

**NAOMI SHIHAB NYE**

**Every Window**

Only the person living and working inside  
will know which yellow cup sits  
on a blue plate, waiting,  
or the size of an hour without interruption,  
or the haunting stroke of light beaming  
sideways onto the next roof.  
If we peer out lonely for everyone  
who preceded us into cloud,  
it's such a crowd by now,  
and the swirl that surrounds  
our continued presence on planet earth  
feels confounding. Another day fumbled.  
Another dialogue ground into dust.  
I woke determined to be simple and focused again.  
It was as if a houseguest had just arrived.  
I cleaned off the counter for her, not me.

Don't you hear this hammer ring?  
I'm gonna split this rock,  
And split it wide!  
When I split this rock,  
Stand by my side.

—Langston Hughes