

# AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY

A FREE COLUMN FOR NEWSPAPERS BY TED KOOSER, POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES, 2004-2006  
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## American Life in Poetry: Column 713

BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE, 2004-2006

I love accounts of people meeting up with wild creatures, as in Elizabeth Bishop's great poem, "The Moose," and here's another such encounter from Sonja Johanson, who is from Maine. Johanson's most recent chapbook is *Trees in Our Dooryards* from Redbird Chapbooks.

### Three Deer in Oquossoc

East will take me back. I drive  
west. I wend between snowbanks,  
until the road delivers me  
to a sleeping boat launch.

They stand on the frozen ramp;  
watch me with coats that are  
better than mine. Ice houses  
and snowmobiles edge the distance.

*I have to turn around, I say  
to them, I went the wrong  
way. They stamp and chuff.  
No, they tell me, this is the way.*

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