

# Candles waking

by [Paul Willis](#) in the [June 17, 2008](#) issue

When I get up in the night to stifle  
a cough with hot tea, and make my way  
through the black terrain of the dining room,

there are candles waking in the dark,  
open eyes that never sleep:  
the blue glow of digital minutes

winking under the television,  
the coffee maker, the microwave.  
A laptop beams its single pulse,

and the mouse beside it arches  
over the red flame of a beating heart.  
The rat scratching away in the attic

suddenly seems superfluous,  
the stars outside the sliding door  
a vestigial redundancy.

When I wake in the night and cross  
to the greening numerals upon the stove,  
I voyage within my own fixed sphere,

my lonely festival of lights.