

Dinty W. Moore

MY NEIGHBOR HAS NOT READ RAY CARVER

His thin black dog is out back, walking in circles. His wife, red-eyed,
stooped and sorry,
stands at the kitchen sink for no reason she can name. In his yard, his
lawn mower flung
open, pieces of red, shattered metal in his hand, my neighbor knows I'm
watching,
wonders what I think. His dog is working loose the rusted chain, and
my neighbor, who
has not read Ray Carver, stands beside the garage with its sagging roof,
and does not
know his life is art, his dog is symbol, his fragile wife is beauty in the
eyes of some
beholders. He does not know this, nor can he fathom what the hell to
do, where to turn,
how to stop the slow rot of timber, of despair, of wet metal. His dog
is out back, walking
in circles. His wife is red-eyed, threadbare, and none of them has a
blessed clue
what to do next, how to end the story, where to find that sad, sweet,
perfect ending.