

SCHOOLED IN WANDERING

Don't watch them with names, don't let them drag their tails. Hardly a face,
more like a heavy

brow or a cap
wedged down. Slowing up the stare

and my heart, maybe, has a habit.

I blow my hair away, and they're gaping
and unlocked

like the drone of highways.

She's nuzzling her mate. The swamp's gotten greedy. If it's summer
with its haws, then we're
in the lawn chairs at midnight.

When I feel a storm stiffen, leaves begin
to steep,

branches fall across
the foot-bridge. Don't mercy
with their water hideaway.

That one swims heavy. Don't stay when its nostrils are tipped up,

boat out until

you don't belong. There's gnawing
under the weather
and hours in the milling.

I wasn't backing up, wasn't calling the chaperone to help hush. So I'd argue

for a sprawl
close to thunder and the rippling outward.

A bucket's worth and what's left, something gnarly?
Upside down, a dirty hoof.