I flick down the switch
and join the roar of metal parts with my own
flushing torrential water
through the suddenly smashed bodies
Black bits swept away with yellow fibres of banana skins
and burnt grains of wheat
into the colourless night of sewer -
The crackling, snapping stops.

My heart pounding now -
frightened by my own unbuddhishness -
I float back to bed,
to sleep as can only those
who kill all their enemies every day.