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Schrödinger's Cat

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Garner: Schrödinger's Cat

MILTON KESSLER MEMORIAL PRIZE
FINALIST

SCHRÖDINGER'S CAT Madelyn Garner

Today as the sun cross-stitches
the screen door into a tapestry of light,
the cat, a shadow on the threshold,
is oblivious to the squirrels
scurrying along the vertebrae of a fence.
Stilled slink. Only a twitch
of ear proving for this click of time,
she is alive. But you, my son, are not.

I consider the possibility
of a parallel universe where an identical cat,
defenseless against the slaughter
of wheels, drags home viscera
shiny as beetles, dies
stretched before the threshold,
breeze fraying her fur,
ears no longer interrogating
the existence of squirrels.

That is to say, time is a rondelet
in the quantum garden
of many worlds, our paths crossing
and separating in alternate
realities cloned from the same streaming
particles, bursts of energy.
My mind says *Yes*
to infinite copies of you coming
to the door, young
and transcendent with good blood,
bearing a kitten the color of shadows.