

## Christine Hamm

### THE STARS ARE YELLOW, SURROUNDED BY BLACK

At 6am, I splay my tender feet  
on cold pink tile, pretending

I can't remember your name. House  
in the palm of my hand. Stink beetle

nestling in my ear, whispering, *this  
is the way we wash our hands.* Skin

color was always SALMON PINK, like  
this sky. My families were never

big enough, floated off to one side.  
*You have to use the whole page,*

the teacher said as she gave me a fresh  
box of wax. The blues didn't taste

as good as they smelled. When she  
asked me to make a face, I drew

your mouth in black, a place  
like a locked door, and me  
on the wrong side, or under it.