

**THE DEATH OF A STRAY CAT**

*(S L Smith)*

I found your body sodden in the cold rain,  
Curled up on leaves beneath a hedge,  
No signs of illness, injury or blood,  
You must have been asleep when claimed by  
death.  
Did anybody own you, little cat?  
Does anybody miss you, call your name?  
Had you somehow strayed from those who  
loved you  
And does somebody search for you in vain?

So thin and fragile, cat, beneath your soaked fur,  
Skin and bone, so old and so alone,  
You'd curled upon some leaves against the cold  
wind,  
I wonder, old cat, did you even have a home?  
Maybe you lived feral all your life, cat,  
Maybe you lived wild, away from man,  
Or maybe lost and lonely you sought comfort,  
Seeking somewhere safe before death came.

Perhaps you found yourself unloved, unwanted,  
Perhaps someone in sorrow seeks you still,  
I cannot leave you lying there like garbage,  
A cat deserves some dignity as well.  
Maybe no-one loved you in your lifetime,  
But now you'll find some dignity in death,  
I can't change your lonely way of passing,  
But I will lay you gently in the earth.

Is there anybody mourns your passing?  
Anybody waits for you at home?  
Were you just a lonely feline wanderer,  
Or did you cry in vain outside some door?  
Maybe no-one cared enough to love you,  
But you'll be treated gently now in death,  
Sleep tight, small cat and I will mourn you  
And grieve for all the unloved felines who are  
left.