1
At first we thought a giant rat
treaded the morning water
of the pool, thick white fur
sinking wet-heavy, dragging
its pointed head down and closer
to swelling currents of the deeper end.

Then Mother came outside
still in her gown, lifted up
that baby possum in the skimmer,
dropping it over the fence toward
the canyon it must have
climbed out of.

Next week Mom raked a lizard from the drapes
and set it soft on leaves
beyond the door.
Tonight, on the hill out back
where the woman next door tosses
dried out bread to the birds,

another possum. We want it to be
the same one, older now and wiser,
coming to give thanks.

How it does that:
iclimbing out of the canyon
in the safer dark, stopping
close to trees, avoiding pools.
Mom turns off the light above her
to better see its scaly tail, snout.

She shivers at the length
of its claws, depth of its pebble eyes,
and watches till it circles, scampers back.