

ANDREA COHEN
Poison Hotline

It's got one operator
and two numbers, one

harried taker of incoming
whose job it is to listen

and sound unalarmed, to
first do no harm by recalling

which number a caller
at the end of her tether

has called. One number
offers antidotes for poisons

taken mistakenly. The other
instructs how to bake

a Bundt cake with hemlock.
Keeping it straight is a lot

to ask of one insomniac, who
on quiet nights dials one

number from the other, taking
turns as a certain injured

party, practicing for when
he gets back to the dark

still house and talks
himself through it.