The Valley of Morning

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of Cat’s funeral the schoolbus arrived
driven by a woman called Mrs. Ek,
freckled and thin, wearing a white
bandana and overalls, with one
eye blue and the other gray. Everything
is strange; nothing is strange:

yarn, the moon, hair coiled in a bun,
New Hampshire, putting on socks.

THE VALLEY OF MORNING

Jack Baker
rises when
the steeple
clock strikes three
to shape dough
into pans
and wedge pale
rising bread
to the fire,
trays shoved in
clay ovens
over wood
coals. After
the summer
sun touches
the church’s
steeple, he
pulls from his
bakestove two
hundred loaves,
crusted brown
with damp fire
inside. Now
the valley
of morning
wakes breathing
bread's air, fresh
loaves for the
day's mouth, for
meadow, lane,
and row-house,
for the reigns
of fifty
Kings and Queens.