

FROG-TAMING

Any fool can learn to catch a frog-
the trick is to do it blindfolded,
lying there, in the wet grass,
listening for the hop and the croak.

And the real trick is to keep it alive,
not strangle it, or squeeze it dead-
that way you can take it home
and tame it, make it your pet.

But early on, keep the cat locked up.
Soon she'll get used to her odd sibling-
meanwhile put a bit of time into
picking a suitable name for a frog.

And research a frog's ideal diet,
also the best sleeping arrangement-
water somewhere nearby, of course,
and plenty of air, plenty of air.

Be sure to play the frog the right music
so it can learn hopping tricks-
ones it can reproduce on the cleared table
when you have dinner-guests around,

while you find your blindfold and put it on,
holding your hands out and grasping
the air the frog has just vacated-
making it clear you're deliberately missing.



Poem © Matthew Sweeney. Artwork © Carolyn O'Neill.

Signal
EDITIONS

Véhicule Press, Montréal, 2002.

Matthew Sweeney
MATTHEW SWEENEY

A/P 6/6