

# Death and Resurrection of a Cat

Her life had been as most: impulse quick,  
acting out an instinct bred the size of rat's feet  
scuttling across hardwood floors.

A hunter of ancient toothless insects.

Still, life always seemed enough  
as she staggered in the grass, milk-drunk,  
and collapsed on a million lightbeams,  
purring.

She lived overstuffed  
as the cushion that held her impression  
warm, long after stepping out for a meal (and  
back again). Catnapping.

Suckling kittens.

Growing old with age tucked beneath calico hair,  
settling in bones  
ready to leave their skeleton in the cool ground.

Fifteen years.

But the sixteenth, like a kitten pawing wild at imagination,  
pain twisting slowly, until blind  
she began to step in her dish;  
each time shaking off the indignation,  
like shit on a silk slipper.

Tearing out claws  
one by one  
until fur hung thick with blood,  
and the service porch like the aftermath of punctured arteries.

Perhaps  
a tumor self-destructing. Painfully.

Seventeen years to die,  
and only eight more times to go.

—R. Blain Andrus