
Cat: A Harbinger of Sorts

Dustin Smith

Fireflies weave through the dark,
old stars
fade in the field.

They code a message:

Watch for cats with tastes for fire!

Yellow eyes blink at me, pause; a deer,
its death.

Weeds rustle, an apocalyptic hymn;
I look up for brimstone,
an archangel,
a plane crash.

The substitute stars continue
warning, continue seducing me.

I stay, a fly
forgot on flypaper.

From the grass, the cat floats past space,—
past scars stitched up, butterflies mounted to walls—
grasps a star, says a prayer
before devouring it.

If it burns during re-entry, I couldn't tell;
he lands,—a head on a pillow,
a bee on a petal—leaps for seconds.

After dinner, the cat trots home to me,
a first report card, a shut front door.
Antennas hang in his whiskers,
burrs burrow in his fur,
—stars' remains.
He sails his tongue across his chops,
Looks at me with moons, purrs: The best are constellations!