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Poem with Fragments of a Lost Language

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Gerry LaFemina

Poem with Fragments of a Lost Language

The carrier pigeons arrived earlier and cooed
their morse code messages from the window sill
while my cat paced, sulky, below.

Such dangers they risked for your greetings: voracious
raptors, storms, helicopters
airlifting crash victims to hospitals. I open

the screen and strap my reply
to their thin legs,
 one at a time. The forks
of their feet stab my finger each one of my notes
a line from this poem you'll have to piece together

like an archaeologist working with fragments

of a lost language: ancient tablets of papyrus
and all that dust. You've taught those birds *The Song of Songs*;
they sing it clearly while they wait.

My cat's tail parries back and forth, frustrated.

When they ascend I see the night sky reversed
dark constellations against a brilliance. I want to be

the song in their sharp beaks
later when they peck the seed from your palm.