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## **The Guinea Pig Roundup** - 1996

*Laura Smith*

She tries to gather up pygmy deities,  
Apollo, Zeus and Orion.  
They don't cooperate,  
running for the bushes and the drain pipe  
instead. Carrots won't budge them.  
Hands on hips, she tries reason.  
She doesn't understand reluctance,  
Language she can't decode, even with  
the ring from Captain Crunch. They dig in,  
their toenails grate against plastic. Squeaks  
and scratches answer silence. Leave them alone  
and they'll come home. But they have no tails.  
How do I make them listen,  
Come in from the cold, avoid the cat?  
Desperate and out of breath, she seeks  
mother, who should hold the key, but  
she has never rounded up  
her own charges.