

Sitting beside a fire, the poet pleads for a sign

by [Spencer Clark French](#) in the [June 29, 2022](#) issue

Bumbling out of the night,  
something veers near the fire,  
wings seared swiftly away;  
it squirms in the suburbs of the blaze.

Oh, deathwish beetle,  
clutzy buzz of immolation,  
hard-backed, inadequate Shadrach . . .

When it stills, I place the shell  
on the pyre. Another dives, dies,  
smashing into a surrounding stone,  
writhes and writhes.

Flame-kissed Phyllophaga,  
acorn-armored Icarus,  
my faithful antiangel . . .

Then another with the same suicide piety.  
I cremate both. Another. It crashes  
into the singed grass, thrashing, winglessly,  
as it crawls back into the flame.

Little Junebug,  
oddball doombug,  
how to save you from your god?