

## **Firebugs**

by Emily Lazar

Fat ones with the squishing centers, green  
fluorescence popped and spread  
by a kid brother over his dirty white T-shirt  
one August night in scratchy grass

Some unrulier child than he  
had taken a ragged bite out of the moon  
but left no lack of visibility and he was ready  
with grubby finger-stubs  
to grasp and extinguish their power sources:  
filmy fluid sealed between beating  
wings, like precious oil in lighthouse lamps

They were amber spies, their insides  
like kaleidoscopes, like  
lemon light born, reborn, in orbs,  
simply a sacrifice for a towhead scamp,  
their perfume-bottle bodies  
carelessly broken over clothing

by a child,  
to make him  
a selfish emulation  
so he too  
could shine in the dark

His mother's sigh deflated her,  
saying: "It'll come out in the wash,"  
the last trace of them,  
soft blazes ensnared by a clumsy carrier  
who smashed their backs for the gift of light

And they go  
out like a light, brother,  
they go out like a light,  
out like a light,  
like a light