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Am Abend

Michelle Oakes

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AM ABEND

by **Michelle Oakes**

In the evening, little black ants trickle out,
shiver your fingers, tickle your throat,
disperse in your hair
like curls of smoke.

A man on the porch with his slow cigarette
romances the porch-swing.
His false mustache
is the color of smoke.

You must play the piano.
Little black ants, the sheet-music's notes,
itch like forgetting.
The man on the porch—

do you know him?
He watches for bombers, little black bats.
He treadles and smokes.
Just play the piano.

Bombers, like black little bats, itch out,
curl your fingers, shiver your throat,
disperse in a mustache
discolored by smoke,
Am Abend, Am Abend, Am Abend.