

RINGING THE BELLS AT LAKE GENEVA

In that hill country, the opulent spruces
and random narrow roads were ours,

absolute green. When we rose at seven
to ring the bells that roused the others

to breakfast, we pushed and pulled each other
into sweaters; we ran to the courtyard.

There, the woman with the blond braid watched us
arch our song into the still morning,

watched us waken mothers and fathers
who lay exhausted from their late nights.

We pulled the knotted rope
that hung thick as our young arms,

straining until the heavy copper bells swung
back and forth in the chill dawn air,

ringing relentless and clear,
until the ground drenched our feet,

until even our parents stood there,
holding hands.