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## Petting Zoo

Charles Hartman

Connecticut College, [cohar@conncoll.edu](mailto:cohar@conncoll.edu)

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CHARLES O. HARTMAN

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*Petting Zoo*

Spring: the edges and middles  
of these roads blossom  
with corpses, racoon, possum, crow-

lunch, bodies bloomed rosy  
into meat and gut, colors  
saturated. Eye catching

until the eye learns better.  
The slow skunk  
lingers in brief afterlife

either because the tail sacs  
burst on impact  
or because it tried

to warn off what was coming.  
Pond turtle crushed to lotus.  
Last week the fox flung itself

under my fender — Last week  
I hit a fox — Last week my car —  
I could make this a poem

about old lovers. I do  
worry, slowing down and then  
farther down, about being

able to get anywhere.  
The thoughtful driver watches  
out at all times, maintaining

an easy and natural grip.  
I check my fluids weekly,  
night after night dream a dim

on-ramp crowded with faint  
shapes, fur thick behind  
the ears, under my fingers,

my lights, while the back legs jerk  
a couple of times. I don't  
see for the life of me

how I'd ever end that poem.  
My species is all crazy,  
think of it, mammals with wheels.

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