

## Three Poems · *Janet Piper*

### COWARDICE

The pattern has been  
Fear and flight  
At the first sight  
Of the Ugly or Evil.

I have been no comfort  
In trouble, to anyone—  
Not even my son—  
The unforgivable sin,

For which no tears atone;  
The burden of age,  
Which no prayers lighten  
Or assuage.

### EAST TEXAS WILD LIFE

I  
Roaches I dislike  
For the arrogance  
Of their stance,

But more, I suspect  
From fear and respect  
For their power of endurance.

Entomologists say  
They are not as old  
As the earth, but nearly,