

Mosaic
Julia Denton

Just outside town, the highway stretches through
the dark Tennessee countryside, gravel
driveways connecting us on either side
to the houses beyond. Closed car windows
block out the song of crickets. We speed past
too quickly for me to see, but I look
anyway, the squares of light on each house
hinting of late supper, homework, bathing,
watching TV in bed, reading a book.

From my hotel window in Manhattan
I saw giant rectangles spangled with
these squares of light, variations on theme.
Exotic yet familiar, they drew me
into a hundred worlds, all new language
with humanity in common, daily,
nightly, forever, the shadows moving
just out of sight, sending coded signals
I could interpret however I chose.

And now I walk my dog, suburban nights
deceptively peaceful, safety assumed
with childlike naiveté, happy endings
I choose for the lighted squares of hidden
life inside McMansion Lane. I think with
delight of the thousands of square lights I
have seen, will see, meals, parties, movement and
shadow, each lighted square a life, a tale
unknown, sparkling through the endless black sky.