

***April Lindner***

## **Seen From Space**

Here's a photograph, patched from a series,  
of earth cast all at once in deepest night,  
the surface like an orange skin peeled flat  
so we can read its violet continents,  
its cobalt oceans blackening at their depths,

vast swaths of lavender at either pole,  
its features as familiar as our own,  
made up in unaccustomed shades. The point—  
there's an agenda here—is many points  
of incandescent light like glue-drenched glitter

on a preschool art project. Some spangles  
stand distinct as sequins—there's Sao Paolo,  
and here gleams Perth—but most melt into pools  
of quicksilver. See how the U.S.A  
and all of Europe glow in golden fishnet.

South America glistens at its coasts  
and Africa goes bare but for her toe rings.  
Japan and India, lit like Roman candles  
outshine China's cloak of sketchy threads.  
From this far off, our handiwork's a pretty

filigree to ornament the planet.  
Why think of skies gone wine red with our backwash,  
of how we've bored in deep for coal to burn,  
of awesome cavities we've left behind?  
Like cancer, we don't mean to harm our host.

Our nature bids us multiply and spread.  
Embellishing the canvas we've been given,  
we turn the earth into a neon sign  
to advertise our presence to the cosmos.  
We burn to know our place in so much darkness.