

Night Fishing

Damp and cold and gray, mist surrounding them
as high above the unfathomable surface as they can see,
blurring the Indian Corn moon into phantom luminescence

as they drift without speaking, the purr of the outboard throttled,
grandfather, father and grandson, his first midnight on the lake,
shivering in the bow seat despite all the woolens.

Out of nowhere first there then there lunatic laughter
and owls echoing each other at some distance
the same unanswered question over and over.

The shush of lily pads or reeds on the sides of the boat
coming to rest near some predetermined shore,
the periodic whirl of reels unreeling,

the unexpected splashing a ways out then up close,
commotion in the flashlight beam as they net the catch,
unhook the lure from cold lips under unblinking eyes,

clip each one through the gills onto the stringer,
slip it overboard, turn out the light, settle back,
take a sip from the thermos, cast again into the darkness.