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Coydogs

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Sindall: Coydogs

COYDOGS

Susan Sindall

They raise blunt
ancient hatchet muzzles
to bark at the lake, at twilight.

Their teeth rip
at a shapeless corpse, frozen
into the ice. They drag

what's left
across the brittle white
with determined, joyless trots.

Furtive, bumpy-spined,
ugly, forceful neither-nors:
one sits on my living room rug.

Fox fur, deeply
pied with moleskin greys
and pale yellows, she's

close to my heels
by day. When her straight
muzzle parts in what I wish

were a smile, there
in the double rows of teeth,
evenly pointed

as if a child
had drawn the noon
sun's rays: two black tusks.

Her howl slightly
muffled, she brings
decapitated gifts,

mole-sized, then
watches from the foot
of my bed while I eat.