# Nostalgia (The Lake at Night) - BY LLOYD SCHWARTZ

[(16pt Font) Source: http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/249306](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/249306)

1 The black water.

Lights dotting the entire perimeter.

Their shaky reflections.

The dark tree line.

5 The plap-plapping of water around the pier.

Creaking boats.

The creaking pier.

Voices in conversation, in discussion—two men, adults—serious inflections

(the words themselves just out of reach).

10 A rusty screen-door spring, then the door swinging shut.

Footsteps on a porch, the scrape of a wooden chair.

Footsteps shuffling through sand, animated youthful voices (how many?)— distinct,

disappearing.

A sudden guffaw; some giggles; a woman’s—no, a young girl’s—sarcastic reply;

15 someone’s assertion; a high-pitched male cackle.

Somewhere else a child laughing.

Bug-zappers.

Tires whirring along a pavement... not stopping ... receding.

Shadows from passing headlights.

20 A cat’s eyes caught in a headlight.

No moon.

Connect-the-dot constellations filling the black sky—the ladle of the Big Dipper not

quite directly overhead.

The radio tower across the lake, signaling.

25 Muffled quacking near the shore; a frog belching; crickets, cicadas, katydids, etc.—

their relentless sexual messages.

A sudden gust of wind.

Branches brushing against each other—pine, beech.

A fiberglass hull tapping against the dock.

30 A sudden chill.

The smell of smoke, woodstove fires.

A light going out.

A dog barking; then more barking from another part of the lake.

A burst of quiet laughter.

35 Someone in the distance calling someone too loud.

Steps on a creaking porch.

A screen-door spring, the door banging shut.

Another light going out (you must have just undressed for bed).

My bare feet on the splintery pier turning away from the water.