

It is as black as
A panther's belly,
And songbirds have given way
To a symphony of crickets,
Whose music is heard only
By uneasy wanderers, dashing between refuges
And an audience of stars
Who glisten in approval.

This hour, I think,
Is still young. Only ten, and therefore,
Young as the youth,
Who, right now, are the only ones who sleep,
As young as the youth, whose eyes will one day
Marvel at the world they have missed.

The moon casts its shadow
As it peers, shy,
Blushing white,
From behind a curtain of branches.
It looks upon a world that changes
As Hour by hour slinks by,
Unnoticed behind a wall of black.

And so, eventually, morning must come
Morning *does* come.
But for now, it remains 10'o clock

An hour that stays

Almost forever.

— Elizabeth F., 10th Grade