

PEARL PIRIE

## NO MELON SWEETNESS IN THE THIS COLLIE OF A DAY

stalk for death's yellow flecked wing  
below the horse's foot by market stalls.  
stoop for a howdy-do to the ants  
too busy to look up from sinew's span.

in the park, remark on the seagull  
floating in the canal as child on lap  
hears another story. pause for the vole  
at the door, its star nose stilled in sun.

examine the balloon of fume, pace  
nearer and farther, and close to the  
juvenile raccoon roadkill. a boom  
season of birth this year. reenter

the room where father raised  
the same smell as the cat had  
as she weakened into final stage  
a deepening of what C. called

*the stench that Old Spice is designed  
to mask*—that opposite of baby fresh  
the giggle gurgle snuffle bury face  
in bulges of neck, let it go straight

to your oxytocin creator in the brain. stem  
the uplift of the scent with the lightness  
of damelflies, the spectrum of metallic  
iridescence on walk. after the rush of a

summer's drive watch for their husks  
trapped in the truck radiator, pinging cool  
in the lot. it's counterintuitive to make  
a bore of yourself, to wear out the visiting,

live on that last doorstep with your empty cup  
for artificial sugar. But maybe Death will find you  
humdrummer than a Hummer and won't hurry  
to give you a lift. as backup plan B, complement

the corpses with attention, not flowers for after,  
hereafter but proactively shower with grateful love

those who live, and pray that your jealous god  
does not pang a thunderbolt at your happiness.