

LIKE QUILLS UPON THE FRETFUL

**MICHAEL
PONTACOLONI**

The dog won't learn,
and the porcupine
has found the acre where
he'd like to remain.

Next day it wiggles
into the narrow plastic
drainage pipe beneath
the gravel driveway.

What else to do but point
a shotgun in the dark
and spray the poor thing
full of stars while

beech and cedar prick
the mountainside and raindrops
dart the soil and oh
the needles and spines of god—

even the gravel shivers.