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## An Unlikely Companion

Thomas Nantz

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## **Growing older**

is putting everything you have  
into square brown cardboard boxes  
with sharpie labels on their flaps  
and moving them across a country  
you haven't ever seen.

it is taking all of your crinkled receipts  
and the letters you thought you might need again,  
realizing you won't, and placing them nostalgically  
into the wastebasket.

it is unpacking your books and your records  
your clothes and your photos and your bicycle  
in an unfamiliar home with an unfamiliar garage  
and putting your kitchen table together again  
in a room where it doesn't quite belong.

Brett Stonecipher

## **An Unlikely Companion.**

And suddenly, a black cat crossed my path.

I didn't think much of it; I was never one for superstitions.

This day was no different. I just knelt down, unafraid, and hoped the dark shadow  
would return.

It did.

I spent the next little while petting that kitten. It seemed to want my company, and  
I kind of enjoyed being around it. I was feeling lonely, and something about that  
feline reminded me of home.

I think my kindness towards it, and our short yet uncommon interaction, bought  
me some time. But in the end, the misfortune found even me.

That black cat and I never saw each other again.

Thomas Nantz