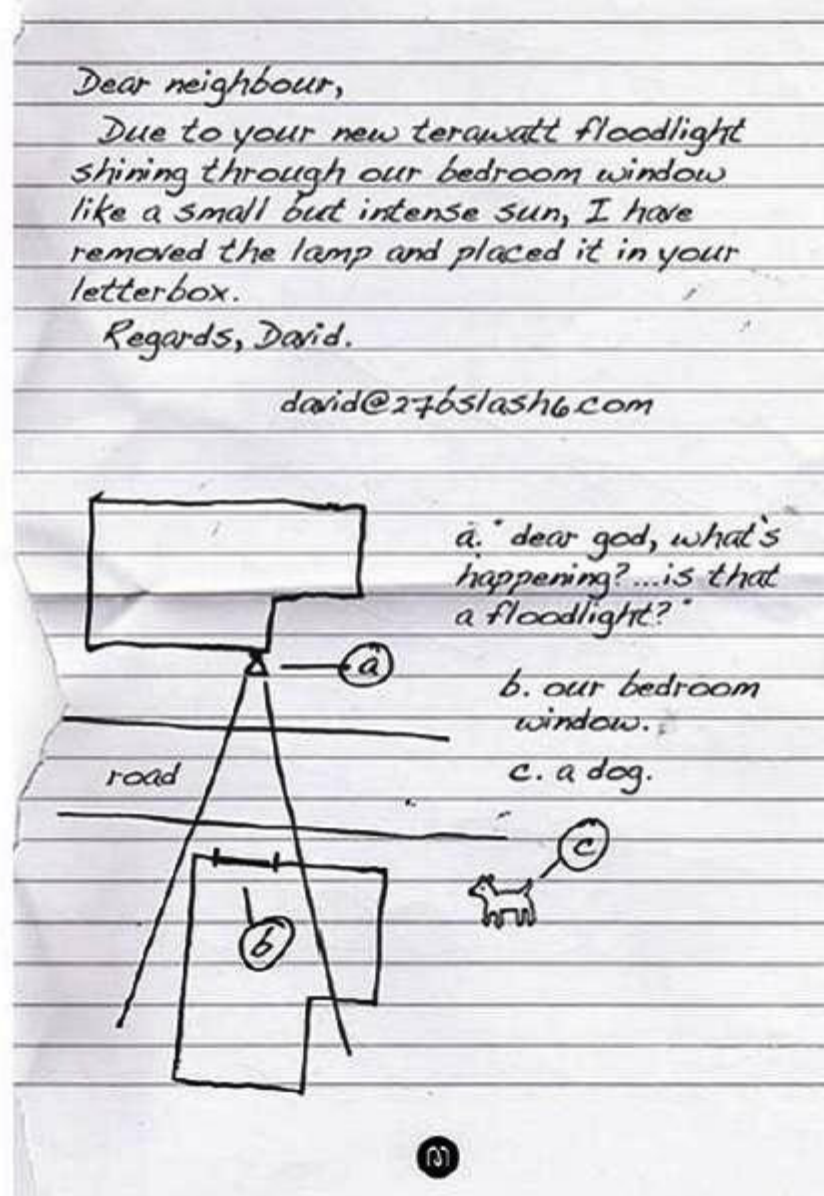


The Context: A homeowner has installed a very bright flood-light on his house. A neighbor directly across the street from this homeowner is trying to kindly (okay, with a little sarcasm & brilliant wit) petition the homeowner to respectfully adjust his new flood-light so that it doesn't light up the neighbor's bedroom at night. The flood-light owner gets angrier & angrier, and the neighbor gets funnier & funnier. It all begins with the note & picture below the neighbor across the street sent to the flood-light owner. The email exchange that follows is priceless. Enjoy.

(The flood-light owner gets nasty with his language. I blocked out the profanity so all can enjoy.)



From: Justin Flecker
Date: Sunday 6 May 2012 6.52pm
To: David Thorne
Subject: Lamp

I received your note but you cant go onto other peoples property and take things, that's trespassing. Massanutten is a wooded area and I installed that light for security. It's a safety issue. I can't help it if some of the light goes across the road, close your curtains if it bothers you.

From: David Thorne
Date: Sunday 6 May 2012 7.41pm
To: Justin Flecker
Subject: Re: Lamp

Hello Justin,

Thank you for your email. While I accept that curtains are usually the key to community accord, in this instance they would need to be constructed of eight-inch-thick lead sheeting. Last night, with my curtains closed and bedside light off, I read a book. Wearing sunglasses. Under a blanket.

