

TEARS SHED OVER WHITE CHICKENS

**RACHEL
RINEHART**

Because yolk becomes chick becomes
slaughtering the broody hen
my father twines chickens
on my mother's clothesline. Lip pouched with chaw,
he ends them,
same as he blew Dewy away
after some windblown swans
landed in the corn shuck.

Now the new pup strains to bust
his chains, but a dog that's tasted blood
is a dog that must be shot. I clutch
Clothespin Odessa, finger-named out of the Big Atlas,
shield our hot eyes and calico dresses
from the everywhere feathers
and everywhere chickens
endless white on clotheslines.