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Even the Smallest Death

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Even the Smallest Death · *Steve Orlen*

We found the orange cat this morning
Sprawled outside the window as though reaching
To surprise his own reflection.
The yard around us asked the simplest questions.

Better to question tree or wind and weather
Going and coming, needing no reason.
The sun rises and the flies gather
As they will, and the rest is sentiment:

You, beside me in the yard, in sunlight
Grieving. Oh everywhere you look you shape
Your own ghosts in the air
Lest you forget, willful to memorize.

I call them memories. Flies will scatter
Soon as the sun sets over
That far corner of the garden.
Sluggish and obedient

The dead can't change
As now we must, or eye the empty spaces.