

## ELEGIAC SONNET II

Nathan W. Harter

Stop! Close those unenchanted eyes  
And listen to the forest as we pass:  
The murmured rubrics of a Druid mass  
Among the twisted branches wend and rise.  
In echoes of a desolate demise,  
Now heaped with fallen timber, moss, and grass.  
But harken to a cruder sing—alas—  
The hoary-headed priest no longer cries.

Where lie the moldering bones among the leaves,  
The hollow breast wherein the forest breathed  
Its elemental chord? My soul bereaves  
The silent cities, buried and unwreathed,  
Revisited when late, autumnal eyes  
A lover hears what he has been bequeathed.

## DEATH TO A FRIEND

Jeff Johnson

In the case of survival, animals must regress to their basic needs and instincts. It was a warm mid-July day in Katmando, a small town at the base of the Green Mountains in Vermont. Walter and Blanch Shrupp were leaving on vacation for Sarasota, Florida. They left behind their two oddly compatible pets, Felix and Ellwanger.

Felix was a stray cat that had become a house pet. He had long fur, which was yellow and white mixed throughout his body. Felix was a large cat with piercing blue eyes, perhaps of a mixed persian breed. He loved to give and receive affection, especially when it came to other animals. Ellwanger was a year and-a-half old hamster. He looked like a golden puff ball because of his ravenous appetite.