

161Y

Foxes Up Churn Lane

At least once a week you call, grin in your voice,
and say you saw the fox up Churn Lane.

As you speak, I picture it: a confusion of amber
in your headlights, sunset bristles

against the dark gesture of tarmac.
The thing no bigger than the shock of its fur.

It slips away, snatching a moment
to erase itself from view, but returns in the night

to cry behind the dustbins. The last time
I saw one myself, he had curled into a singed knot

on the lane, already becoming the mulch
of leaves and mud that collects

when the trees unhand themselves
of foliage. I had never held a newborn

but his head lolled and I supported him
in the crook of my elbow,

set him down in sorry leaves
flushed with his colour.