

## Our New House

She was gullet-hungry & nearly skirted the plastic jaws smeared with local peanut butter, but they clamped shut as she scraped by, breaking both hind legs. We woke to relentless scratching in the kitchen, 3:00 a.m. clamor as she dragged her body along the valley between stove & sink. We'd chosen quick-kill traps & already tossed two dead ones in the woods behind the house, their faces flat, tiny eyes bulging. But she didn't die. Instead she curled into a question mark, tried to chew her body free, scurried across linoleum desperate to escape herself.

## Sex Education

Virginity was the currency  
of being wanted, I learned  
from the local seminarians  
who preached abstinence  
in our public high school.  
By then, my boyfriend's dick  
had already been everywhere  
except inside me, his want  
a tremolo. I'd trained my  
stamen on Sharpie markers  
before his mouth was on me  
at fourteen. We fumbled  
in a tent in Arizona, rustling  
nylon while his parents  
slept. At school I watched  
a virgin unwrap & chew  
a piece of gum, then spit  
the wad into her own  
palm, offering the sticky  
mound to a boy who refused  
it on cue. His face a lemon  
of disgust, *Nobody wants  
someone who's already  
been used.* I crossed my legs,  
pretending. In truth, I was  
giddy with power, in awe  
of how I'd made a boy wither  
& whimper, my grip firm,  
his pleasure my reward. He  
limped himself malleable—

I held him hard like the stick  
shift of my little red Jetta,  
my thirst for control a vibrato.