



## Poem with Fragments of a Lost Language

## **Gerry LaFemina**

(Poetry Reading, April 23, 2007)

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 you 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.

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