

## THE WAR

Relentlessly he grips it tight,  
unslippingly between his teeth  
as canines and incisors bite  
to clamp above and underneath.

How trickily he does his dance,  
wild shaking head with rigid jaws,  
then locking in a 3-point stance,  
braced solidly with 2 front paws.

I groan and strain to hold my place  
as he and I exchange fierce scowls.  
Dead set to beat me face-to-face,  
he jerks and gyrates, grunts and growls.

In danger, I am not, despite  
his violence down on our rug.  
Indeed, he fights a friendly fight  
engaged with me in playing "Tug.

*by* Lee Netzler