



## Dear You-in-the-Dark:

I want to tell you  
stories of my childhood,  
make it seem as if someone else  
carried the lantern. There was  
the summer of the garden party—  
when my father  
filled the lawn with air and light,  
gathered us together like pins on cork,  
thrust a lit torch  
into my wet hands, told me  
to scurry across the grass  
like a primrose, shimmy  
to the center, be the pinion of light.  
I was constellation's center—  
he was making stars on the earth  
—*stars!*— I pulled back the curtain.  
I've looked so many times.  
That night sky like a blanket  
pulled across the front of my gown.

—Mary Shelley Wollstonecraft