While we talk a blue streak at a café,
an unspoken word
drifts in the air between us
like a bit of ash.
We do not speak it
yet it grows,
somersaulting in the air
like tortellini
boiling in a pot.
Like a hummingbird egg.
Then it cracks.
On its own, unspoken, midair,
it cracks,
hatches, all mouth,
inhaling
like a plastic bag
in the sea. It speaks, inaudibly,
mouthing words.
We (still talking) lean in
to hear. It falls
flat, crawls the tiles,
sheds its skin.
Bare, veined
like a jellyfish,
slimy organ of a bird
left at the door,
it crawls up the skirt
of an old woman
chatting to her friend.
Its one eye—
upon the wrinkled cheek
of the woman
—blazing, it crawls
into her mouth.
She stops chatting.
She drools cappuccino.
She croaks
at us!
as if cursing: "Love."
MORNING AFTER A PARTY IN A FARM-HOUSE

Downstairs, friends gobble pancakes in a hangover mania,
while I lie on a hard bed scanning my body
for joy I can use like pliers to pry my way into the morning,
& it came back to me: last night I sat with an old friend
on a firewood pile as she described the fingers of her childhood piano teacher, how as he played with his left hand deftly his right dragged down her thigh up her school skirt & down again, up & down like waves on a shore. Listening to her I had on a silly orange wig I couldn’t figure out how to take off. Now on the hard bed the house tomcat sits on my chest gazing out the window at the wheat field like King David at Jerusalem. Each night he returns from the brook smeared in blood, in his mouth one of night’s creatures, demystified. My dream ignites like a flare in the dark: I was naked like one of the dead catapulted out of the earth. Like a demon back from war.
Nothing *happened*.
I just stood in a forest
breathing. Effect of a vanished
cause. So the light
I gave off was my own.