**Apartment 271**

*After Meret Oppenheim*

Steaming in gazelle,

espresso in a fur-lined teacup

clipped just less than an inch

scowling on the dresser. She gullets

fuzzed brown innards

with a Levonelle

& a little salt (a day later)

three phone calls missed at five fifteen

with another due at seven

we’d been waylaid. The first shout:

“*time is money, the early bird–”* catches

her skirt on the subway,

tearing office snags out in gashes,

rat-race scars. This is what prayer feels like:

*holding your breath all the way to the bank.*

Last month’s move-in lies around

pulling tooth and nail for a long

low sweetness & each week

frank autobiographical exposures meet another’s deadline.

Scissor spilt heels

incisive in stiff velvet

so red as to make

morning shriek with the mutts outside yelling:

*thank you oh good lord for not making me a man.*

Beastly things don’t belong at teatime.