

Purring Apparition

When we arrived a year later
my son learned to ride waves
holding the foam board, his hands in front of Grandpa's
and how to read a green
after last tourists cleared the course,
when the backdrop of moist mountain and dark clouds
made him glow in a flood of golden light
walking back through yards
with a red plastic putter
perched on his shoulder,
but the year the cat came
was the softest year,
steps beyond the back door
my son sat with his knees together
his feet splayed to the sides,
black spots on piles of white fluff
draped over his thin legs
and my sons hand with fingers stretched out
waved over the fur again and again,
the way I had rocked him back and forth
soothing us both,
the little hand following the nap
never taking a break
and the mind of the boy
not noting the position of the sun.

It was quiet there between the house and the island
of giant bird of paradise
whose upper leaves leaned out over
and the roof leaned out over, or so it seemed.

There was no need
of calling the boy in, I thought, the breeze light, the air warm
and he was being fed beyond my means.

“Leave him there,” said Grandma,
“He told me the cat purrs the whole time.”

It came each day
to the small hands that needed
to do something that made sense.

“I’d really like to take my friend home with me.” my son said
and I wished at that moment I could leave my son
nestled in that tropical cradle,
forever the pads of his palms
finding softness,

I wished this for him
as I took him with me for myself.