

The Fable of the Cicada and the Ant
the early hours of the morning, my day is lost.

Oh, little demon, plague of my dwelling which I should like to have so peaceful, they say that the Athenians used to rear you in a cage to enjoy your singing at their ease! One we could do with, perhaps, during the drowsy hour of digestion; but hundreds at a time, all rattling and drumming in our ears when we are trying to collect our thoughts, that is sheer torture! You say that you were here first, do you? Before I came, you were in undisputed possession of the two plane-trees; and it is I who am the intruder there. I agree. Nevertheless, muffle your drums, moderate your arpeggios, for the sake of your biographer!

Truth will have none of the absurd rig-marole which we find in the fable. That there are sometimes relations between the Cicada and the Ant is most certain; only, these relations are the converse of what we are told. They are not made on the initiative of the Cicada, who is never dependent on the aid of others for his living; they come from the Ant, a greedy spoiler, who monopolizes every edible thing for her granaries. At no time does the Cicada go