

Animal Noises

Phoebe Walker

My husband and I talk in normal voices
in the public baths, at the ATM, the supermarket,
under space heaters at the open-air bar,
and with friends.

But indoors, we wheedle like baby mosquitoes.
I bleat like a sheep and drop my drawers
at whim; he mewls like a stomped fox.

We've been doing this for years now,
honestly, I don't know how it ends. I'm half curious,
half fearful to see what happens if one day, at work,

someone addresses me in the wrong tone
and I slobber at them in the mode

of besotted piglet, or gloomy flounder.

Honey, what then?