

NORA HICKEY

## Morning Rituals

When I wake up in the morning [...] and the sunlight hurts my eyes

*Bill Withers, "Lovely Day"*

The sun is not wearing underwear —  
it's willing to consume the sky.

The phone rings in its old sharp way  
and I try to pull my fingers through the hair  
that's thundering from my head.

There are assaults happening hundreds of miles away  
and down the block. My legs rise from a body.  
The one geranium bud pressed close

to the window — a clitoris. An ingrown eye.  
How it dilates. Identifies the length of lawn —  
thousand pearls of fertilizer. I've been reading

the same newspaper for days: "spar over"  
"house passes" "poverty rate" "hackers hit"  
"heaviest rain." I contemplate doing

laundry. My legs close in sentiment.  
There is someone trying to reach me —  
how much liquid can I own? How would I clean

the mouths of faucets? Flush a calcified drain?  
I don't judge my appliances.  
I accept them each morning as the cold offspring

that they are. In my sink is a skyline.  
It is a radical act of discipline  
to believe there will always be daylight.