American Life
in Poetry
The title of the poem, "The Love Ridge Loop", is, no doubt, something of a joke, an exaggeration built on irony. After all, the poem is an ironic love poem, and, at the same time, an anti-dog poem. But it allows for something else, a poem about the unreliability of affection, of how, in love, we dare not admit to the animal danger in those we love or, at least, own in love. Abbie Kiefer’s poem resonates nicely for those of us who view with deep skepticism, the expressed assurances of our safety by pet-owners, while we walk among unleashed dogs in our neighborhoods.

The Love Ridge Loop

By Abbie Kiefer

In disregard of the signs, no one bothers with leashes, dogs barreling unbounded over every grooved path. *He’s friendly* they yell, 50 yards back. *Don’t worry, he’s darling, a cuddlepie of a pup.* I’m never not wary. Show me any person who could call their dearest unworthy. Who would warn me *Walk wide. He’s teeth and more teeth.* This creature I love beyond my control.