

DECODING 101

It's late. Elongated shadows crosshatch
my back yard, extend beyond definitions.
Black on black cryptograms I can't read.

At his desk, my neighbor's hunched silhouette
behind blinds he forgot to lower
lurches abruptly, catching my eye.
His darkness rises slowly. One hand
goes to his face, a single legible line
among hieroglyphics in a frame.

Overbearing, smart-alecky were words I had used
instead of foreign. I never liked him by day.
Now in this moment I recognize a lamed
and lonely brother. My warmth moves toward him,
a sudden kinship of knowing.
One deciphered blip on night's graph.

Tomorrow he will have a better neighbor.
Tomorrow I will introduce myself.

--Glenna Holloway