



# Naming the Beasts

by Elizabeth Morton



The planes went down the same day Romulus and Remus were butchered.

And I walked barefoot through the cattlegrass, moods to Romulus and Remus and they said *how do you do?*

as though it were an ordinary Tuesday.

As though the stock truck parked outside the old schoolhouse were just a metaphor for everything thrust into double digits. The sky was cheesecake.

Sweetgums were bald to skin and bone. Wind licked the bluegrass, retelling comedies

only the weather sees. What world is this?

Romulus and Remus were the hot breath

rising from the schoolhouse kettle,

the two sparrows that knocked against the car windshield on that lonely highway. They were a pair of headlights.

They were possums spent on nightfall, giddy with the casual light of passing tankers.

Romulus and Remus loped onto the truck ramp,

Said *how do you do?* And I. And I. And I.

I walked barefoot through embers only to turn back halfway, to shrug at the ordinary Tuesday, to let what happens

happen. I hid from the bellowing, under husk and chaff, in the noise of harrower and winnower.

Later, I sat in the diner, watched two planes go down on a city, into the stubble of people and places just doing what people and places do.

As though little men falling from windows were just a metaphor for everything haunted by what we never fix.

