

TAYLOR GRAHAM

*First Aid Refresher*

It's like our last meal.  
You're frying onions, then cracking  
each egg by its skull,  
the hopeless life-stuff slushing  
into the skillet.  
This will get us through the morning,  
you promise. The interminable  
morning before us, when we remember  
all the ways the body dies.  
Stopped breath, the heart  
in fibrillation. Uncontrollable  
hemorrhage, shock.  
I've packed us brown-bag sandwiches  
to chew and swallow  
while the video reviews suctioning  
of airways. Then  
will come the afternoon slide  
down the spine of injury:  
burns, the needle  
impaled in the eye. Finally,  
the written test, to see  
if we've truly learned  
how frail the air  
that finds our lungs, its brief  
course through blood and brain  
before it escapes again  
silent as a soul.