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Knute Skinner
A Suitable Guest

“What’s wrong with them?” I asked.

“Wrong? Nothing’s wrong with them,” he answered,
lifting his cup.

“But you’ve given them all to me,” I said,
setting down my fork.

“Why aren’t you having any?”

He emptied his cup, hot as it was,
and he rose from the table.

The morning sun blazed on the deck,
visible through the French doors across the room,
and although the kitchen was cool enough,
I fanned my throat with my collar.

“Oh, I don’t know,” he said, walking to the door
and letting out his cat,

“I usually just drink coffee in the morning.”

He returned to the table and sat down.

“Don’t you like them?” he asked.

“Oh, yes, they’re delicious,” I said,
“but I’ve never had them before for breakfast.”

I took another small bite.

“Wherever did you find them?” I asked.

At that he lifted his chin and smiled,
and I noticed his crows-feet.

“Oh, I’ll never tell,” he said, laughing,

“just as I won’t tell my mother
where I found you.”

He laughed again and a surge of sweet fluid
coursed through my veins,
and I thought of his laughter the night before
as he handled my body. I took another small bite.

“Eat them up, eat them up, they’re good for you,” he said,
and he jumped to his feet and crossed the room.
“I don’t really care about them myself,” he said
letting his cat back in,
“but I keep them for suitable guests.”

“Our tastes are quite different then,” I said.
“It’s a mystery why anyone last night
would take us for twins.”