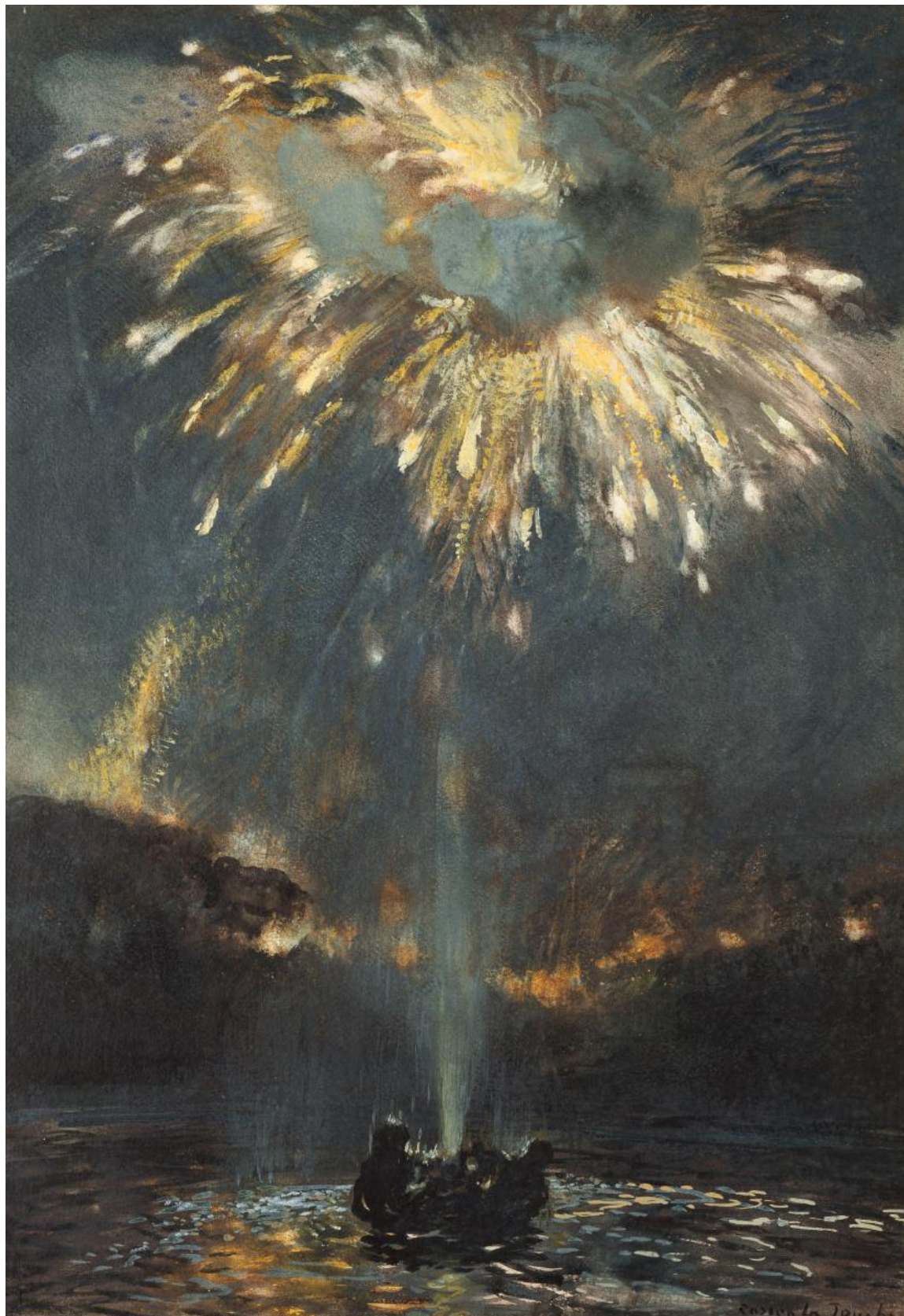


# July Explosion & More

By [Diane Webster](#) (August 2023)



## **July Explosion**

Firecrackers explode  
as a brave boy  
strings them together  
for bigger, louder  
"let's see what happens"  
until in reality  
raindrops ping, echo  
through the swamp cooler vents,  
and a wet sidewalk confirms  
it's a July day shower.

Of course, a rainbow arcs  
like a firework shot  
to light up the sky  
in ooh aah display  
even as an afterglow  
doubles as a reflection  
as thunder rolls in distant travel

heard again through  
the swamp cooler's vents.

## **String Unravels**

Like a trapped victim attempting  
discovery, escape  
the string unravels from the car's trunk,  
lies limply on the pavement  
like bread crumbs marking  
the path home  
or like a joke planted, luring

while laughter, finger-pointing  
hide.  
Hesitation lasts longer and longer  
until walking away hunched  
like after a kite wraps around  
the power lines flapping for assistance  
not coming, not coming.

## **Cigarette Gesture**

A half-smoked cigarette  
stuck in the car hood's  
seam, left for the homeless man  
incapable of bending  
down in the gutter  
to retrieve discarded butts.

A middle-finger gesture  
to non-smokers:  
"I'll be back!"

A Halloween finger  
smoked to the bone  
like a cadaver scratching  
its freedom from the engine  
compartment.

## **Pristine in Purple**

Grasshoppers clack and leap away  
as I wade into the hillside  
of fireweed pristine in purple.  
A wander of wonder steps through  
spikes blooming their own selves.

On the lake below anglers fish

from boats gliding across  
from shore to shore  
on upside down reflections—  
their voices drift upward  
with paddling and trout talk,  
but I see fireweed only  
as the hillside bursts into flames,  
and the lake waters shimmer.

## **Fear Tucked In**

At night streetlights  
stare  
with wild animal eyes  
caught in flashlight  
beam, unblinking,  
creating fight-flight fear.

A ghost body unseen  
behind those eyes,  
hope of identification  
sunken in darkness  
behind perpetual eyes.

What I can't see  
won't hurt me,  
isn't there.  
I close my eyes,  
wad the blanket  
over my head.

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**Diane Webster's** goal is to remain open to poetry ideas in

everyday life, nature or an overheard phrase and to write. Diane enjoys the challenge of transforming images into words to fit her poems. Her work has appeared in *El Portal*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *New English Review*, and other literary magazines. She also had a micro-chap, *Between Journeys*, published by Origami Poetry Press in 2022.

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