**The *Other* Morning**

Lorrie Ness

It’s not just tea and toast,

the singe of dust as the furnace kicks on

or the static zap of fingers after shuffling to the switch.

Morning is the domesticated name

for something feral. The falcon-colored hours —

buff bellied and dark-winged,

pressing against night. Go out at daybreak

and all you see is the bright

undercarriage. Your heart will quicken

walking outside after twelve,

before the slacklight of dawn. Nocturnal beasts

tread silently across midnight

into the dark of day. Hunting until moonset,

early morning is coyote-eyed

and owl-swept. A time when foxes

stalk the henhouse and the killing frost

withers the peas. Overnight

is the unlit side of undernoon — shadow

in full hemorrhage

before it’s cauterized by the sun.