

Alicia Hoffman

Lucy

I am fostering a Bedlington terrier named Lucy.
Each morning she nudges her nose into my side
till I wake, let her into the large fenced yard

where she tires herself with endless running.
In May of 1967, The Beatles released “Lucy
In the Sky With Diamonds” to great acclaim.

Almost 10 years later, in the valley of Awash,
Ethiopia, a crew listened to the song on repeat,
found remains of a hominid species, named it Lucy

in honor of the hours spent listening to the lyrics
while conducting their archaeological dig.
In Ethiopia, the assemblage of bones is also known

as *dinkinish*, which means *you are marvelous*.
In Sellersville, Pennsylvania I have an aunt Lucy
who suffers extensive migraines. Medicated,

she spends days behind closed doors and drapes.
The name Lucy is derived from the masculine
Lucius, bearer of light. Early morning. Dawn.

And it is marvelous, the way such a small dog
can curl her body around my lap, can hint
at hunger for a snack by nudging her bowl

till it flips. And it is marvelous how humans
can move, a bipedal wonder of evolution we are
able to do most things if not well than at least

okay. I hope my aunt is doing okay. I don't speak
to her anymore. Family trauma tends to linger
inter-generationally, and she bears a deep grudge.

I hold no anger towards her, and hope she forgives
before her resentment ruins her. I know enough
to know when we let go we move towards the light.

We become lighter. And that, too, is marvelous.
How joy comes in the morning, how our bodies'
bones are buoyed by beauty. How right now Lucy

is under the azalea, snout buried deep in the damp
earth, smelling the ghost trail of a mouse, maybe,
or maybe hearing some hint of our animal music.

Originally from Pennsylvania, **Alicia Hoffman** lives, writes, and teaches in Rochester, New York. Author of two collections, her poems can be found in a variety of publications, including *Rust & Moth*, *Radar Poetry*, *Redactions*, *Tar River Poetry*, and elsewhere. Find out more at: www.aliciamariehoffman.com.