Though unconvinced that blinding local fauna is the best solution, I do understand the heightened need for security living in a wooded area such as the gated community of Massanutten demands. Having formerly lived my entire life in Australia, I am unfamiliar with much of the local wildlife but I did see my first raccoon last week. I stepped outside to have a cigarette and the raccoon, sitting less than five feet away beside an up-ended bin eating the remains of a Domino's Artisan Tuscan Salami pizza, hissed at me. Surprised, I threw myself backwards, rolled several times toward the door, and sprang to my feet holding the welcome-mat above my head to appear taller. Sometime during the roll-spring-mat maneuver, probably during the roll part as it was over gravel and I was wearing shorts and a thin t-shirt so I had to take it slow, the raccoon left. Which probably isn't as exciting a story as it should be but this isn't Borneo and I'm not Jack London.

I did see a snake the other day though. I picked up a stick to poke it with which also turned out to be a snake. Jumping back in panic, I threw it away from me, but our dog thought I was playing fetch and I had to run and jump over a creek to get away.

As such, this weekend I intend to set up a canister of poisonous gas in my yard with an industrial fan behind it. I can't help it if some of the gas goes across the road.

Regards, David.

From: Justin Flecker
Date: Monday 7 May 2012 2.14pm
To: David Thorne
Subject: Re: Re: Lamp

Is that meant to be a threat? Put something up in your window if you don't like the light, we lived here 5 years before you even moved into the neighborhood and got along perfectly with Ryan who lived at your property before you. We went to his BBQ's and I loaned him our mower. We get along with all our neighbors. I dont know what you people do in your own country but in this country we dont go onto other peoples property and touch their stuff.

From: David Thorne
Date: Monday 7 May 2012 3.37pm
To: Justin Flecker
Subject: Re: Re: Re: Lamp

Dear Justin,

In my country, terawatt globes are reserved for police helicopter chases and warning sailors of hazardous shoals. This is despite the fact that practically every living creature there can kill you in under three minutes. Our primary spoken language is screaming.

I'm not surprised you get along well with all the other neighbours. If you put fifty children with Down's syndrome in a room there is going to be a lot of hugging.

And no, it was not a threat. It was an exaggerated response to an uncompromising stance. I was taught never to make a threat unless you are prepared to carry it out and I am not a fan of carrying anything. Even watching other people carrying things makes me uncomfortable. Mainly because of the possibility they may ask me to help.

I did consider installing a floodlight as bright as yours, but this would require some form of carrying things, electrical wiring knowledge, and access to a power supply capable of producing that amount of wattage. Probably fusion. As I am told off by my partner for wasting money when I leave the light on in the bathroom overnight, I can only speculate to what her reaction would be to an electricity bill eight times our annual income for retaliatory garden lighting. She would probably have to get a third job.

It would be much cheaper to stand in my driveway and throw rocks. I can't help it if some of the rocks go across the road. You should probably put something up in your window.

Regards, David.

From: Justin Flecker
Date: Tuesday 8 May 2012 10.01am
To: David Thorne
Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Lamp

Did you take our lamp again [REDACTED]? What part about not being allowed to go on our property don't you get?

From: David Thorne
Date: Tuesday 8 May 2012 10.32am
To: Justin Flecker
Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Lamp

Dear Justin,

No, I did not take the light again. I relocated it again. Its current location may be discovered by deciphering the following set of clues to its whereabouts. Perhaps you could invite your friend Ryan over and treat it as a kind of treasure hunt:

1. It's in the letterbox again.
2. Look in the letterbox.

As I realise this probably won't narrow it down much for you, I will give you a third clue in the form of a riddle:

What burns with the light of a thousand suns and is in the letterbox?

Regards, David.

From: Justin Flecker
Date: Tuesday 8 May 2012 11.15am
To: David Thorne
Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Lamp

I put a smaller lamp in so you can shut the [REDACTED] up now. Don't email me again and if you ever trespass on our property again I will press charges.

From: David Thorne
Date: Tuesday 8 2012 12.02pm
To: Justin Flecker
Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Lamp

Dear Justin,

What if I have a barbecue and need to send you an invitation? Is it ok to email you then?

Regards, David.

From: Justin Flecker
Date: Tuesday 8 May 2012 12.18pm
To: David Thorne
Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Lamp

No it's not ok.

From: David Thorne
Date: Tuesday 8 May 2012 12.27pm
To: Justin Flecker
Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Lamp

Dear Justin,

What if I need to borrow your lawn-mower? I can't invite people over for a barbecue and expect them to stand in long grass. Someone might be bitten by a snake. It's a safety issue.

Regards, David.

From: Justin Flecker
Date: Tuesday 8 May 2012 3.26pm
To: David Thorne
Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Lamp

■■■■ off back to Austria.