

## VIDA CROSS

### *THE NIGHT*

This night is black

Even blacker when things are in it

The house across the street is a  
black house

The car resting in the yard is a  
black car

The man on his front stoop is a  
black man

He feels the air on his face  
a soft touch

A lightning bug runs into his cheek  
he sees  
black wings

He checks his breathing

If he can breathe in air  
nothing is near

Once the air feels used  
murky  
stiff  
something's there  
he tells himself

A door opens  
his face turns

He sucks in his last gulp  
holds his breath  
then smells the alcohol  
on his skin  
the cigarette smoke on his clothes

He sees his dark daughter  
lightly chasing  
the even darker firefly

Minor troubles  
they  
favored a mother  
who'd died inside  
when her daughters were born

His little girl danced around him  
around the car  
through the dark yard

He figured he was  
invisible  
too dark  
too drunk  
to be seen

Seated  
eyes half closed  
so he was almost gone