

*A bank of purple cloud presses the sunset  
down, down into fire and golden light.  
Up from the land rises Darkness.  
At the horizon there is a little string  
of highway lights, commercial buildings  
marking their place against the oncoming night  
But here in the overlook I am encompassed by it.*

*The color of the bee balm standing straight  
along the mowed edge of the meadow  
fades to lavender gray and then to  
no color I can see. The shapes of plants  
and a single tree hold their own  
against the burning sky. Lightning bugs  
appear. Their signaling occurs in the margins of my view:  
I turn to them and they are gone, to wink again  
in another place.*

*I am sending out my signal, too,  
into the universe like they are,  
to a face I only imagine, one  
I hope into existence, who will see and love  
my light, little though it is,  
tentative and timid in the dusk,  
but trusting the power of the darkness  
to let it shine.*

*Jane Cook Barnes lives and teaches in Naperville, Illinois (USA), where the midwestern landscape and the lives of her family give energy to her poetry.*