

# THE SORROWS OF THE DEAD

**EUSUF  
NAUSHEEN**

refuse to perish with their mortal masters.  
The griefs they grieved, the slights they bore,

how can they not, once told, return to task  
the living—a collector at the door?

You tend to them the way you water the plants  
that yellow regardless on the window sill,

the way regret catches you like a feather  
on the windshield that turns, stalls, lies still,

and disappears. Familiar, like old friends,  
like the loping gait of the three-legged cat

that comes to your porch at dusk to find  
a bowl of milk. Surely, you owe them that.