

## NANCY JO RINEHART

### *Raccoon*

Driving past you for the second day,  
or the third (they fly so),  
I notice again your rigorous posture  
and wonder how you died.  
Thank God you lie off the pavement,  
where your cousin was rolled to oblivion;  
you, little bandit, wave goodbye  
with stiffened limbs,  
Perfect monument to your living.

### *Back Again*

Here I come again,  
on a giant slide—  
not the funhouse kind,  
but one dumping me  
into a future  
of excusing my eccentricities,  
convincing everyone  
that singleness is bliss,  
avoiding the doctor  
with each headache and rash  
(could it be cancer?),  
depending on my parents  
and fearing their goodbye,  
existing in loneliness  
in a cheap apartment  
where I don't know how  
to fix a leaky faucet  
and wish I had learned.