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Lampyridae

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Lampyridae

By Donna L. Emerson

As I walk down the June steps
of the farmhouse,
fireflies flash close to my face.

Droplets of light fill the night sky,
small lights coming toward me,
bobbling, dipping down, as far as I can see.

We used to catch them in jars, sit them
next to our beds until their lights went out
or pound nail holes in the jar tops so they'd
stay with us 'til morning.

Mating time, the males flashing, the females
close to the ground on the grass blades,
the bushes. If the lights grow closer together,
all is well for the next generation.

One large lightning bug
tries to come into our bedroom
window, knocking on the pane.
The room fills full with his clicking

sound and light, magnified by window glass.
He lightens our faces like a candle,
softening bedposts
and our startled eyes.