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Mr. Jim

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Mr. Jim

Corinne McDevitt

If ever there was a stray cat
it followed him home,
until he had a parade of misfit felines everywhere he went.
He slaved for hours in his crowded garden,
Dodging nats and spiders,
just so the sunflowers could see to the horizon.
He sang songs to his lilies to keep them awake
And missed every daffodil that did not make it to spring.
His voice coaxed the tulips open with flattery and charm.
He neglected to mend his broken old fence,
so that squirrels had windows to talk to their friends
And pass over acorns to bury in his yard.
If a dog was cast down for biting
He would sigh and lament for the lost fighter.
The spirit of a gladiator stuck in fur.
But if a pup would growl and scare a young girl
He would reprimand him,
For that was no way to talk to a lady.
He lived in his kingdom of odds and ends,
Ruler of flora and fauna.
No dissertation was ever published,
Nor documentary ever made,
But when he died his garden mourned
At the loss of such a soul.
The cats cried and the dogs whined.
The sunflowers drooped and his tulips closed
Refusing to face a world without their steward.