

White Cat Hit By A Car

"Is that your cat?" they said, pointing
To a rag of white on the roadside.
I went over for a closer look,
Thinking—no, it can't be, it looks almost grey—
The dark hair moving as if by wind
Or breath: ants.

The dead are so changed; earth-heavy, still.
I should bury the cat. But the ground is hard;
I scratch out a shallow hole—a mouth.
I wonder whose face is under my shoe.

Instead, I tip the cat into a plastic bag.
Early the next morning, on my way to work,
I throw the white bag into a trash bin.
It crashes like a rock.

All that day I am afraid of my blood,
Crawling blue under my skin. If someone
Slit the veins, it would pour out, tiny and dark,
Waving antennae.



The Death Of A Horse

The acadia is heavy with blossom
As they put the old horse down—
Yellow flowers smelling of damp ground,
Sunlight hanging in grey leaves.
He shakes bees from the petals, falling,

His legs galloping through blue sky.
Even when the rest of him is still,
His nostrils fill with warm air,
Eyelids open and shut like wings.

He has cancer. Each day for two years
His throatlatch tumor fattened,
Catching the stomach tube at worming,
Then his hay. They chopped alfalfa,
Mixed in molasses. Lately each breath
Whistled; they dreamed of the lifting of ribs.

Now, the needle in his vein,
His whole body fills like a lung,
Then empties . . . His hooves
Draw furrows in the dirt
As they drag him into the truck bed.
Bees settle again on thin wings
In the earth-scented flowers,
In the flower-scented earth.

