

Aubade with Hound
Colleen S. Harris

Sunlight spills like spiced rum through windowpanes,
lids closed, warming. Before the first thoughts can form:
sweet press of fur against back of thigh, breath warm
and steady, heating your feet. Winsome sleep drains

from limbs. The day's to-dos stretch to occupy
waking mind, so do legs, neck, nails that scratch
down summer-smooth calves. Listen close, catch
the canine grumble demanding you justify

this theft of covers, this pilfering of pure peace,
asking you for the simplest thing, the gift
of time, to extend this temporary lease
on oblivion, deny daylight's urge to lift
the blankets from your bodies and abandon rest.
Somehow, starting the day feels like failing a test.